

HOSEA

Chapter 1

Verse 1. [[@Bible:Hosea 1:1]]{{field-on:Bible}}**The word of the Lord.** Not "cunningly devised fables," **2 Peter 1:16**, or human testimonies, that can make but a human faith; but the "word of the ever living God," **1 Thessalonians 2:13**, the "Scripture that cannot be broken," **John 10:35**, the very heart and soul of God (*cor et anima Dei*), as Gregory calls it.

That came unto Hosea. The Lord is said to come to Laban, Abimelech, Balaam, &c. But he never concredited his word to any such profane wretches, as he did to the holy prophets which have "been since the world began"; of whom it is said, as here, "The word of the Lord came to Hosea." His name signifieth a Saviour, **Matthew 1:21**: a fit name for a minister, whose work is to "save himself and them that hear him," **1 Timothy 4:16**. To save them if he can, **Obadiah 21**; to deliver their souls from going into the pit, **Job 33:24**; to pull them, if possible, out of the fire, **Jude 1:23**; to "give them the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sin," **Luke 1:77**: to give it, I say, not by infusion (for that he cannot do), but by instruction; and that he must endeavour to do, as this prophet did: than whom few ministers ever ran so long a race without cessation, or cespitation, so constantly, so courageously, so unweariably. For he continued prophesying sixty-five years at least, saith Pareus; seventy, saith Oecolampadius; it is very probable fourscore years, saith Mr Burroughes. The Hebrews say ninety years, *quibus multa dixit quae non scripsit*, wherein he uttered much more than he wrote. This we may easily believe: for we have but the short notes or heads of his sermons and larger discourses, which he seems also to have set down for the use of the Church in his extreme old age, whereof they carry a smatch in the shortness of his speech, applied, as much as might be, to the measure of his breath. Hence Jerome fitly called him, *Commaticum et quasi per sententias loquentem*, concise and sententious. *Amputatas loquitur sententias et verba ante expectatum cadentia*, as one saith of Sallust; *Multo est verbis quam sensu restrictior atque concisior*, as another saith of Livy: he speaketh much in few; and seems to have more sentences than sayings. The more often you read him the more you may get by him: *et nunquam tamen dimittat te sine siti*; and yet the more you get the more you covet (Lips. de Thucyd.). Obscure he is (as delivering things briefly), and such as will not be easily acquainted with you but upon further suit: hence that Epiphonema ¹ in the perclose of his prophecy, "Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them?" But this must waken and not weaken our more diligent search, not being content with the first ore that offereth itself to our view, but digging deeper and deeper, till we become owner of the whole treasure, which will sufficiently pay for the pains. Wherefore "search the Scripture," "follow on to know the Lord"; get all the dimensions of knowledge, which (now in the great abundance of the means we have) doth even bow down to us, as trees do that are laden with fruit, so that a child may gather from them.

The son of Beeri. That is, of a well that hath pure and clear water in it, and that never faileth; living water, as the Scripture calleth it, and not mixed with mud. Ministers should be children of Beeri, of a well digged by the direction of the lawgiver, **Numbers 21:17**, whence people should draw waters with joy, the pure waters of life, the unadulterated milk of God's word; not troubled, brackish, and sourish doctrines, such as the Popish clergy (called therefore "the sea," **Revelation 12:12**) do set abroad which rather bring barrenness to their hearers and gnaw their entrails, than quench their thirst or cause fruit. These and all false teachers make God's flock drink that which they have fouled with their feet, **Ezekiel 34:19**, yea, impoisoned with their hands: as the malicious Jews once cast bags of poison into many wells here, to do mischief, and were therefore banished the country. False doctrine is like a filthy pond, wherein

¹ An exclamatory sentence or striking reflection, which sums up or concludes a discourse or a passage in the discourse. (ED)

fish die soon and frogs live long: it is like the Dead Sea, or the great falling star, called Wormwood, **Revelation 8:10-11**, which made "the third part of the waters become wormwood," so that "many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter" by that son of perdition, who was himself the "gall of bitterness, and bond of perdition." Who this Beeri was it appears not in Scripture. It seems he was a man famous in those days among the Israelites (and is here named *honoris gratia*, for honour's sake to the prophet), as Alexander and Rufus, the sons of Simon the Cyrenian, were men famously known in the Church of the New Testament; and are therefore but named only by Mark. (**Mark 15:21**) The Jews have a tradition, that whensoever a prophet's father is named, that father was likewise a prophet as well as the son. And Beeri might be *binominis*, and have some other name of more note: like as Pethuel, the father of the prophet Joel, is thought by some to have been Samuel, and to have been called Pethuel, that is, a persuader of God, because what he asked of God he obtained.

In the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, &c. A young prophet he must needs be (especially if he prophesied fourscore years. See the note above). Haply he began as early as did Samuel, Jeremiah, Timothy, Origen, or Cornelius Mus; of whom Sixtus Senensis testifieth, that he was an admirable preacher at twelve years old.

Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah. The throne of Judah had some interchanges of good princes: Israel none at all. The same justice therefore that made Israel a scourge to Judah, made Assyria a scorpion to Israel; as is here set forth under the type of Hosea's two last children, Loruhamah and Loammi; whereof in their place, Meanwhile this prophet went through variety of conditions under so many different kings' reigns (as did likewise Athanasius and Latimer), Jeroboam's (especially), the second of that name, and here only named, when six other kings of Israel (in whose time Hosea prophesied) are not once mentioned, but lie wrapt up in the sheet of shame, because wicked idolaters, such as God took no delight in, and hath therefore written them in the earth.

And in the days of Jeroboam, the son of Joash. Not the son of Nebat, that ringleader of the ten tribes' revolt from the house of David; but another, little better, and yet very prosperous and victorious, **2 Kings 14:25, 28**. He reigned also forty-one years, and did great exploits: yet is Hosea sent to contest with him, to declaim against his sin and wickedness, and to proclaim heavy judgments against him and his people. This the prophet did for a long while together with all fidelity and fortitude; when the king was triumphing over his enemies, and the people were not only drunk, but even mad again, by reason of their extraordinary prosperity (*non tantum temulenti erant sed etiam prorsus insani*), as Calvin expresseth it. Now that so young a prophet should so sharply contend with so fierce a people, in the ruff of their pride and jollity; that he should so rouse and ripple up these drunkards of Ephraim with their crown of pride, **Isaiah 28:1**; this shows him to have been of a heroic spirit. Jonah, his contemporary, flinched when sent against Nineveh. "Micah the Morasthite" (another of Hosea's contemporaries) "prophesied in the days of Hezekiah, king of Judah, and spake to all the people of Judah, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Zion shall be ploughed like a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest. Yet did not Hezekiah, king of Judah, and all Judah, put him at all to death," &c., **Jeremiah 26:18-19**. He and Hosea, though they prevailed little with the people they preached to, yet they were better dealt with than the prophet Isaiah (their contemporary too), of whom Jerome tells us, out of the Rabbis, that he was sawn asunder, because he said he had seen the Lord: and, secondly, because he called the great ones of Judah, princes of Sodom, and rulers of Gomorrah, **Isaiah 1:10**. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 2. [[@Bible:Hosea 1:2]]{{field-on:Bible}} **The beginning of the word of the Lord by Hosea.** Heb. in Hosea: to note, that the Lord was both in his mind and mouth, in his spirit and speech. God spake in him before he spake out to the people. His prophecy must therefore needs be divine and deep. That is the best discourse that is digged out of a man's own breast,

that comes *a corde ad cor*, from the heart to the heart. And blessed are the people (saith one) that have such ministers, that shall speak nothing to them but what hath been first spoken by God in them: saying, with David and Paul, "We believe, therefore have we spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak," **2 Corinthians 4:13**; we have experimented what we deliver; we believe and are sure, that God is in us of a truth, and that we preach *cum gratia et privilegio*, with grace and privilege.

The beginning. Hence some gather that Hosea was the first prophet: *Hoseas videtur tempore et maiestate aliis prior*, saith Oecolampadius. Certain it is he began before Isaiah (because he prophesied in the days of Jeroboam, who was before Uzziah); whether before Amos or not is not so certain. Eusebius tells us there was no Greek history extant before Hosea's time. ^[2] Well, therefore, might that ancient priest of Egypt say to Solon, You Grecians are all boys and babes in matters of antiquity: neither is there one old man among you (Plato in Timaeo). Samuel is counted the first prophet, **Acts 3:24**, but Hosea was the first of those that lived in these kings' days, and likely held out longest; (*See Trapp on "Hosea 1:1"*) as did father Latimer, preaching twice every sabbath day, though of a very great age; and rising to his study winter and summer at two o'clock in the morning. Others read the words thus, At the beginning when the Lord spake by Hosea, he said to Hosea himself, "Go, take unto thee," &c. An uncouth precept, and a rough beginning for a young preacher, whose youth might be despised, and whose sharpness might be disgusted. But truth must be spoken, however it be taken; and a preacher should take the same liberty to cry down sin that men take to commit sin, **Isaiah 58:1**. Jerome was called *fulmen Ecclesiasticum*, the Church thunderbolt; and our Mr Perkins applied the word so close to the consciences of his hearers, that he was able to make their hearts fall down and their hairs almost to stand upright (Mr Puller's Holy State). But in old age he was more mild, and delighted much to preach mercy; as did also our prophet Hosea, whose prophecy is comminatory in the fore part, consolatory in the latter part.

And the Lord said to Hosea. This is now the third time inculcated for more authority' sake, which the people, so rubbed and menaced, would be apt enough to question. He therefore shows them his commission, and that he hath good ground for what he saith; that they may have no cause to cavil, but reply, as that good Dutch divine did (if God would give them a heart so to do), *Veniat, veniat, verbum Domini, et submittemus ei, sexcenta si nobis essent colla*: Let the word of the Lord come, yea, let it come, and we will submit thereunto, though we had six hundred lives to lose for so doing (Melch. Ad.).

Go take unto thee a wife of whoredoms. An arrant whore, a stinking strumpet, *scortum obsoletum*, a known and trite harlot; such as were Thais, Lais, Phryne, &c.; yea, and such a one as, after marriage with a former husband at least, went astray after other sweethearts; for so the application of the figure to the subject, **Hosea 2:2-5**, requireth it to be understood. Whereby it appears (saith Diodati) that all this was done in a vision. Others infer as much from that phrase in this verse, "The beginning of the word of the Lord in Hosea," that is (saith Polanus), appearing and speaking to him by an inward vision, as it were in an ecstasy. Besides, in the third Chapter and three first verses, the prophet is bidden to marry another harlot, to buy her for his own use, and to keep her at his house for a time. Now, *scimus hoc non fuisse completum*, saith Calvin; we know that this was never really done. It follows therefore that this figure was only proposed to the people, that they might perceive, in the looking glass of this allegory, first, their duty towards God; second, their disloyalty; thirdly, their penalty for the same. It is not a historical narration, but a prophetic vision. "Children of fornication, a bastardly brood," such as this "evil and adulterous generation" is; sons of the "rebellious whorish woman, children of transgression, a seed of falsehood," **Isaiah 57:4**. The *Hebrews* call such children brambles, such as Abimelech was, who grew in the hedgerow of a harlot: they

² De Praep. Evang. l. 20, c. ult.

call them also *Mamzer*, as ye would say, a strange blot; and *Shatuki*, or silent, because when others are praising their parents, such must hold their peace, and hold down their heads with shame enough, because they are bastards.

For the land hath committed great whoredoms. *Fornicando fornicata est, i.e. frequentissime et fiedissime*, most frequently and most filthily. See **Ezekiel 23:2-4**, throughout. Aholah (that is, Israel) played the harlot when she was mine, **Ezekiel 23:5**, In her youth they lay with her, **Ezekiel 23:8**, so that she might say, with that impudent strumpet, Quartilla, in Petronius, that she could never remember herself a virgin: yea, she grew old in her adulteries, **Ezekiel 23:43**, opened her feet to every passenger, and multiplied her whoredoms, **Ezekiel 16:25**. *Meretricis scilicet hoc est meretricissimae*. Such a common *prostibulum* prostitute is the whore of Rome, whom her followers call *piam matrem, quae gremium claudat nemini*. a pious matron who excludes no one. Joan of Naples was a saint to her. Idolatry is spiritual whoredom in many respects. It defiles the soul, God's bridal bed. It breaks the marriage knot, and discovenants. It enrageth God, who in this case will take no ransom. It subjecteth men to God's deepest displeasure: it besots them and unmans them: they that make idols are "like unto them, so are all they that trust in them," **Psalms 115:8**.

Lastly, idolatry is seldom without adultery, in a proper sense; as appears in the old heathens, at their feasts of Priapus, Lupercalia, &c., the Canaanites had filled the land from one end to another with their uncleanness, **Ezra 9:11**; and in the Papists today, who reckon fornication a venial sin, have their stewes allowed them; yea, among the very Indians, who abhor their most loathsome living. And for Rome itself—*tota est iam Roma lupanar*, it is become a great brothel house, and her stench is come up to heaven, as Matthew Paris (one of her sons) long since said.

Departing from the Lord. In whom all amiables and admirables are concentred. This did exceedingly aggravate the unkindness. **{{field-off:Bible}}**

Verse 3. **[[@Bible:Hosea 1:3]]{{field-on:Bible}}****So he went.** He said not, "This is a hard saying, who can hear it?" **John 6:60**. *Dura mihi praecipit, et paene terret*. He doth not reason but run, dispute but despatch. God must be obeyed, though we see no sense for it.

And took Gomer. which signifieth both consummation and consumption, to show that she was *consummata meretrix*, a complete whore, had all the tricks of a whore; and brings her paramours to final consumption, utter extermination.

The daughter of Diblaim. Not *quasi de Belaim*, a place so called, as Hugo dreameth: though there was a wilderness of this name, whereto some think the prophet here alludeth, to show the Church's wretched beginning in its own nature: as **Solomon's Song 3:6; Ezekiel 16:7**. But Diblaim is by some taken for Gomer's father: by more, for her mother, which is also held to be a harlot, according to that, **Ezekiel 16:44**, "As is the mother, so is the daughter." Diblaim signifieth bunches of dried figs, that were the delicacies of those times. Gluttony is the gallery that lechery walketh through. *Sine Cerere et Libero friget Venus*. Concupiscence (as Plato saith) hath the lowest places, and is *alligata ventri*, as one would tie a horse or an ass to the manger. **Jeremiah 5:8**; not unfitly compareth sensualists to fed horses, neighing after their neighbours' wives. Saturity breeds security, which is the sure forerunner of destruction. *Est ergo hic gnome*, saith a Lapide, *i.e.* Here we have, then, an elegant sentence, Gomer is the daughter of Diblaim, that is, rottenness of sensuality: for as the worm that grows in the fruit, devoureth it; so doth grief, the pleasure of sin. This observation we have from the Cabalists.

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Verse 4. **[[@Bible:Hosea 1:4]]{{field-on:Bible}}****Call his name Jezreel.** For the honourable name of Israel is too good for this people; call them therefore Jezreel, a people devoted to

dispersion, and such as I will scatter into the four winds of heaven, as the seedsman scattereth his seed (רָעַר *spargere* to scatter). Thus Jeconiah is called Coniah (for a judgment upon him): Bethel, Bethaven; Har, Hammischa, the mount Olivet, or of unction, *Har Hammaschith*, the mount of corruption, **2 Kings 23:13**. And this is not unusual among men; so when they would disgrace a man, to clip or play upon his name: as when they spitefully called Athanasius, Sathanasius; Cyprian, Coprian (as if all his excellent works were but dung); Calvin, Cain, &c. This people, saith God here, are more like Ahab than Jacob. Call them therefore Jezreel (Ahab's court), that is, a den of thieves and murderers, where innocent Naboth cannot be master of the vineyard that he was born to. Micah (who prophesied also much about these times) hath a saying much to the same purpose, **Micah 2:7**: "O thou that art named the house of Jacob, is the spirit of the Lord straitened? are these his doings?" *q.d.* Ye that boast of Jacob to be your father, do you tread in his steps? are ye of his spirit, of his practice? was there such vile profaneness found in him as is openly found in you? David describeth the generation of such as "seek God, as seek his face," and then subjoineth, "this is Jacob," these are Israelites indeed, these are Jews inwardly, **Psalms 24:6**: and all others are degenerate plants, and are the worse for their outward privileges: since "tribulation and anguish shall be upon every soul of man that doeth evil, but of the Jew first, and then also of the Gentile," **Romans 2:9**.

For yet a little while. And yet this little was a long while, through God's gracious forbearance. As bad as this people were, they should not perish without warning; yea, though the Lord foreknew they would make no good use of it. Φιλεῖ ὁ Θεὸς προσημαίνειν, saith the heathen historian Herodotus: God loves to forewarn, and premonish. But there is nothing more dangerous and dismal than these still revenges; as when God suddenly brake out in wrath upon Nadab and Abihu, upon Nebuchadnezzar, Herod, Pharaoh at the Red Sea, when he would not beware. It is a just both desert and presage of ruin, not to be warned. See this in Nineveh, spared at first, but after a little while revolting, soundly paid for the new and old faults, **Nahum 3:19**. *Non consurget iterum afflictio*, saith the same prophet. (**Nahum 1:9**) Affliction shall not rise up the second time: God will not make two doings of it: but when he begins, he will also make an end, **1 Samuel 3:12**, that is, as sure as he begins, so sure will he make an end: and though it may be some time ere he begin, yet a little while (for he is slow to wrath and of great kindness), yet assuredly he will "avenge the blood of Jezreel," *i.e.* the executions done by Jehu upon the house of Ahab, as so many murders: see **1 Kings 16:7**; **2 Kings 9:24, 31; 10:11, 17**; This God did not presently, but that is nothing. *Nullum tempus occurrit Regi, nedum Deo*. He is slow, but sure, *Et tarditatem supplicii gravitate compensat*, as the heathen (Val. Max.) could say, the longer he holds, the harder he strikes: and visits Jehu's house for past sins, that they made little reckoning of. Sin may sleep a long time, like a sleeping debt, not called for of many years: as Saul's sin in slaying the Gibeonites, not punished till forty years later: as Joab's killing of Abner slept all David's days: as Amalec perished, for their ill usage of Israel, many hundred years after. It is ill angering the Ancient of Days. He that saith, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay it," takes his own time for the doing of it: and who shall prescribe to him? It is dangerous offending him whose displeasure is everlasting. Vapours, that ascend invisibly, come down again in storms and showers. A sinner of a hundred years shall be accursed, and made to possess the sins of his youth. It is not the last sand that exhausts the hour glass, nor the last stroke that fells the oak. Jehu's house is visited, and his progeny extinguished in the fourth generation, for Jehu's offences. God's work must be done truly, that there be no halting, and totally, that there be no halving. But Jehu, as he had not that true heart spoken of by the apostle, **Hebrews 10:22**, but was double minded, **James 1:8, 4:8**; (like that mad Neapolitan that said he had two hearts, one for God, and another for him that would); so he fulfilled not after God, or he followed not God fully, as Caleb did, **Numbers 14:24**; he did not all God's will, as David, **Acts 13:22**; he served him not with a perfect heart, as Asa, **2 Chronicles 15:17**. He reformed the State, but not the Church; or if he did something toward it, yet he was not thorough in it. He had a dispensatory conscience: for though he

rooted out Baal's worship, yet the golden calves must continue; piety must give place to policy. It was a just complaint of *Chemnitius*, *Principes regionem potius quam religionem quaerunt: pauperes panem potius quam Christum*. All men seek their own, but not the things of Jesus Christ, **Philippians 2:21**. And yet piety hath ever proved to be the best policy: and the very philosopher in his *Politics* gives this golden rule: *πρῶτον περὶ θεῶν ἐπιμελεῖ*, (Arist. Pol. l. 7. c. 8.), first take care of divine things. Jehu seemed at first to be as zealous a reformer as Jehoshaphat: but though his fleece was fair, his liver was rotten. *In parabola ovis capras suas quaerebat*; he was like the eagle which soareth aloft, not for any love of heaven: her eye is, all the while, upon the prey; which by this means she spies sooner, and seizeth upon better. He seems to have been of Machiavel's mind, viz. that virtue itself should not be sought after, but only the appearance: because the credit is a help, the use a cumber. Finally, of Jehu it may be said, as Marcellinus saith of Julian, that by his hypocrisy and double dealing, *Obnubilabat gloriae multiplices cursus*, he stained his many praise worthy practices. Or as Camden saith of King Henry VIII, *Fuerunt quidem in eo rege, confuso quodam temperamento mixta*. There were in that king great virtues, and no less vices mingled, or rather jumbled together. Or lastly, as Fellers Galeazo reporteth of Sforza, Duke of Milan, that he was a very monster, made up and compact of virtue and vice. See more **Hosea 1:5**.

And I will cause to cease the kingdom. This happened after 76; years, which God counts and calls here but a little while. A thousand years with him are but as one day. What is our life but a spot of time between two eternities? "It is even a vapour," saith St James, (**James 4:14**) "that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." "Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us (and a door now opened) of entering into God's rest, any of us should seem to come short," or to come lag, and late, **Hebrews 4:1**, as did Esau, the foolish virgins, those that come a day after the fair, an hour after the feast. Agree with your adversary quickly, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel, *Currat paenitentia, ne praecurrat sententia*: Repent a day before death (and that may be this day before the next), make God's judgments present in conceit, ere they come in the event; prevision is the likeliest way of prevention, the surest means of mitigation: whereas coming on the sudden, they find weak minds secure, make them miserable, leave them desperate. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 5. [[@Bible:Hosea 1:5]]{{field-on:Bible}} **I will break the bow of Israel.** Though it may seem to have a back of steel, and though it be drawn by Jehu himself, with his full strength, as once against Jehoram, to the piercing of his heart, **2 Kings 9:24**. He means, God will blast all the power of their ammunition, defeat their likeliest projects and practices, and make the strongest sinew in the arm of flesh to crack. "He breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder," &c., **Psalms 46:9**. He rendereth the weapons vain, or successful, **Isaiah 54:17**; **Jeremiah 50:9**, as he did when the rats and mice were sent into Sennacherib's army in great abundance, to gnaw and devour their quivers, bow strings, belts, bridles, shields (as Herodotus relates), to show that the shields of the earth belong to the Lord, that the militia of the world is his, that he orders the ammunition, **Jeremiah 50:25**. And the like was done by this Lord of hosts, or armies, when the wind and weather fought for Theodosius, in that famous battle against the tyrant Maximus, celebrated by Claudian (Aug. de Cir. Dei, 1. 5). As also when the Spanish Armada was defeated and discomfited by the English in 1588. That was very remarkable, and for our purpose apposite, which occurred in the battle between Edward III of England and Philip of France. Philip, enraged with a defeat, resolves presently to revenge it; and hardly had patience to stay in Abbeville one day, while the bridge to pass over his army was being repaired. And with this precipitation and fury, into the field he marcheth, elevated with an assured hope of triumphant victory. But it happened otherwise; for there fell at the instant of the battle a piercing shower of rain, which dissolved their strings, and made their bows useless.

In the valley of Jezreel. A city near to Maximinianopolis, saith Jerome. Of the valley wherein

this city was situated, see **Joshua 17:16; Judges 6:33**. It was in the tribe of Manasseh, and bordered upon Issachar, **Joshua 19:18**. It was ten miles long, and two miles over; being called also the plain of Galilee, and was fit for a fight, for a pitched battle. Here it was, saith Adrichomius, that Gideon fought the Midianites, **Judges 6:7**, Saul the Philistines, **1 Samuel 31:1-3**, Ahab the Syrians, **1 Kings 20:21, 29**. And here Zechariah (the last of Jehu's line) was slain, and with him the kingdom of Israel received such a wound, that it could never rise again. Monarchies have their times and their turns, their rise and their ruin. Junius renders it *Propter Vallem Iericho*, I will break the bow of Israel, because of the wall of Jezreel: that is, saith he, because of the slaughter of Ahab's house there made by Jehu, **2 Kings 10:1-8**. Jehu's tent in that execution was rewarded as an act of justice, *quoad substantiam operis*, and yet punished as an act of policy, *quoad modum*, for the perverse end. *Finibus non officiis a vitiis discernuntur virtutes*, saith Augustine: By the ends, and not by the works done, are virtues distinguished from vices. Two things make a good Christian, and declare him so,—good actions and good aims. And although a good aim doth not make a bad action good (as in Uzziah), yet a bad aim makes a good action bad, as here in Jehu. There may be then, we see, *malum opus in bona materia*, a work materially good, which yet may never prove so formally and eventually: sc. when there is a fail either *quoad fontem*, or *quoad finem*. A thing which I see in the night may shine; and that shining proceed from nothing but rottenness. Blazing comets (though but comets), as long as they keep aloft, shine bright. But when they begin to decline from their pitch, they fall to the earth, and infect the air. So when Illuminates forsake the Lord, and mind only earthly things, being all for self, they lose their light, and go out in a snuff. Jehu's golden calves made an end of him and his, though he made an end of Ahab's house and Baal's worship. His rooting out of Ahab's race was but to settle the crown better upon his own head. Like unto him was our Richard III, who well knowing (saith the historian) it was no policy to play the villain by half, is resolved to leave never a rub to lie in the way, that might hinder the true running of his bowl. Like unto him also (saith Master Calvin upon this text) was our King Henry VIII, who cast off some degree of Popery, so far as would serve his own turn: but there were the six articles in force (that whip with six cords, as that martyr called it) for which many suffered at that time. And whereas (like Sulla) he commanded others, under great penalties, to be no Papists, himself was either Papist or atheist, jeering at some for their old *Mumpsimus*,⁽³⁾ and at others for their new *Sumpsimus*,⁽⁴⁾ as he profanely called the Reformation: hanging Papists on the one side of the hedge for denying his supremacy, and burning Protestants on the other side thereof for denying transubstantiation, &c. And hence, it may be thought, is that dreadful and dismal ruin that is now (in these our days, and in the fourth generation or succession) befallen the royal family. The house of Jehu fareth the worse for Jehu. Offa, king of East Saxons, lived in the time of Charles the Great, and was a potent prince. But the many injuries he did, and the murder he committed in his house upon Ethelbert, king of East Angles, coming to him under a public faith, and a suitor to his daughter, were justly revenged upon his posterity, which, after him, declining, in the end lost all. But to return to Jehu: we shall find, **2 Kings 10:30**, that God said, that because Jehu had shed the blood of Ahab in Jezreel, that he would reward him for it: and that his children to the fourth generation should sit upon the throne of Israel, and govern that kingdom. And yet, for miscarriage in the manner, justly plagueth his posterity. As Xerxes crowned his steersman in the morning, and yet hanged him in the afternoon of the same day. And as Mareschal de Thermas, the French general, first knighted a French soldier in Scotland who first mounted a besieged fort (by that means taken), and then hanged him within an hour after, for doing it without order.{{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 6. [[@Bible:Hosea 1:6]]{{field-on:Bible}}**And she conceived again.** To show, in a

³ One who obstinately adheres to old ways, in spite of the clearest evidence that they are wrong; an ignorant and bigoted opponent of reform. CED

⁴ A correct expression taking the place of an incorrect but popular one (*mumpsimus*). CED

continued allegory, the weak and woeful state of the ten tribes, when the Assyrian took from them all the land of Gilead and Galilee, together with all the land of Nephthali, and carried them captive, subduing, in a manner, five tribes of Israel: to wit, those without Jordan (who as they had first their inheritance given them, so they were now first carried captives), and the tribes of Zebulon and Nephthali, who were seated in the land of Galilee. And this was the first captivity of Israel: see **2 Kings 15:29; Isaiah 9:1**.

And bare a daughter. This age is compared to a daughter, because from that time forward, after the bow of Israel was so broken, as **Hosea 1:5**, they should be no more able to defend themselves than if they were a commonwealth of women. Their spirits should be so cowed out and emasculated, their backs so bowed down with unsupportable burdens and bondages, that there was scarcely place left of a worse condition, nor hope of a better. Like them were those we read of **Isaiah 51:23**, that yielded to such as would but say to them, "Bow down that we may go over you." Or as those in Nahum, **Nahum 3:13**, Their "men shall be as women," **Ἀχηδὲς οὐκετ Ἀχαιοί**, ⁵ timorous and cowardly, like Issachar's ass, **Genesis 49:14**; (whose lot fell in Galilee, **Joshua 19:18**), or those fugitives of Ephraim, **Judges 12:4**, that therefore bare a brand of dishonour, because they would not rather die bravely than live basely. Of such it may be said, as of harts and stags, they have great horns and strength, but do nothing with them, *quia de est animus*, because their spirits are imbased: as the Israelites in Egypt were of old by Pharaoh, and as the Grecians are to this day by the Turk.

Call her name Loruhamah. When God once calls a people or a person by this name, we may well write upon their doors (if any place be yet left for prayer, any good to be done by it), Lord, have mercy upon them: their condition is deplorable, if not desperate. *Vade frater in cellam et dic, Miserere mei Deus*, Brother, go into thy cell, and say, Lord, have mercy upon me, said Crantzius to Luther, when he began to declaim against the pope, for he looked upon him as an undone man, and yet he was not (Scaltet. Annal.). But those are doubly undone, to whom God shall say, as here to Israel,

I will no more have mercy. Heb., I will add no more to show mercy: but my so often abused mercy shall turn into fury. That it is not so yet with this sinful nation, that we are not yet a Loruhamah, an Aceldama, that we are not already as Sodom, and like unto Gomorrah, even a place of nettles and salt pits, a perpetual desolation, as another prophet hath it, we may well cry out, O the depth, the fathomless depth of God's dear love to England, **Isaiah 1:9; Zephaniah 2:9**. Certain it is that we have hitherto subsisted by a miracle of his mercy, and by a prop of his extraordinary patience. Certain it is that God hath not dealt with England according to his ordinary rule, but according to his prerogative royal. England (if one may so speak with reverence) is a paradox to the Bible. God grant that being lifted up to heaven with Capernaum in the abundance of blessings, she be not brought down to hell by the abuse of them; that God set not that sad impression of Loruhamah (worse than any black Theta) upon her, and make her know the worth of his undervalued favours by the want of them: why should it be said of us as once, *Anglica gens est optima flens, et pessima ridens*? why should we provoke the Lord so long till he shall resolve upon an evil, an only evil, *i.e.* without mixture of mercy, **Ezekiel 7:5**; till the decree bring forth, **Zephaniah 2:2**, and God pronounceth that fatal sentence against us that he did once against the old world, *Fiat iustitia, ruat mundus*, Let justice be done, though the world be thereby undone. "Of all God's attributes he can least abide an abuse in his mercy; God's mercy is precious" (saith one), "and he will not let it run out to waste; he will not be prodigal of it. There is a time wherein God will say, Now I have done, I have even done with this people, mercy hath had her turn, &c. I will not always serve them for a sinning-stock, but will take another course with them: I will take my own and be gone: and woe be unto them when I depart from them." When the sun is eclipsed, all creatures

⁵ Hom. II: sic Virg. *Phrygiae, neque enim Phryges*.

fade and flag here below. "Thou hiddest thy face, Lord, and I was troubled," **Psalm 30:7**. David could not live but in the light of God's countenance: he begs for mercy everywhere, as for life. Never did poor prisoner at the bar beg harder for a psalm of mercy than he doth, **Psalm 51:1**, and other places. Neither would common mercies content him, he must have such as are proper and peculiar to God's own people, even the "sure mercies of David." Oh, make sure of mercy, whatever you go without. And the rather, because there are a race of Loruhamahs, a sort of such among men as are excluded from mercy. God is not merciful to any wicked transgressors, **Psalm 59:5**, that go on in their trespasses, **Psalm 68:21**, that allow them and wallow in them. That last letter in God's name had need to be well remembered, **Exodus 34:7**, "He will by no means clear the guilty." And that terrible text should never be forgotten by those that are obstinate in an evil course, and bless themselves when God curseth them, **Deuteronomy 29:19-20**. God's mercy goes often times in Scripture bounded by his truth: and as the same fire hath burning heat and cheerful light, so hath God plagues for the obstinate and mercy for the penitent. Surely as he is *Pater miserationum*, the Father of mercies: so he is *Deus ultionum*, the God of vengeance: as he hath *ubera*, blessings, so he hath *verbera*, whip, treasures of punishments for those, especially that kick at his bowels, that despise his longsufferance, that argue from love to liberty, which is the devil's logic. *Cavete a Melampygo*.

But I will utterly take them away. *Tollendo tollam*, so Calvin renders it: and further tells us that some render it *comburam*, I will burn them; and indeed war is fitly compared to fire, that cruel element, and to extreme famine, **Isaiah 9:19-20**. The Vulgate Latin translateth it *obliviscendo obliviscar*, I will utterly forget them, and that is punishment enough: as when one carried himself insolently toward the state of Rome, a grave senator gave this counsel, Let us forget him, and he will soon remember himself. Woe be to those to whom Christ shall say, "Verily, I know you not," I have utterly forgotten you. Mercer rendereth it, *Levabo, id est, proieciam*, I will lift them up, that I may throw them down again with the greater poise. The LXX hath, "I will set myself against them in battle array." Now "the Lord is a man of war," **Exodus 15:3**; yea, he is the Lord and Victor of wars, as the Chaldee there paraphraseth. But what meant the Chaldee here to render this text by *parcendo parcam eis*, sparing, I will spare them: is not this point blank against Loruhamah? How much better Tremellius, *ut ullo pacto condonem istis*, that I should any way forgive them. Have I not pardoned them enough already? may I not well by this time be weary of repenting? I will even break off my patience, and forbear to punish no longer: "I have long time holden my peace, I have been still and refrained myself; now will I cry like a travailing woman" (who bites in her pain as long as she is able), "I will destroy and devour at once: I will, I will," **Isaiah 42:14**; The ten tribes never returned out of captivity, unless it were some few of them that came up with the other two tribes out of Babylon, **Ezra 2:1**, by the appointment of Cyrus, and some others that fled home when Nineveh (where they were held captive) was destroyed; but for the generality of them, whether they abide in China or Tartary, or West Indies, I cannot tell you. Pareus rendereth it, *nam tolerando toleravi eos*, for I have a long while borne with their evil manners. And surely *subito tollitur, qui diu toleratur*, as an ancient saith, God's patience will not always hold. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 7. [[@Bible:Hosea 1:7]]{{field-on:Bible}} **But I will have mercy upon the house of Judah.** The ark and the mercy seat were never separated. Judah had not utterly cast off God, as Israel had; but worshipped God in the temple (how corruptly soever), therefore they shall have mercy, because they kept the right way of worship. See the Church's plea for mercy to this purpose, **Jeremiah 14:9**. Again, Judah was now in a very great strait, having been lately beaten and plundered by Israel, **2 Kings 14:12**, therefore they shall have mercy. God heard Hagar's affliction and relieved her. "I have seen, I have seen the sufferings of my people in Egypt, saith God, and am come to ease them," **Exodus 3:7**. "Because they have called thee an outcast, saying, This is Zion, whom no man looketh after, therefore I will restore health unto thee, and I

will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the Lord," **Jeremiah 30:17**. He will repent for his people when he seeth their power is gone, **Deuteronomy 32:36**, when there is *dignus vindice nodus*, an extremity fit for Divine power to interpose. He knows that mercy is never so seasonable and sweet as when misery weighs down, and nothing but mercy turns the scale; therefore Judah shall have mercy, when Israel shall have none. True it is, that Judah was not at this time much better than Israel, Aholibah than Aholah: they were scarce free from sodomy and many such like foul abominations. But what of that? if God come with a *non obstante*, as **Psalms 106:8**, "Nevertheless he saved them for his name's sake," &c., who shall gainstand him? if he will show mercy for his name's sake, what people is there so wicked whom he may not save? See **Isaiah 57:17; Ezekiel 20:8, 14, 22, 44**. Add hereunto that Israel and Syria were confederate against Judah, and thought to have made but a breakfast of them, **Isaiah 7:5**; but God here promiseth Judah mercy; and lets them know, to their comfort, that there is more mercy for them in heaven than there can be misery in earth or malice in hell against them. True it is, that even after this gracious promise made to Judah, it went very hard with them. See **2 Chronicles 28:6**, there 120, 000; of them were slain in one battle, and 200, 000; of them carried captive: yea, and all this by these Israelites here rejected from that mercy that Judah is promised; besides abundance more misery that befell them by Edomites, **2 Chronicles 28:17**, Philistines, **2 Chronicles 28:18**, Assyrians, **2 Chronicles 28:20**; &c. *Ecclesia haeres Crucis*, saith Luther, The Church, as she is heir of the promises, so is she of the cross: and the promises are always to be understood with condition of the cross. The palsy man in the Gospel, healed by our Saviour, heard, "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee," and yet he was not presently freed of his disease, till, after a dispute held with the Pharisees (which must needs take up some time) and the case cleared, Jesus said, "Arise, take up thy bed and walk," and so show thyself a sound man. But to go on: Judah shall be saved, and not Israel, that envied Judah and maliciously sought their ruin. David looketh upon it as a sweet mercy, that God had spread him a table in the presence, and maugre the malice, of his enemies, **Psalms 23:4**. And the children of the kingdom (so the Jews are called) shall gnash their teeth, and be even ready to eat their nails at the reception of the Gentiles, **Matthew 8:11**. This was that which put the men of Nazareth into an anger, and our Saviour into a danger, **Luke 4:25, 29**.

By the Lord their God. That is, by the Lord Christ, by Messiah their Prince, by the word of the Lord their God, saith the Chaldee here, that Word essential, **John 1:1**, that true Zaphnath Paaneah (that is, Saviour of the world, as Jerome interprets it), whereof Joseph was but a type. This horn of salvation, or mighty Saviour (able to save them to the uttermost, *εἰς τὸ παντελές*, that come unto God by him, **Hebrews 7:25**), God raised up for these unworthy Jews, and even thrust him upon them, whether they would or no, **Isaiah 7:13-14**, that all might appear to be of free grace. Well might God say, "I will have mercy upon the house of Judah": matchless mercy indeed! mercy that rejoiced against judgment. Man's perverseness breaketh not off the course of God's goodness; Judah shall be saved by the Lord their God, who is *Alius* from his Father, but not *Aliud*, a distinct person, not a distinct thing. This angel of God's presence saved them, in his love and in his pity he redeemed them, &c., **Isaiah 63:9**, even the angel that had redeemed their father Jacob from all evil, **Genesis 48:16**; and that, soon after this prophecy, destroyed so many thousands in Sennacherib's army, "Not by bow nor by battle," &c., but by his own bare hand immediately and miraculously, **2 Kings 19:35**; where we may see that when Sennacherib (after the example of his father Salmaneser, who had captivated the ten tribes) came up against Judah, having already devoured Jerusalem in his hopes, and thinking to cut them off at a blow, as if they had all had but one neck, they were saved by Jehovah their God: the virgin daughter of Zion knew well the worth and valour of Christ her champion, and that made her so confident, **Isaiah 37:22**. She knew whom she had trusted, not with her outward condition only, but with her inward and everlasting, with her precious soul, saying with David, "I am thine, save me; for I have sought thy precepts," **Psalms 119:94**. "I will not trust in my bow, neither shall mine arm save me: but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the

light of thy countenance, for thou hast a favour unto me," *Psalm 44:3, 5.* (See Trapp on "Zechariah 4:6") (See Trapp on "Zechariah 14:3") (See Trapp on "Zechariah 14:5") That is an excellent passage, *Psalm 21:13*, "Be thou exalted, O Lord, in thine own strength: so will we sing and praise thy power." {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 8. [[@Bible:Hosea 1:8]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Now when she had weaned Loruhamah.**

That is, after that the patience of God had waited and long looked for their conversion; but all in vain, he resolved upon their utter rejection. And first he sent for his love tokens back again: he weans them and takes them off from those "breasts of consolation," *Isaiah 66:11*, the holy ordinances, deprived them of those dugs (better than wine, *Solomon's Song 1:4*) that they had despised, carried them far away from that good land that abounded with milk and honey: the men of the East should be sent in upon them "to eat their fruit and drink their milk,"

Ezekiel 25:4. "This nation" (saith a divine) "is sick with a spiritual pleurisy: we begin to surfeit on the bread of life, the unadulterated milk of God's word, and to spill it. Now when God seeth his mercies lying under the table, it is just with him to call to the enemy to take away." Say not here, with those in the Gospel threatened with this judgment, "God forbid," *Luke 20:16*. Think it not a thing impossible that England should be thus visited. The sea is not so calm in summer, but it may be troubled with a storm: the mountain so firm, but may be moved with an earthquake. We have seen as fair suns as ours fall from the midst of heaven, for our instance, *Lege historiam, ne fias historia*. Read history lest you become history! Surely, except we repent and reform a little better than we have done yet, a removal of our candlestick, a total eclipse of our sun, may be as certainly foreseen and foretold, as if visions and letters were sent us from heaven, as once to the seven Churches of Asia, who sinned away their light, &c.

And bare a son. Not a daughter, as before, but a son, because under Hosea, the last king of Israel, that kingdom began a little to lift up the head, and to stand it out against the Assyrian. But this was but *extremus nisus regni*, the last sprunting of that dying state. For soon after, Samaria, the chief city, was closely besieged: and although it held out three whole years, with a masculine resolution, yet at length it was sacked, and all the people of the land carried captive, young and old, naked and barefoot, even with their buttocks uncovered, &c., as it is said of their confederates the Egyptians, *Isaiah 20:4*, and as it shall be done at length to that purple whore of Rome, who shall be stripped naked, broiled, and eaten, *Revelation 17:16*. A cold sweat stands already upon her limbs: and, for a presage of her future ruin, it is observed that Rome, since it became Papal, was never besieged by any but it was taken. As for their late masculine attempts and achievements (if any), it is but as here in the kingdom of Israel, a lightning before death, as the blaze of a candle a little before it goes out, the bulging of a wall that is ready to come down, or as it was said of Carthage a little before it was taken, *Morientium bestiarum violentiores esse morsus*, dying beasts bite cruelly. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 9. [[@Bible:Hosea 1:9]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Call his name Loammi.** *Nomen extremum et deploratum*, saith Pareus, the last and most lamentable name of all, containing a most heavy, but spiritual, and therefore less sensible, punishment, viz. an utter abjection and abdication from the covenant, from grace, from God, from life eternal.

For ye are not my people. But, being totally cashiered, and discovenanted; "Are ye not as the children of the Ethiopians unto me, O children of Israel, saith the Lord? Have not I brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir?"

Amos 9:7: q.d. True it is, I have brought you up out of Egypt (and therein you greatly glory), but have I not done as much as all this for those profane nations here mentioned? with and among whom, hence forward I shall reckon you, for you are no people of mine, but discarded, and dispeopled. Till the covenant made with Abraham, all nations were suffered to walk in their own ways, *Acts 14:16*, as fishes pass at liberty through the paths of the seas, *Psalm 8:8*. One person was no more respected than another. But as soon as it was said, I will be thy God,

and the God of thy seed after thee, the Church became as fish cast into a pond for peculiar use, and was divided from other nations no otherwise than light was from darkness in the first creation, or than Goshen was from Egypt in that wonderful separation. But here God seems to rescind his own act, to cast off the people of his purchase, and utterly to disown them; as once before he also did, when he fathered them upon Moses, saying, "Thy people, which thou hast brought out of Egypt," &c., **Exodus 32:7**. But this (we must know) is no other than *mutatio rei non Dei, effectus non affectus, facti non consilii*, not a change of God's will, but only of his works. "For hath God indeed cast away his people? God forbid. God hath not cast away his people, whom he foreknew," **Romans 11:1, 2**. "Thus saith the Lord God, If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel, for all that they have done, saith the Lord," **Jeremiah 31:37**. And albeit (by an angry aposiopesis) he says here, "I will not be your God" (the word "God" is not in the original, *ab irate omittitur*, it is omitted from anger, saith Mercer), yet to show that he is Baal Chemah, One that can rule his wrath, as **Nahum 1:2**, he subjoineth here, **Hosea 1:10**, {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 10. [[@Bible:Hosea 1:10]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Yet the number of the children of Israel.** *i.e.* of the Israel of God, those Jews inwardly, the circumcision indeed, which "worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, putting no confidence in the flesh," **Philippians 3:3**, but saying each for himself, as the good Father Bernard did, *Horreo quicquid de meo est, ut sim meus*; All my care is "to be found in Christ" (*sc.* when sought for by the justice of God), "not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith," **Philippians 3:9**. Lo, to such Israelites indeed, and of such, it is here promised (the Lord in judgment remembering mercy) that they shall be "the sand of the sea which cannot be measured nor numbered." This was first promised to Abraham; and afterwards confirmed with an oath, **Genesis 22:16**. It began to be fulfilled, when, by the preaching of the apostles, so many of both Jews and Gentiles came in and were converted to the faith of the true Messiah, as St Paul expoundeth this text, **Romans 9:24-25**, and he had "the mind of Christ." It shall have its full accomplishment when the fulness of the Gentiles shall come in, and all Israel shall be saved, **Romans 11:26**. Then the Church shall be as the stone that smote the image, it shall become a great mountain, and fill the whole earth. Though the beginning of it be small, yet the latter end of it shall greatly increase, **Job 8:7**, for all the earth shall be filled with the glory of Christ: "he shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth," **Psalms 72:8, 11, 17**. Great is the paucity of God's people for present: but let us, by the help of this promise, get above that stumbling block. Cosmographers tell us that if we divide all the known world into thirty parts, the heathens' part is as nineteen of this thirty; the Mahometans as six, the Christians as five only: and of those five more than the one-half is held by idolatrous Papists. But let not this discourage us; it will be otherwise one day, for the "Scripture cannot be broken." And although God may seem utterly to have abandoned his ancient people the Jews (the ten tribes especially), yet they, as well as the rest, shall be vouchsafed this honour to be called to the participation of Christ, **Ezekiel 37:16, 19; Jeremiah 3:12-13; Isaiah 11:12-13; Obadiah 1:20; Zechariah 10:6; Romans 11:26**. If God after so dreadful a threatening come in with his *non obstante* (as he doth likewise, **Psalms 106:8**, and elsewhere) and say, Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be, &c., who shall gainsay him? Their interpretation is too narrow that understand this text of the increase of this people in all their dispersions, until the time of their conversion. And that of Rabbi Ezra is pretty, though not proper; that as the sand keeps the waves of the sea from breaking in and drowning the world, so doth Israel preserve mankind from perishing by the waves of God's wrath. It should have been considered by him and the rest of those refractory Rabbis, that at that general conversion of the Jews (here plainly foretold) there shall be some stubborn spirits that will not even then stoop to Christ; but will be filled with envy, as those cankered Pharisees their forefathers were (**Acts 13:44-45**) to see almost the whole city come together to hear Christ; yea, they will be ready to

say, as **John 12:19**, "Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the whole world follows him." Now against these spiritual spirits, the wrath of God shall be revealed from heaven, **Revelation 21:8; Daniel 12:2; Isaiah 65:11-17**.

And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them. As if God did now even repent, and would make them a full amends: make them glad according to the time, and in that very place when and where they had seen evil, **Psalms 90:15**. Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in Jerusalem, **Zechariah 12:6**. The Jews (it is thought) shall dwell in their own country, **Jeremiah 3:18; 23:8; Ezekiel 37:11-12; Amos 9:14-15**; and God have a very glorious Church in the land of Canaan. But that is not all; the Gentiles, who shall be made a spiritual Israel, though in time past they were not a people, yet now are they the people of God; and which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy, **1 Peter 2:10**, yea, such a signal mercy as St John cannot look on without an *Ecce admirantis*;" Behold," saith he, "what manner of love" (*qualem et quantum*, as **2 Peter 3:11**) "the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God," **1 John 3:1**. Yes, the sons of *the living God* who as he lives, so he gives us all things richly to enjoy; and is therefore to be trusted, **1 Timothy 6:17**. And that we should not only be God's people, but his sons (reconciled, but adopted), and not only be so, but be called so, have the name and the note, the credit and the comfort. Well might the apostle say, that the grace of God herein had abounded even to an overflow, **ὑπερεπλήονασε, 1 Timothy 1:14**. Well may Oecolampadius say as he doth upon this very text, *Vide ut maior gratia quam peccatum*, See that greater grace than sin. Behold, how as sin abounded, grace superabounded. Well might Leo say, *Omnia dona excedit hoc donum, &c.*, This is a gift of God, that exceedeth all gifts, that man should call God Father, and God call a man his son; this is a greater dignity than to be called an angel, archangel, cherubim, seraphim, &c. See more of this in my "Righteous Man's Recompense," Part 2, doct. 5. Calvin upon this verse noteth, that there is an emphasis in these words, "It was said," and "It shall be said"; the latter sheweth that till the Lord speak peace to his people, and say to their souls that he is their salvation, they cannot have the comfortable assurance of their adoption and acceptation into his favour: **Ephesians 1:13**, "After that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; ye believed and were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise." Again, if God by his prophets had said to any, "Ye are not my people," &c., he will effect it. God heweth men by his prophets, and slayeth them by the words of his mouth, **Hosea 6:5**. Elisha hath his sword, as well as Jehu and Hazael, **1 Kings 19:17**. Ezekiel besiegeth Jerusalem, and overthroweth it. Jeremiah is "set over nations and kingdoms to root out and pull down," &c., **Jeremiah 1:10**. St Paul hath "vengeance ready for the disobedient," **2 Corinthians 10:6**. And what God's ministers do on earth he ratifies in heaven, **Matthew 16:19; 18:18**. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 11. [[@Bible:Hosea 1:11]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together.** *i.e.* they shall unite into one body, and one religion, and shall all make one entire kingdom, **Ezekiel 37:22, 24**. Christ once lifted up, shall draw all things to himself, **John 12:32**: and wherever this carcase is, there will the spiritual eagles be also, **Matthew 24:28**. Caiaphas, like another Balaam, prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation: and not for that nation only, but that also he "should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad," **John 11:51-52**. This is the gathering together here mentioned: Christ shall be one among his people, and his name one, **Zechariah 14:9**. (*See Trapp on "Zechariah 14:9"*) They shall serve the Lord with one shoulder, **Zephaniah 3:9**. It seems to be a metaphor taken from oxen that are yoked together, and that set their shoulders jointly to the work. Surely, the more the gospel prevaieth, the more peace there will be. They shall be gathered together in that day. So when Christ shall be preached, and obedience yielded to his government, **Isaiah 9:7**, then shall there be a blessed harmony of hearts: then shall they fly in flocks to the ordinances, as the doves to their windows: then shall they come to the Lord's house upon "horses, and in chariots, and in litters," **Isaiah 66:20**.

And appoint themselves one head. The Lord Christ, called David their King, *Hosea 3:5*. A multitude gathered under this one head, and united to him, is a Church. This head is indeed appointed, and set up over the Church by God, *Psalms 2:6; Ephesians 1:22*. But the saints are said to appoint Christ their head, and, indeed, to set the crown upon his head, as *Solomon's Song 3:11*, when they choose him and embrace him for their sovereign, when with highest estimations, most vigorous affections, and utmost endeavours of unfeigned obedience, they set him up in their hearts, and serve him in their lives; giving him the preeminence, and holding all *in capite* in Christ: yea, holding of the head, as the apostle's expression is, *Colossians 2:19*, not of Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas. That popish buzzard was utterly out, who said that he had found in the dictionaries that Cephas signifieth a head, and that therefore Peter was head of the Church. For neither does Cephas signify a head, but a stone or rock; nor, if it did, would that prove what he allegeth it for. Judah and Israel shall appoint to themselves one head, not more than one. The Church is not *bellua multorum capitum*: neither is there any need of a ministerial head of the Church: indeed, there is a contradiction in the very mention of it (as one well observeth),—a ministerial head! it is absurd to speak it.

And they shall come up out of the land. *i.e.* they shall be gathered into the heavenly Jerusalem, saith Oecolampadius; they shall come up from their miserable life, saith Luther: from their earthly affections, saith Jerome. Rather, from Chaldea, or wherever they lie captivated and dispersed, to Jerusalem; there to join in the same way of worship (as once the 12 tribes did before the schism under Jeroboam) with the Christian Church, and so go on the way to the kingdom of heaven.

For great is the day of Jezreel. *i.e.* of Christ (saith Jerome), who is God's seed, and shall see his seed, and so prolong his days by a succession of saints, *Isaiah 53:10*, for whom God also will do great things in that day of his power, *Psalms 100:3*, when there shall be a marvellous increase of his Church, which he shall sow with the seed of men and of beasts, revealing his arm (another etymology of the word Jezreel) for the ingathering of his elect, *Jeremiah 31:37; Ezekiel 36:38*. *Sic, Octogesimus octavus mirabilis annus.* {{field-off:Bible}}

Chapter 2

Verse 1. [[@Bible:Hosea 2:1]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Say unto your brethren, Ammi.** Besides the public preaching of this gracious promise, **Hosea 1:10**, "There it shall be said unto them," &c., charge is here given that this be the subject of their more private discourse also: and that they that fear the Lord speak often one to another; We that were not a people, are now a people: we that had not obtained mercy, have now obtained mercy. *lubet per prophetam ne haec vox in ecclesia taceatur* (Mercer). God commands by the prophet that these sweet words, Ammi, Ruhamah, be tossed and spoken of at every friendly meeting; I will not leave you fatherless: in me the fatherless findeth mercy: I will never leave thee, I will not, not, not forsake thee (οὐδέ, οὐ μὴ, **Hebrews 13:5**): so many "nots" there are in the original for more assurance. God would have such precious passages as these to be rehearsed (even in the "places of drawing water," **Judges 5:11**, where the maids met to fetch water, or do other ordinary chares) for mutual encouragement, and for the praise of his name. Oh, the matchless mercy of our God! Oh, the never enough adored depth of his free grace! who would not fear thee, O King of nations! **Jeremiah 10:7**; who would not be telling of thy goodness in the morning, and of thy faithfulness every night? Read that triumphant **Psalms 114**, and be you ever chanting out (as they of old at their daily employments), *aliquid Davidicum*; so building up one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual Songs. Think but on these two words in the text, and you cannot want matter. Is it nothing to be in covenant with God, and to be under mercy? Oh, blessed are the people "that have the Lord for their God," saith David, **Psalms 144:15**. "But I obtained mercy," saith Paul, **1 Timothy 1:16**, and that was his *μεγαλαύχημα*, his confident boasting, wherever he came, being a constant preacher of God's free grace: (as was likewise Augustine, which makes him hardly censured by the Semipelagian Papists and Arminians as an enemy to nature, because so high a friend to grace). Neither is he forgetful to tell his Ephesians and others to whom he writeth, that they were once dead in sins and trespasses, but now "quickened together with Christ," &c. They were foreigners, but now fellow citizens with saints: they were darkness, but now light in the Lord, and should therefore "walk as children of light," **Ephesians 5:8**, and talk of his praises, who had drawn them out of dreadful darkness into marvellous light. Come, saith David, and I will tell you what God hath done for my soul, **Psalms 66:16**. The Lord hath done great things for us, saith the Church, whereat we are glad, **Psalms 126:3**. He which is mighty hath done to me great things: and holy is his name, saith the blessed Virgin, **Luke 1:49**. Say ye unto your brethren, Ammi, and to your sisters, Ruhamah. Say it, say it, to brethren and to sisters, upon every opportunity, and with the utmost importunity, that it may take impression upon their spirits, and not be as a seal set upon the water, nor as rain falling upon a rock that leaves no sign behind it. The Grecians being delivered out of servitude by Flaminius, the Roman general, rang out Soter, Soter, that is, Saviour, Saviour, with such a courage, that the very birds of the air, astonished thereat, fell to the earth. The people of Israel gave such a loud shout at the return of the ark, that the earth rang again. A drowning man, being pulled out of the water by Alphonsus, king of Aragon, and rescued from so great a death, cried out (as soon as he came again to himself) by way of thankfulness, Aragon, Aragon. Let us cry as loud Ammi, Ruhamah, hitherto God hath helped us, **1 Samuel 7:12**, who were lately (with those Israelites in the wilderness) talking of our graves. Say therefore with the Psalmist, "Because thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, my feet from falling, I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living," &c., **Psalms 116:8**. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 2. [[@Bible:Hosea 2:2]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Plead with your mother, plead.** Here of right begins the second Chapter (the former verse being not so fitly separated from the former chapter), and it is nothing else but a commentary upon the first, as Pareus well noteth. For the prophet here proceedeth in accusing the people of disloyalty and ingratitude: whereupon he denounceth a divorce and punishment: and then foretelleth their repentance and return into

favour with God under the kingdom of the Messiah. Now the end wherefore both the accusation and the promise is here reiterated, is not so much to confirm what had been before affirmed, as to set forth the means whereby this cast off people was to be at length added unto the Church: viz. partly by external means (as sharp sermons and sore afflictions), and partly by the internal grace of the Spirit of God, and good affiance of his love sealed up to them, by various spiritual and temporal favours conferred upon them; as so many love tokens. Come we now to the words of this verse; where Oecolampadius begins the chapter: *Plead with our mother, plead* It is *verbum forense*, saith Mercer; an expression borrowed from pleaders at the bar: *q.d.* Be in good earnest with her, rebuke her roundly and openly, according to the nature of her offence: that she may be sound in the faith, and ashamed of her perfidiousness. What though she be your mother, and in that respect to be honoured by you, yet she is a perverse rebellious woman, as Saul once said of his son Jonathan's mother, **1 Samuel 20:30**; (how truly I inquire not: malice little regards truth, so it may gall or kill), and therefore to be barely and boldly told her own. Besides, we cannot better show our respect to parents than by seeking their souls' health, and by dealing fairly but freely with them therein. Not as Walter Mapes (sometime Archdeacon of Oxford) did by his mother Church of Rome: for relating the gross simony ⁶ of the Pope in confirming the election of Reginald, bastard son of Jocelin, Bishop of Sarum, into the see of Bath, he thus concludes his narration, *Sit tamen Domina materque nostra Roma baculus in aqua fractus: et absit credere quae vidimus*: yet let our lady and mother Rome be as a stick put into the water, which seems to be broken, but is not so: and far be it from us to believe our own eyes against her. Was this charity? or stupidity rather? Charity may be ingenuous, but not servile and blockish. It is not love, but hatred (if Moses may judge), to suffer sin in a dearest friend to pass uncontrolled, **Leviticus 19:17**. Good Asa deposed his own mother for her idolatry: and our Edward VI would not be drawn by any persuasion of friends or fear of enemies, to indulge his sister, the Lady Mary, to have mass said in her house. The truth is, those Ammis and Ruhamahs that have found mercy from God, they have their hearts so fired up thereby with a holy zeal for him, that they cannot endure to see him dishonoured, but must appear and plead for him against any in the world. Again, as any one is more assured of his own salvation by Christ, the more he thirsteth after the salvation of others; as we see evidently in St Paul, that vessel of mercy. I am persuaded, saith he, or I am sure, that neither life nor death, &c., shall ever separate me from God's love in Christ. And what follows in the very next words, but this, "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also hearing me witness in the Holy Ghost; that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ, for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites," &c., **Romans 8:38-39; 9:1-4**. And how effectually and convincingly he pleadeth with them to draw them to Christ and hold them close to him, that golden Epistle to the *Hebrews* will well witness to the world's end.

For she is not my wife. For I have put her away by a bill of divorcement, **Isaiah 50:1**, with a *Habe tibi quae tua sunt* (which was the form of divorce among the Romans), Take thine own things and be gone. Now, the Jewish synagogue had nothing she could properly call her own, but sin and misery: when God first took her, she had not a rag to her back, **Ezekiel 16:10**, nor any kind of comeliness, but what he was pleased to put upon her, **Ezekiel 16:14**. But she (foolish woman and unwise, **Deuteronomy 32:6**), trusting in her borrowed beauty, played the harlot, and poured out her fornication on every one that passed by: his it was, **Ezekiel 16:15**. The synagogue of Rome is such another *meretrix meretricissima quae gremium claudit nemini*, as her own sons say of her, by way of commendation. St John calleth her the whore, the great whore, **Revelation 17:1, 15**; and further telleth us that she sitteth upon her paramours in a base manner, in an unseemly sort, she sitteth upon their very consciences, and keeps them

⁶ The act or practice of buying or selling ecclesiastical preferments, benefices, or emoluments; traffic in sacred things. CED

under by force: whereas Stephen, king of Poland (one of her sons, but not altogether so obsequious), was wont to say, that God had required three things to himself, *sc. ex nihilo aliquid facere, scire futura, et dominari velle conscientiis*, that is, to make something of nothing, to know things to come, and to bear rule over men's consciences. How she forceth men to commit folly with her by the cruel Inquisition; and how she hireth others for preferments (Luther was offered a cardinalship; Bessarion of Nice was won over to her by such an offer; Thomas Saranzius was of a poor shoemaker's son made bishop, cardinal, and pope, all in one year, and called Nicolas V; the like might be said of Aeneas Sylvius, Canon of Trent, afterwards Pope Pius II), and for a price too, is notoriously known to the Christian world. *Stratagem nunc est Pontificium ditare multos ut pii esse desinant*, saith a good author. It is one of the pope's stratagems to enrich men that he may oblige them to himself, and bring them into his own vassalage (John Baptist. Gelli. Dialog. 5). In various towns of Germany (as at Augsburg, &c.) there was a known allowance by the year for such Lutherans as would become Papists. Thus this whore of Rome imitateth her in the text: of whom it is elsewhere complained, **Ezekiel 16:33**, "They give gifts to all whores" (and so buy repentance at too dear a rate, *Nolo tanti paenitentiam emere*, Dem.), but "thou givest thy gifts to all thy lovers, and hirest them that they may come unto thee on every side for thy whoredom: yea, thou hast played the harlot with them, and yet couldst not be satisfied," **Ezekiel 16:28**. It was but time therefore that God should cast her off as now no wife of his, but an adulteress of the devil, as she showed herself notably in the Trent Conventicle: where with a whore's forehead that refused to be ashamed, **Jeremiah 3:3**, she not only established by a law their abominable idolatry, but also set forth that heathenish decree, whereby she equaleth (at least) the Apocrypha to the holy Canon, the vulgar puddle to the Hebrew and Greek fountains, unwritten verities and traditions to the sacred Scriptures: and further addeth, that the Holy Ghost himself is not to be hearkened unto speak he never so plainly and expressly, *nisi accedat meretricis purpuratae effrons interpretatio*, unless she may have the interpreting of his meaning according to her way. O monstrous impudence, deserving a divorce! True it is that God hateth putting away, **Malachi 2:16; Isaiah 50:1**; he tells these Jews that he had not given their mother a bill of divorcement, *ut solent morosi et crudeles mariti*, as cruel and froward husbands used to do for every light offence. But what he had done this way, he was merely compelled to it; as not able to wink any longer at their flagitious practices. Hear his own words, "Thus saith the Lord, Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement whom I have put away? or which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? Behold, for your iniquities you sold yourselves; and for your transgressions is your mother put away." And yet not so far put away either, but that if she repent, she may be received again: and that is no small mercy. See **Jeremiah 3:1**, "They say, If a man put away his wife, and she go from him and become another man's, shall he return unto her again? shall not that land be greatly polluted? but thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return again to me, saith the Lord." Lo, God is above law; and his mercy is matchless: he will do for his people what none else in like case would ever be drawn to do: **Micah 7:18**, "Who is a God like unto thee?" saith the prophet, by way of admiration. David never came near his concubines more after Absalom had gone in to them; and Ahithophel judged that act would be such an injury, as David would never put up with, and therefore gave that pernicious counsel. But God's thoughts are not as man's thoughts, neither are our ways his ways, of mercy, and multiplied pardons. But "as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are his ways higher than our ways, and his thoughts than our thoughts," **Isaiah 55:8-9**. We are not to measure things according to our own model; and to have as low thoughts of God and his goodness as those miscreants once had of his power when they demanded, "Can God prepare a table for us in the wilderness? Can he give us water out of the rock?" Surely a finite creature cannot believe the infinite attributes of God thoroughly, without supernatural grace: which therefore must be implored, and every one of us excited not to cast away our confidence which hath so great recompense, so great encouragement: but to say to our mother, and each to other, "Put away

your whoredoms," &c., "Cast away all your transgressions," **Ezekiel 18:31**. "Ye have done all this wickedness" (saith Samuel to the revolted people of his time), but what of that? "yet turn not aside from following the Lord": for that were to add rebellion to sin, as Herod to all his other hateful practices added that of beheading the Baptist. Do not therefore turn aside from following the Lord, but go home again to him, and he will speak peace. "For the Lord will not forsake his people for his great name's sake: since it hath pleased the Lord once to make you his people," **1 Samuel 12:20-22**. He chose you for his love: and now loves you for his choice; yea, he cries after you, as once, "Return, you blacksliding children, and I will heal your backsliding." Oh that you would reciprocate and say, "Behold, we come unto thee; for thou art the Lord our God," **Jeremiah 3:22**.

Let her therefore put away her whoredoms out of her sight. Not out of my sight (as a Lapid readeth it, neither according to the original, nor yet his own Vulgate translation), but "out of her sight," or from her face,^[7] and her adulteries from between her breasts. *Sed quid hoc sibi vult?* saith Calvin here. But what may be the meaning of this? It surely seemeth harsh to say that women play the whores, either with their faces or with their breasts: and yet it is not unknown to the learned what Archesilaus the philosopher said to a young wanton, that cast lustful looks and lascivious glances upon others: *Nihil interest quibus membris cinaedi sitis, posterioribus an prioribus*: You may be naughty packs more ways than one. And Plutarch tells of a certain orator, that said of an impudent fellow: *Quod in oculis haberet non κόρας sed πόρνας*, that he had in his eyes not pupils, but punks.^[8] And St Peter saith of the heretical sects of his time, that they had eyes full of the adulteress (so runs the original, *μεστοὺς μοιχαλίδος*), and that could not cease to sin, **2 Peter 2:14**. It is evident enough (saith Calvin) that the prophet in this text alludeth to the manner of harlots painting their faces, decking or laying out their breasts to allure lovers. Filthy dressing and naked breasts (saith another divine), this is whoredom between the breasts. A third calleth naked breasts and wrists, abhorred filth. Jerome saith, If a man or woman adorn or carry themselves so as to provoke others to lust after them, though no evil follow upon it, yet the parties shall suffer eternal damnation; because they offered poison to others, though none would drink it. In Scripture, women taxed for this were notorious wicked persons, and usually whores: as Tamar, Jezebel, those damsels, **Isaiah 3:12, 16-17**; Dives, the rich man, **Luke 16:19:31** *Lupa Romana*, the Roman wolf, **Revelation 17:3**. Our Henry VI, when a mask of women were presented unto him, whereof some of them showed their naked breasts, he left the presence, crying, Fie, fie, ladies, in sooth ye are to blame, to bare those parts to the eyes of man that nature appointed modesty to conceal. Frederick the Emperor, seeing some country wenches, near Florence, in dancing to show their naked legs, Eamus, said he, *meretricum hic ludus est non virginum*, Let us go hence, for this is not maids' play, but whores' rather. That youngster in the Proverbs was met by a woman with the attire of a harlot, and subtle of heart, or trussed up about the breasts, with her upper parts naked, like a bedlam. So Levi Ben Gersom, she met him with her naked breasts, yea, with something else naked,^[9] which modesty forbids to name, as some construe that text, **Proverbs 7:10**. So she caught him and kissed him, **Hosea 2:13**, with strange impudence: and no question but having caught him, her lust grew more flagrant: as by unclean touches of the face and breasts men are more enkindled. Hence that of our Saviour in expounding the seventh commandment, **Matthew 5:30**, "If thy right hand offend thee," sc. by dalliance and wanton touches, "cut it off," &c. Hippocrates observeth that there are *venae et viae ab utero ad mamillas*, veins and passages that go from the belly to the breasts; and that is the reason he gives of the temptation to lust that is in the breasts. "Keep thyself pure," saith St

⁷ So the Septuag. ἐκ προσώπου μου.

⁸ Lib. περὶ δυνωπίας. Κορη puellam et pupillam oculi significat.

⁹ וְשֵׁי pro וְשֵׁי quasi nudato pudendo. And verse 18, Nerveh dodim inebriabimur uberibus.

Paul to his son Timothy. And again, "The younger women exhort with purity," or chastity. It is not safe to pry into the beauty of young women. *Ut vidi ut perii*, &c. The eyes are those windows of wickedness and loop holes of lust. "Let her therefore put away her whoredoms out of her sight." And let not the strange woman "take thee with her eyelids," saith Solomon, **Proverbs 6:25**. For prevention hereof, in Chrysostom's time, the women were separated from the men in the church by a wooden wall. And Tertullian saith to the Christian women, *Iudicabunt vos Arabiae feminae ethnicae*, &c., The heathen women of Arabia shall judge you: for they do not only cover their faces but their heads too; and rather than they will have any part appear naked, they will let the light but into one eye. In Barbary, they say, it is death for any man to see one of the Xeriffe's concubines; and for them too, if when they see a man (though but through a casement) they do not suddenly screech out. Millions of people have died of the wound in the eye. Aholah and Aholibah, that is, Israel and Judah, no sooner saw the Assyrians (those desirable young men), though but portrayed upon the wall, but they doted upon those paramours, and received them into the bed of love, **Ezekiel 23:16-17**. *Et divaricavit tibias suas*, **Ezekiel 16:25**, and multiplied their whoredoms. The very sight of the altar at Damascus set Ahaz agog to have one of the same fashion, **2 Kings 16:10**. And Jeroboam, coming out of Egypt, where the ox was worshipped, brought home two calves with him; and set them up at Dan and Bethel. The Nicodemites and Familists hold it no sin to be present at idol service, and allege a text for it out of Apocryphal Baruch. But Mr Burroughes, a good interpreter, well observeth, that that which is intended specially here, in these words, "Let her put away her whoredoms out of her sight, and her adulteries," &c., is, that they should not be content merely with change of their hearts, to say, Well, we will acknowledge the Lord to be the true God, and our hearts shall wholly trust in him; but for these external things, what great matter is in them? Oh no, they must abstain from all appearance of evil, from the badges of idolatry, &c. Thus he. Those badges or ensigns of idolatry they usually carried between their breasts (saith another author), to testify that the idol had their hearts; whereas Christ should have been there, **Solomon's Song 1:13**, who to show his dear love to his Church appeared to John, girt about the paps with a golden girdle, **Revelation 1:13**. (See Trapp on "**Revelation 1:13**") *Cor sedes amoris*. The heart is the seat of the affections. Hence God calleth for it; "My son, give me thine heart": and the devil strives for it, **Luke 22:3**; **Acts 5:3**. Once he strove about a dead man's body, **Jude 1:9**, but his design therein was to have set up an idol for himself in the hearts of the living. His eldest son and successor, the pope, useth the same policy. It was a watch word in Gregory XIII's time, in Queen Elizabeth's days, My son, give me thy heart: dissemble, go to Church, be a Papist in heart, and then do what ye will: take the oath of allegiance, supremacy, anything that shall be put to you, I will absolve you. Do but carry a crucifix between your breasts (that is the place where they wear such idols), and kiss it when you have sworn (as Louis XI of France used to do), and it shall suffice. An oath upon the conscience of a popish idolater is like a collar upon a monkey's neck,—that he will slip on for his master's pleasure and slip off again for his own. Pascenius scoffs King James for the invention of the oath of allegiance. Equivocation the Jesuits have invented, or revived rather, *ad consolationem afflictorum Catholicorum*, for the comfort of afflicted Catholics, as Garnet and Blackwell profess. So impudent is idolatry, such frontless whoredoms appear in their very faces, they openly prostitute themselves; *Imo volunt extare signa foeditatis sum*, saith Calvin, here they hang out their filthy superstitions in the sight of the sun, as Sodom: they set them upon the cliff of the rock, as Jerusalem, **Ezekiel 24:7-8**, *ut similes sint publicis scortis*, like common whores that solicit lovers, and send to them, as she, **Ezekiel 23:2-21**. It was a sad complaint God made, **Hosea 7:1** of this prophecy, "When I would have healed Israel, then the iniquity of Ephraim was discovered, then it broke forth as the leprosy in their foreheads": their fornications were not only covert, but overt. Their whoredoms in the face were their worshipping the two golden calves and Baalim (saith Pareus); their "adulteries between their breasts" were their trust in idols, in the arm of flesh, in confederacies, &c., when they would

seem nevertheless to trust in God alone: as now the Papists profess to do, and have therefore coined diverse nice distinctions of worship, per se, *et per accidens, proprie, et improprie*, and a hundred the like evasions. But there is no hiding of their asses' ears by these subtilties. Dr Reynolds, in his Books *de Idolatria Romana*, hath (among others) proved them rank idolaters. Weston writes, that his head ached in reading that book; but they all yield it unanswerable: and yet they "repent not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood, which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk," **Revelation 9:20**. But, as those that make them are like unto them, so are all those that trust in them, stockish and stupid; given up to the efficacy of error, to believe a lie, yea, and that against common sense, **Isaiah 44:17**, which is no small stumblingblock to both Jews and Mahometans. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 3. [[@Bible:Hosea 2:3]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Lest I strip her naked.** *Deus ideo minatur ut non puniat.* God therefore threateneth, that he may not proceed to punish. Here he doth not so much direct as threaten, as conditionally terrify, from the pernicious effect or sad issue of their adulteries, a full and final desolation, after an utter deprivation of God's gifts and graces, shadowed under a fourfold metaphor. 1. Of stripping her of all her borrowed beauty, those jewels, and that comeliness that he had put upon her. 2. Of reducing her to her first forlorn condition wherein he found her, **Ezekiel 16:6**, viz. in her blood, in her blood, in her blood, as it is there said and set out for greater emphasis. 3. Of laying her waste as a wilderness (by the incursions and hostilities of cruel enemies), or, as in the wilderness (so some read it, by understanding the particle in) that is, as in the wilderness of Arabia, where they were put to great straits when they came out of Egypt. The very first handful God gave them there was bitterness and thirst. It was by Marah that they came to Elim, &c. 4. Of afflicting and punishing her with the most miserable and insufferable kind of death; "I will slay her with thirst," which is worse than to be slain with hunger. All which is foretold, with some hope nevertheless of grace and forgiveness, if she return and seek the Lord; as by the word lest is secretly given to understand:

Lest I strip her naked. As a jealous husband snatcheth away with indignation the clothes and ornaments that he had bestowed upon his adulterous wife. The Lord threateneth the wanton women of Zion to make naked their secret parts, **Isaiah 3:17**, so that their shame should be seen, **Isaiah 47:3**, even all their nakedness, **Ezekiel 16:37**, to discover their skirts upon their face, as **Nahum 3:5**. Thus the great whore of Babylon is threatened with nakedness, **Revelation 17:16**. And this we see already performed upon her in part, as Mr Philpot barely told Chadsey in that vehement expression of his, "Before God, you are bare breeched in all your religion": he uttereth it somewhat more grossly. There was a base custom in Rome, that when any woman was taken in adultery, they compelled her (for a punishment) openly and beastly to play the harlot: ringing a bell while the deed was doing, that all the neighbours might be made aware. This the good Emperor Theodosius took away, and made better laws for the punishment of adultery. God, when he threateneth to strip the Jewish synagogue naked, meaneth (saith Mercer) that he will take away *ornamenta regai et sacerdotii*, those ornaments of the kingdom and of the priesthood, leave them, as **2 Chronicles 15:3**, without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law, *sine lege, sine rege, sine fide*, without law, a king and trust, as the Brazilians are said to be. "The children of Israel" (saith our prophet, **Hosea 3:4**, where he interprets this text) "shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim"; that is, without any form of civil government, and without any exercise of true (yea, or of false) religion. What a comfort was it to good David, in his banishment, and after the slaughter of the priests by Saul (even "fourscore and five persons that did wear a linen ephod," **1 Samuel 22:18**), that Abiathar, the son of Ahimelech, came down to him to Keilah, with an ephod in his hand, and that thereby he could inquire of God what to do, as he did! **1 Samuel 30:7**. And what

a grief and misery to Saul, that God had forsaken him in those visible pledges of his favour, and would not be found of him! Hence he lay all open and naked to his enemies, who now might do what they would to him, and none to hinder them. This also was the case and condition of the people, when Aaron (by making the golden calf at their command) had made the people "naked unto their shame among their enemies," **Exodus 22:25**, that is destitute of God's powerful protection, and deprived of their former privileges. A people, or a person, may sin away their happiness, and forfeit the favours they formerly enjoyed. A hypocrite may lose his gifts and common graces; as that idle and evil servant did his talent; his light may be put out in obscure darkness. See **Ezekiel 43:11, 17**. (*See Trapp on "Ezekiel 43:11"*) (*See Trapp on "Ezekiel 43:17"*)

And set her as in the day that she was born. Not only *nudam tanquam ex matre*, Naked as ever she was born (the Albigenes in France, those old Protestants, were turned out stark naked, both men and women, at the taking of Caracasson, by command of the popish bishop: and so were thousands of good Christians by the bloody rebels in Ireland now of late), but as she was born of the Amorite and Hittite; her navel was not cut, her birth blot was not washed in water, nay, she was cast out into the open field, and no eye pitied her (as the princess did Moses, and as the shepherdess did Romulus and Remus). See all this and more, most elegantly set out, Ezek. xvi., together with what high honour and sumptuous ornaments God did put upon her, **Hosea 2:11, 12**. What this people were in the day of their nativity, **Joshua** telleth them in part, **Joshua 24:2**: "Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and served other gods." And I took your father Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldees, as a brand out of that fire, &c., and gave him Isaac. And I gave unto Isaac Jacob, who, together with his children, went down into Egypt, where they fell to the worshipping of idols, **Ezekiel 16:26**. And although they were there, held under miserable servitude, yet they continued exceeding wicked and abominable. The fire of their afflictions seemed to harden their hearts as much as the fire of the furnace did the bricks they made. Hence, as they hardened their hearts, God hardened his hand, and had hastened their destruction, had it not been that he had feared the wrath of the enemy: lest their "adversaries should behave themselves strangely, and lest they should say, Our hand is high, and the Lord hath not done all this," **Deuteronomy 32:27**. The Psalmist was sensible of all this, and therefore saith, "Our fathers understood not thy wonders in Egypt, they remembered not the multitudes of thy mercies, but provoked him at the sea, even at the Red Sea. Nevertheless, he saved them for his name's sake," **Psalms 106:7, 8**. And what was it else but the respect to his own great name and the remembrance of his holy covenant that moved the Lord to premonish this perverse people of their present danger: and not to suffer his whole wrath to arise against them, and to rush in upon them without a **Nehemiah forte**, "lest I set her as in the day," &c. "Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel: and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God," **Amos 4:12**, with entreaties of peace, lest your house be left unto you desolate, **Luke 21:20**; lest wrath seize upon you, and that without remedy.

And make her as a wilderness. After that I have brought her out of a wilderness, and set her in a land that floweth with milk and honey. God can quickly curse our blessings, and destroy us after that he hath done us good. See this excellency set forth, **Isaiah 5:5**; **Jeremiah 17:5, 6**; **Psalms 107:34**; **Zechariah 7:14**, (*See Trapp on "Isaiah 5:5"*) (*See Trapp on "Jeremiah 17:5"*) (*see Trapp on "Zechariah 7:14"*) (*see Trapp on "Jeremiah 17:6"*) (*See Trapp on "Zechariah 7:14"*) and take heed lest living in God's good land, but not by God's good laws, we forfeit all into his hands, and he take the forfeiture. For he had rather that wild beasts should devour the good of the land, yea, that satyrs and devils should dance there, than that wicked and stubborn sinners should enjoy it. If Philip of Spain could say he would rather have no subjects than Lutheran subjects; and if the council of Toulouse (out of a like blind zeal for propagating popery) did decree that the very house should be pulled down *in qua fuerit*

inventus haereticus, wherein a heretic (as they then called God's true servants) was found; how much more shall the King of heaven, the righteous Judge, root out and pluck up a rabble of rebels that refused to be ruled by him! Idolatry is a land desolating sin, and brings in the devouring sword, **Judges 5:8; Psalm 78:, 58, 59, 62; Jeremiah 22:7-9**. *Cavete ab idolis*, Beware of idols, **1 John 5:21**.

And slay them with thirst. *Surgit hic oratio, surgit afflictio*. To be slain with thirst is a grievous judgment. Lysimachus parted with his kingdom for a draught of water in a dry land; and made himself of a great king a miserable captive to the king of Getae. Darius, fleeing from his enemies, was glad to drink of a dirty puddle that had carrion lying in it; professing it was the sweetest draught that ever he drank in his life. *Dives* would have given all that ever he was worth for a drop of cold water. The members, enfeebled for want of due moisture, seek to the veins for relief, the veins to the liver, the liver to the entrails, the entrails to the ventricle, the ventricle to the orifice. But these being not able to impart what they cannot receive, out he cries, "Father Abraham." But hospitable Abraham hath it not for him: fire and brimstone, storm and tempest, is now the portion of his cup: extreme thirst is a piece of hell's pains, and one of the greatest of earth's miseries. A dear servant of God in Queen Mary's days (kept and pined in prison) would fain have drunk his own water: but for want of nourishment could make none. Inward refreshings he had, even those divine consolations of the martyrs: he drank of the river of God's pleasures, **Psalm 36:8**, which cast him into a sweet sleep: at which time one clad all in white seemed to stand before him and to say, Samuel, Samuel, be of good cheer, for after this day thou shalt never be hungry or thirsty more (for soon after this he was buried): and from that time till he should suffer, he felt neither hunger nor thirst (as himself declared), though he were kept by the cruel Bishop of Norwich with two or three morsels of bread every day, and three spoonfuls only of water. Mercer expounds this text of spiritual thirst, the same that was foretold by Amos, **Amos 8:11**, *Ideoque subdit, Hosea 2:4*, saith Oecolampadius, and therefore God addeth in the next verse, that he will not have mercy upon her children, but will kill them with death, hurl them to hell, as he threateneth to do Jezebel's children, **Revelation 2:23**. Oh, when the poor soul shall be in a wilderness, in a dry and thirsty land, scorched and parched with the sense of sin and fear of wrath; when the terrors of God fall thick upon it, even the envenomed arrows of the Almighty; besides the buffetings of Satan, that hail-shot, hell-shot of fiery darts, **Ephesians 6:16**, so called for the dolor and distemper they work (in allusion to the poisoned darts used in war by the Scythians and other nations, the venomous heat whereof is like a fire in the flesh),—when conscience, I say, shall by this means lie burning and boiling, what would it not give for a cup of consolation, yea, for any consolation in Christ as the apostle hath it, **Philippians 2:1**, for any Beerlahairoi, to fill the bottle at, yea, for any Enhakkore, any cleft in a jaw bone to revive a thirsty Samson, that must else be slain with thirst, **Genesis 16:14; Judges 15:19**. David never so desired after the water of the well of Bethlehem, as he did after God in a dry and thirsty land, where no water was, **Psalm 63:1**. As the hunted hart (the hind, saith the Septuagint, *ἔλαφος*) panteth after the water brooks, so panteth or brayeth my soul after thee. "My soul thirsteth for God," &c. "Oh, when shall I come and appear before God? The tears have been my meat," &c., **Psalm 42:1-3**. Hunters say the hart sheds tears (or something like) when hotly pursued and cannot escape. He is a beast thirsty by nature, and whose thirst is much increased when he is hunted. The female especially, in whom the passions are stronger than in males. Christ, that Aijelet Shachar, that is, the morning hart or stag, as he seemeth to be styled, **Psalm 22:1**, in the title, felt his soul heavy to the death in his bitter agony; and tasted so deep of that dreadful cup, that in a cold winter night he sweat great clots of blood, which, through clothes and all, fell down to the ground. And when this Lamb of God was even a roasting in the fire of his Father's wrath, he cried out, "I thirst." At which time men gave him cold comfort, even vinegar to drink: but God, his Father, most sweetly supported him: so that he might better say than David, "In the multitude of my perplexed thoughts within me, thy comforts have refreshed my soul." But

what shall those poor creatures do that are strangers to the promises, and have no water of the well of life to relieve them, when God's wrath is as a fire in their bones, and falleth upon their flesh like molten lead or running bell metal. Then they that have sucked in sin as an ox sucks in water, shall suck the gall of asps and venom of vipers, and have none to pity them. Francis Spira felt this spiritual thirst. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 4. [[@Bible:Hosea 2:4]]{{field-on:Bible}} **And I will not have mercy upon her children.** Lo, here another "and" to those four before; and more dreadful than the rest. Like as that in **Jeremiah 16:13**, where "I will not show you favour," was worse to them than their captivity in a strange country. Say that God do cast off his people, yet if he say, "they shall be as if I had not cast them off, and will hear them," **Zechariah 10:6**, the affliction is nothing so great as when he sends an evil, an only evil without mixture of mercy, as here, **Ezekiel 7:5**. Oh, this pure wrath, this judgment without mercy, must needs be very heavy: when it is once grown to hatred, there is little hope: **Hosea 9:15**, "All their wickedness is in Gilgal, for there I hated them." God is not of himself μισάνθρωπος, a hater of mankind, but the contrary, φιλόανθρωπος, **Titus 3:4**. But such is the venomous nature of sin, and so contrary is it to God's both holy nature and just law, that he cannot but hate it in whomsoever he finds it: yet with thin difference, that he pities it rather in his saints, and hates it in his enemies: as we hate poison in a toad, but we pity it in a man; because in the one it is their nature, in the other their disease. And as revenge is the next effect of hatred, wicked men may expect no better dealing from God than a man would afford to his stubborn enemy. Pharaoh had plague upon plague: neither did the Lord leave him till he had dashed the breath out of his body: so true is that of the Psalmist, "With the froward thou wilt wrestle," **Psalms 18:26**, and that of Solomon, "The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways," **Proverbs 14:14**. He hath made a match with mischief, he shall have his belly full of it. He would needs have his own way, and had it ("for I would have purged him, but he would not be purged"). Now I will have my way another while: "for thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness any more, till I have caused my fury to rest upon thee," **Ezekiel 24:13**. So our Saviour to those refractory Jews in the Gospel, "I would have gathered thee as the hen gathereth her chickens," I would, but thou wouldst not: therefore they shall "lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee." And I will not have mercy upon her children. Lo, God is so incensed by a general defection, that he will make havoc and destroy even the mother with the children (which was Jacob's great fear, **Genesis 32:11**), yea, he will dash the mother in pieces upon the children, as Shalman did at Betharbel, **Hosea 10:14**, he will put young and old into the same bag together, as fowlers deal by birds, which yet was forbidden by a law, **Deuteronomy 22:6**; his eyes shall not spare children, as **Isaiah 13:18**. And why?

For they are the children of whoredoms They are *mali ex malis*, the bad of the bad, as Jerome interprets it: they love and live in the adulteries of their mother: they take after her, as the birth usually followeth the belly, and as in a syllogism, the conclusion follows the weaker proposition. (10) Those Jews in the Gospel boldly boasted to our Saviour that they were not the children of fornication, for they had Abraham to their father, **John 8:33**, nay, God to their Father, **John 8:41**. But he as boldly telleth them, that they are a bastardly brood, yea, a serpentine seed; and that they were of their father the devil, **John 8:44**. And in another place, as serpents, saith he, "ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" If mercy interpose not, as the cold grave must one day hold your bodies, so hot hell your souls. But I will have no mercy upon her children: for they are the children of fornications, *i.e.* they are not only misbegotten and illegitimate (which though no fault of theirs, yet is their reproach, as hath been said in the notes on the former chapter), but they are children of fornications in an active sense too; they have learned of their mother to fornicate: they are as

¹⁰ κακοῦ κόρακος κακὸν ὤν. *Qualis mater talis filia. Partus sequitur ventrem.*

good at resisting the Holy Ghost as ever their fathers were, **Acts 7:51**; they fill up the measure of their fathers' sins, that wrath may come upon them to the utmost. Children, as they derive from their parents a cursed birth blot, which comes by propagation; so they are very apt to fall into their vices by imitation: and then they sue both their own and their parent's iniquities. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 5. [[@Bible:Hosea 2:5]]{{field-on:Bible}} **For their mother hath played the harlot.** Being a "wife of whoredoms," **Hosea 1:2** (*See Trapp on "Hosea 1:2"*) therefore I will not have mercy upon her children, but will root out all her increase, **Job 31:12**. Either she shall commit whoredom, and not increase, **Hosea 4:10**; or if she do, it is for mischief she shall bring forth children to the murderer: or at least she shall bequeath them a fearful legacy of sin and punishment, worse than that leprosy that Gehazi left to his posterity, or that Joab left to his, **2 Samuel 3:29**: lameness and gonorrhoea, &c. It is a dangerous thing to keep up the succession of a sin in the world, and to propagate guilt from one generation to another: it is a great provocation. When the wickedness of such is ripe in the field (and they have filled up the measure of their fathers' sins), God will not let it shed to grow again: but cuts it up by a just and seasonable vengeance. Let parents therefore break off their sins and get into God's favour; if for nothing else, yet for their poor children's sake: labouring to mend that by education which they have marred by propagation and evil example. And let children of wicked parents (as they tender their own eternal good) take God's counsel, **Ezekiel 20:18, 30**: Are ye polluted after the manner of your fathers? and commit ye whoredom after their abominations? Oh, walk ye not after the statutes of your fathers: neither observe their judgments, nor defile yourselves with their idols. True it is men are wondrous apt to dote upon their fathers' doings, and are hardly drawn off from their vain conversation received by tradition from their ancestors, **1 Peter 1:18**. *A bore maiori discit arare minor* (Ovid). Prescription is held authority sufficient. *Me ex ea opinione quam a maioribus accepi de cultu deorum nullius unquam movebit oratio*, saith Cicero, No man shall ever dissuade me from that way of divine worship that my forefathers lived and died in. It is reported of a certain monarch of Morocco, that having read St Paul's Epistles, he liked them so well that he professed that were he then to choose his religion, he would, before any other, embrace Christianity. But every one ought, said he, to die in his own religion: and the leaving of the faith wherein he was born was the only thing that he disliked in that apostle. Thus he. *Sed toto erravit coelo*, Antiquity must have no more authority than what it can maintain. Ἐμοὶ ἀρχαῖα ἐστὸν Ἰησοῦς ὁ Χριστός, Mine antiquity (said Ignatius) is Christ Jesus, who said not to the young man, Do as thy forefathers, but Follow thou me.

She that conceived them hath done shamefully. She hath utterly shamed herself and all her friends, husband, children, all. The woman is, or should be, the glory of the man. Solomon's good housewife was she, **Proverbs 31:28, 29**. Her children rise up and call her blessed: her husband also, and he praiseth her, saying, "Many daughters have done virtuously: but thou excellest them all." Alphonsus, king of Aragon, was once resolved never to commend his wife, lest he should be accounted immodest or uxorious: but afterwards he changed his mind, and was so taken with his wife's virtues and constancy, that he resolved to praise her *quocunque in trivio, cuique obvio, sine modo, et modestia*, in all places and companies. So did Budaeus, Pareus, and others. But a wicked wife (a harlot especially) puts her husband to the blush, and is a great heart-break, as Livia was to Augustus (Eudemus was both her physician and her stallion); his children also proved stark naught: which made him wish that either he had lived a bachelor, or died childless, (11) "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a shame to any people," **Proverbs 14:34**. It is the snuff that dimmeth their candlestick, the leaven that soureth their passover, the reproach that rendereth them a proverb and a byword, an astonishment

¹¹ Plin. Tacit. *Utinam aut caelebs vixissem, aut orbus periissem*.

and a hissing, a taunt and a talk to other countries, **Deuteronomy 28:37; Jeremiah 25:9; Ezekiel 5:15**; Such was Israel's apostasy and idolatry, their subjecting religion to carnal policy in setting up the two calves and Baalim: when Ephraim spake "there was trembling, and then he exalted himself in Israel: but when he offended in Baal, he died," **Hosea 13:1**. While he kept close to God, who but Ephraim? None dared to quack, but all quaked at the name of Ephraim: he was on high, and much honoured. But when he declined to idolatry, he became contemptible: and every paltry adversary cast dirt in his face, and crowed over him. So true is that of Solomon, "The wise shall inherit glory: but shame shall be the promotion of fools," **Proverbs 3:35**; What a victorious prince was Henry IV of France, till he (for political respects) turned Papist! Till then he was *Bonus Orbi*: the good of the world, but after that *Orbus Boni*, bereft of good, as the wits of the time played upon his name Borbonius, by way of anagram. Once he was (before his revolt) persuaded by Du Plessy to do public penance for having abused the daughter of a certain gentleman in Rochelle, by whom he had a son (Life of Phil. de Mornay). Hereunto he was drawn with some difficulty, being ready to fight a battle: and this was no disgrace to him. But when, by compliance at least, he became an idolater for lucre of a crown and love of life, he became a vile person, as Antiochus is called, **Daniel 11:21**, and was worthily lashed with rods by the pope, in the person of his ambassadors; and butchered by the instigation of those Jesuits whom he basely recalled into France, whence they had been banished, and admitted them into his bosom; making Father Cotton his *confessor et sic probrose se gessit, et rem confusione dignam admisit*, as here. He both shamed and undid himself.

For she hath said, I will go after my lovers. *Amasios meos*, My sweethearts, those that have drawn away my heart from my husband. But if that persecutor could say to the martyr, What a devil made thee to meddle with the Scriptures? how much better might it be said to the synagogue, and so to all apostates, What a devil meant you to go a whoring from such a husband who is *totus, totus desiderabilis*, altogether lovely, even the chief of ten thousand, **Solomon's Song 5:16**, after dumb idols, and false prophets, who are their brokers (*proxenetae et proci*) and spokesmen? Athenaeus brings in Plato bewailing himself and his own condition, that he was taken so much with a filthy whore. Adultery is a filthiness in the abstract: so is also idolatry: and therefore idols are called by a word that signifieth the very excrements that come out of a man, (*gelulim*, **Ezekiel 22:8**) a term too good for those dung hill deities, those abominable idolatries, as St Peter expresseth it, **1 Peter 4:3**. Mention is made in histories of a certain heathen people that punish adultery with death: and with such a death as is suitable to the sin. For they thrust the adulterer's or adulteress's head into the paunch of a beast where lieth all the filth and garbage of it, there to be sufficated to death. Sodom and Gomorrah had fire from heaven for their burning lust, and stinking brimstone for their stinking brutishness. They are also thrown out (as St Jude phraseth it) for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire, **πρόκεινται, Jude 1:7**. And in the like pickle are the beast and the false prophet (those arch-idolaters), for these both are cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone, **Revelation 19:20**. And worthily, since they declared their sin as Sodom, they hid it not, **Isaiah 3:9**. And as this housewife in the text, who said, "I will go after my lovers"; she did, of wickedness forethought, upon deliberation, *de industria, ex consilio*, wilfully and of purpose, impudently and without all shame of sin, say, "I will go after." This was shameless indeed: they should rather have gone after her, than she after them. Moses fitly compareth a whore to a salt bitch that is followed after by all the dogs in a town, **Deuteronomy 23:18**. "Am I a dog's head?" said Abner to Ishbosheth, **2 Samuel 3:8**, that is, Am I so given to lust and lasciviousness as dogs are that run after every salt bitch? But this harlot verified that saying in Ezekiel: The contrary is in thee from other women in thy whoredoms: whereas none followed thee to commit whoredoms, thou followest them; and gloriest in thy so doing, as Lot's daughters did in their detestable incest, naming their children, Moab, that is, a birth by my father; and Benammi, that is, begotten by one of my near kindred. These all might have held their tongues

with shame enough. But such kind of sinners are singularly impudent, **Jeremiah 3:3**, infatuated, **Hosea 4:11**, and past feeling, **Ephesians 4:19**. And so are idolaters wickedly wilful, and irreclaimable for most part. See **Jeremiah 44:16, 17; 2:10; Isaiah 44:19, 20**: "A seduced heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul; nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?" How stiff are Papists to this day in defence of their image worship! how severe against such as deface or but disgrace them! Murder is not so heinous a sin.

That give me my bread and my water, &c. What can be more like to the doings of the Papists than this? saith Danaeus. Who knows not what suit they make, and what thanks they return to their he-saints and she-saints, and how they sacrilegiously transfer the glory due to God alone, to the creature. The Lord rightly resolveth the genealogy of grain, wine, and oil into himself, **Hosea 2:22** of this chapter. And the apostle tells us that it is he that "filleth men's hearts with food and gladness," **Acts 14:17**.

—*"Et cum charissima semper
Munera sint Author quae preciosa facit."*

*This should make us lift up many a humble, joyful, and thankful heart to God: well content if we may have offam et aquam, bread and water, and the gospel; and vowing with Jacob, **Genesis 28:20**, that if God will give us bread to eat and raiment to put on, then shall he be our God, and we will honour him with the best of our substance. As for other gods, whether pagan or papagan, say we as that heathen did, *Contemno minutulos istos deos modo love mihi propitium habeam*, I care not for these petty deities: I trust in the living God, who giveth us all things richly to enjoy: all things, I say, both *ad esum, et ad usum*, for back and belly (besides better things), which is all that carnal people care for. There be many (too many) that say (and can skill of no other language), Who will show us any good? **Psalms 4:6**; who will give us bread, water, wool, oil? &c.; they look no higher, know no heaven but plenty, hell but penury, God but their belly, whereunto they offer sacrifice, with Poliphemus, and care for no more, *quam ut ventri bene sit ut lateri*, than that their bellies may be filled, their backs fitted. Let them have but plenty of victuals, and the queen of heaven shall be their good lady, **Jeremiah 44:17**. Base spirits look only after low things: gain and credit carry them any way. They work for their penny a day; and are like little children, which will not say their prayers unless they may be promised their breakfast. Whereas a true worshipper of God soareth aloft, hath his feet, at least, where other men's heads are, trades for higher commodities, cannot be put off with mean matters. When great gifts were sent to Luther, he refused them with this brave speech, *Valde protestatus sum me nolle sic satiari*: I deeply protested that I would not be put off by God with these low things (Melch. Adam). The Papists offered to make him a cardinal if he would be quiet. He replied, No, not if I might be pope. They sent Vergerius, the pope's nuncio, ⁽¹²⁾ to tempt him with preferment, and to tell him of Aeneas Sylvius, who following his own opinions, with much slavery and labour, could get no further preferment than to be Canon of Trent, but being changed to the better, became bishop, cardinal, and, finally, Pope Pius II. The same Vergerius also minded him of Bessarion of Nice, who of a poor collier of Trapezond, became a great renowned cardinal, and wanted not much of being pope. But what said Luther to all this? *Contemptus est a me Romanus et favor et furor*, I care neither for the favour nor fury of Rome. The bramble thought it a brave business to reign over the trees: not so the vine and fig tree. We read of Pope Sylvester, that he gave his soul to the devil for seven years' enjoyment of the popedom; which Luther spurned at. One good cast of God's loving countenance was more to David than a confluence of all outward comforts and contentments. "Thou hast put gladness in my heart," saith he, "more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased," **Psalms 4:7**. Their grain and their wine he calleth it; because it is their portion (poor souls), and they are too well paid of it. Wealth upon any terms is welcome to them, and those are their lovers*

¹² A permanent official representative of the Roman See at a foreign court. CED

that will keep them to it, yea, though it be the devil himself: whose language also here they seem to have learned when they say, "My grain and my water," &c. All is their own if you will believe them: like as the devil said to our Saviour, **Luke 4:6**, "All this wealth is mine, and to whomsoever I will, I give it." But God is the true proprietary, the owner of all: and it is his alone to say *Cui vole, do illa*, **Daniel 4:22**. The devil is god of this world, **2 Corinthians 4:4**; but it is but titular only, as a king at chess; or at best, by usurpation only, as Absalom was a king; and as the pope is lord of all the kingdoms of the world, both for temporals and spirituals, to dispose of them at his pleasure. When he makes cardinals, he useth these big swollen words, *Estote confratres nostri, et principes mundi*, Be you brethren to us, and princes of the world. And by such high honours, bishoprics, and benefices, he prevaieth with very many to be wholly at his devotion. One of his poor beneficiaries ingenuously confessed that he and those of his rank preached the gospel for nothing else, *nisi ut nos pascat et vestiat*, than to get a poor living by it. Let saints say, *Non est mortale quod opto*, We breathe after better things: we have the moon under our feet, **Revelation 12:1**, and are above grain, wool, flax. The devil shall not stop our mouths with these palterments. Balaam may run and ride after the wages of wickedness, and get a sword in his guts. Ahab may make a match with mischief, and sell himself to do wickedly; Judas hunt after lying vanities, and hasten to his own place; but Moses was of another spirit, and "refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter," **Hebrews 11:24**. And those worthies that were tempted with offers of profit and preferment, could not be won over, but resisted the devil, and he fled from them, **Hebrews 11:37**. The world was crucified to St Paul, and he to the world, he was of too generous a spirit: he was no malleable matter: all was but dung and dog's meat in his account, **Philippians 3:8**. Dr Taylor, martyr, was promised not only his pardon, but great promotion; yea, a bishopric: but he would have none of it. Another Dr Taylor, Bishop of Lincoln, was violently thrust out of the parliament house in his robes, in Queen Mary's reign, and deprived. So was Hirmanius, Archbishop of Colen, for certain reformation done by the aid and advice of Martin Bucer. I dare say (said Bishop Bonner to Mr Hawkes, martyr)—that Cranmer would recant if he might have his living: so judging others by himself. But Latimer and Shaxton parted with their bishoprics in King Henry VIII's time, rather than submit to the Six Articles. And John Knox refused a bishopric offered him by King Edward VI, as having *aliquid commune cum Antichristo* (Knox's Life, by Mr Clark): so did Miles Coverdale in Queen Elizabeth's reign, choosing rather to continue a poor schoolmaster. Pliny saith of Cato, that he took as much glory in those dignities and honours that he denied as he did in those that he enjoyed (Plin. Nat. Hist. praef.). He was wont also to say that he had rather men should question why he had no statue or monuments erected to him, than why he had: certainly it is so with the saints; and upon better grounds. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 6. [[@Bible:Hosea 2:6]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Therefore, behold, I will hedge up thy way with thorns.** *i.e.* with difficulties and distresses. So God had fenced up Job's way that he could not pass, **Job 19:8**, he had thrown the cross in his way, to stop him in his career. And so he had hedged the Church about, that she could not get out, **Lamentations 3:7**, he had enclosed her ways with hewn stone, and made her paths crooked, **Lamentations 3:9**. A great mercy if well considered, though grievous to the flesh, that loveth not to be cooped or kept within compass. Man is fitly compared to a wild ass's colt used to the wilderness, snuffing up the wind at her pleasure, rude and unruly, untamed and untractable, **Jeremiah 2:24; Job 11:12**. To be kept by hedges and fences within a pasture, seems to such no small punishment: neither count they anything liberty but licentiousness; or a merry life, unless they may have the devil their playfellow: but the devil plays at no small games: *capite blanditur, ventre oblectat, cauda ligat*: he plays indiscriminately, he lies in wait for the precious life, as that harlot, **Proverbs 6:26**; nothing less will content him. In great wisdom, therefore, and no less mercy to men's souls, doth God restrain, and bind them by afflictions that they may not run wild as they would nor feed upon the devil's commons, which would fatten them indeed, but

for the slaughter. This made Job prize affliction as a special favour, **Job 7:18**. Jeremiah prayeth, "Correct me, O Lord," **Jeremiah 10:24**; and Luther to like purpose, *Feri Domine, feri clementer*: Strike, Lord, strike, it shall be a mercy. And King Alfred prayed God always to send him some sickness, whereby his body might be tamed, and he the better affectioned to Godward. It is observed by one of our chroniclers, that affliction so held in the Saxon kings in the Danish wars, as having little outlets or leisure for ease and luxury, they were made the more pious, just, and careful in their government: otherwise it had been impossible so to have held out. Sure it is that if God did not hedge us in (as by his hedge of protection, **Isaiah 5:5**, so) by his hedge of affliction, as here, no reason would rule us, no cords of kindness would contain us within the bounds of obedience. David himself, before he "was afflicted, I went astray," saith he: but God brought him home again by weeping cross. He once so leapt over the pale, that he broke his bones, and felt the pain of it to his dying day: he brake God's hedge, and a serpent bit him, **Ecclesiastes 10:8**; his conscience flew in his face, the guilt whereof is compared by Solomon to the biting of a serpent and sting of an adder, **Proverbs 23:32**; "he roared for the disquietness of his heart": but better so, than roar in hell, where is punishment without pity, misery without mercy, sorrow without succour (help), crying without comfort, mischief without measure, torment without end and past imagination. The prophet Amos likeneth incorrigible persons to horses running upon a rock, where first they break their hoofs, and then their necks, **Amos 6:12**. Another fitly compareth them to that Jesuit in Lancashire, who followed by one that found his glove with a desire to restore it him, but pursued inwardly by a guilty conscience, leaps over a hedge, plunges into a clay pit behind it unseen and unthought of, wherein he was drowned. To prevent their deserved destruction (if it may be) God telleth them here that he will not only hedge them in but wall up their way.

And make a wall. *Macerabo maceriam*, I will wall a wall, and immure her: as jealous husbands do their wives whom they mistrust. And this God speaks by an apostrophe to others, as loathing the thought that ever he should be put to it.

I will make a wall that she shall not find her paths. *q.d.* I will hamper her and handle her as she was never handled. By a like passionate apostrophe, **Genesis 49:4**, old Jacob, speaking of Reuben's incest, "Thou wentest up to thy father's bed: then defiledst thou it": moved with the odiousness of the fact, he breaks off his speech with Reuben, and turning him to the rest, he addeth, "He went up to my couch": *q.d.* Out upon it, I am the worse to think of it. Maginus tells us, that in Lithuania the men are such fools, that they allow their wives to have their stallions, whom they call *Connubii adiutores*, and prize them far above all their acquaintance. And Balthasar Exnerus telleth us of a certain Duke of Oppania, who marrying a Lithuanian lady, and going forth to meet her, when she came first to him, he found in her company one of that rank, a lusty young fellow; whom, when he understood what he was, and wherefore he came, *voluit laniandum canibus obicere*, he was once in mind to make dog's meat of him. But understanding that it was the custom of that country, he sent him home again without further hurt. The Lord our God is a jealous God: and be the gods of the heathens good fellows, saith one, yet he will not endure co-rivals; nor share his glory with another. "Why trimmest thou thy way to seek love? And why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way? Thou also shalt be ashamed of Egypt as thou wast ashamed of Assyria. Yea, thou shalt go forth from him," *i.e.* from the Egyptian, thy present patron and protector; "and thy hands upon thy head," which was the gesture of women in great sorrow, **2 Samuel 13:19**: "for the Lord hath rejected thy confidence, and thou shalt not prosper in them," **Jeremiah 2:33, 36, 37**. This people, to have a stake in store, howsoever the dice chanced to turn, sought to join friendship as soon with the Assyrian as with the Egyptian, and so to secure themselves: but it would not do. They followed after these lovers, but could never overtake them. Egypt proved but a broken reed. Assyria, the rod of God's wrath, the staff in his hand, **Isaiah 10:5**, yea, the hedge of his making, hemmed them in by strait sieges, both at Samaria and Jerusalem: till at length the Romans came, and walling

them about, till they were forced to yield, took away both their place and their nation, according to that they feared, **John 11:48**, and caused to cease the daily sacrifice, which they would needs till then hold out in opposition to the gospel.

That she shall not find her paths. Those highways to hell, wherein she hath hitherto tired herself by trotting after her lovers. Drusius noteth here that a harlot hath her name in the Chaldean tongue from her tracing up and down, ארכתע, delighting to be abroad altogether, to see and to be seen, that she may draw in the silly simple. See **Proverbs 7:11, 12**. (See Trapp on "Proverbs 7:11") (See Trapp on "Proverbs 7:12") God is able to strike such people with such blindness as he did the wicked Sodomites at Lot's door, *subito scotomate*, saith Junius, such as tormented their eyes as if they had been pricked with thorns, as the Hebrew moral there signifieth, **Genesis 19:11**. See **Psalms 75:6; Isaiah 29:19; 19:11-13**. The fool knoweth not how to go to the city, **Ecclesiastes 10:15**, they are so blinded and baffled many times in their own ways. God loves to make fools of them. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 7. [[@Bible:Hosea 2:7]]{{field-on:Bible}}**And she shall follow after her lovers.** Follow them hot foot, pursue them eagerly and earnestly, as the hunter doth his game, or the pursuivant the party to be arrested; so little was she bettered by her former sufferings. Thus the blind Sodomites continue groping still for the door as if they were ambitious of destruction, which was now even at next door by. And thus Pharaoh, that sturdy rebel, rageth against God, and menaceth Moses with death, then, when that palpable gross darkness was upon him. This was one of those wild bulls in a net that was full of the fury of the Lord, **Isaiah 51:20**. He was full of it, and yet lay raging against it, adding impatience to his impenitence, and passive disobedience to his active. Another bull of the same breed was Ahaziah, who sent a third captain after the two former had been consumed with fire from heaven; as if he would spitefully spit in the face of heaven, and wrestle a fall with the Almighty. And a third was that stubborn stigmatic Ahaz, who the more he was distressed the more he trespassed: "This is that king Ahaz," **2 Chronicles 28:22**. These men lost the fruit of their afflictions; which indeed was a great loss, but that they were not sensible of it (*Perdidistis fructum afflictionis*. Aug.). Those that belong to God shall have stroke upon stroke, one cross in the neck of another, till they be kindly humbled, and brought home to their first busband. God will strike a parting blow between them and their sweethearts; and make them pollute the idols which they had once perfumed, **Isaiah 30:22**.

She shall follow them, but she shall not overtake them. *Persequetur, sed non assequetur.* She shall meet with disappointment, but it shall be in mercy: she shall be crossed with a blessing, chastened by the Lord, that she may not be condemned with the world. She shall seek for favour and help from her sweethearts' hands, but all in vain, they shall all forsake her, and shall change their ancient love into mortal hatred, **Jeremiah 2:36; Ezekiel 36:17**. It is the usual practice of the devil and his instruments to bring men into the briars, and there to leave them to shift as they can: thus the Pharisees dealt by Judas; "What is that to us?" say they; "see thou to that," **Matthew 27:4**: they left him when they had led him to his bane; like as familiars leave their witches, when they have once brought them into fetters. God dealeth not so with any of his, when he is most angry. But as in very faithfulness he afflicts them, that he may be true to their souls; so when they follow hard after him, as David did, they are sure to overtake him, though perhaps not presently; when they seek him, they are sure to find him, so they search for him with all their heart, **Jeremiah 29:13**. True it is, that God often by the hand of the enemy, as by a pursuivant at arms, fetcheth in bankrupt tenants, that is, his own untoward and backsliding people, and leaveth them in the pursuivant's hand, till they take some course to satisfy for their arrears. But that once done, he will soon set them at liberty, and make them glad, according to the days wherein he had afflicted them, **Psalms 90:15**. Let a poor soul but say, as here,

I will go and return to my first husband. That is, to God. I have run away from him by my sins; I will now return again to him by repentance. Let there be but such language in the hearts of God's prodigals, and he will soon relent toward them, meet them on the way, **Isaiah 65:24**, fall upon their necks and kiss them, **Luke 15:20**, he will receive them with all sweetness. *Iam ex hoc loco licet colligere quae sit vera resipiscentia*, saith Calvin here. By this text we may gather what true repentance is: namely, when a sinner not only confesseth himself guilty, and worthy of punishment, but truly displeaseth himself, and seriously returns to God. Here we have those two essential parts of true repentance, *sc.* contrition and conversion; or humiliation and reformation. The former is called in Scripture repentance for sin, the latter, repentance from sin: and the one without the other is to no purpose or profit.

For then was it better with me than now. It was so: but how came you to conceive or consider of it in this sort? but by disappointments and afflictions? These are to us as Benhadad's best counsellors, that sent him with a cord about his neck to the merciful king of Israel. The Septuagint render the text thus, For he was good to me then, or he is now. And what wonder? Is there anything to be gotten by departing from Christ, by leaving thy first love, by quenching the Spirit, and making apostasy from former degrees of grace and holiness? Can any son of Jesse do for us as Christ can? or do we think to mend ourselves by running out of God's blessing into the world's warm sun, as Demur did? "O call me not Naomi," said she once, but "call me Marah: for I went out full, and am come home empty," **Ruth 1:20**. So doth a revolted Christian say, when he comes from the act of sinning, when he hath been seeking after his sweethearts: he went with his heart full of peace, and his hand full of plenty; and meeting with a bargain of sinning, thought to eke out his happiness, and make it fuller (as Solomon did), but came home empty; empty of comfort, but laden with crosses. He hath lost his evidences, is excommunicated from the power of the ordinances, is under the terror of a wounded spirit, is buffeted by Satan, is out of hope of ever recovering the radiance of his graces, hath his back burden of afflictions: so that he is forced to confess it to be the greatest madness in the world to buy the sweetest sin at so dear a rate. David found it so. The Shulamite found it so, **Solomon's Song 5:1, 2**, &c. No rest she had at home, nor comfort abroad, till she had recovered her first husband's company; for then it was better with her than now; and yet now, too, upon her hearty repentance, all becomes as well with her as ever it had been before, **Hosea 6:4**, &c. Was it not so likewise with Ephraim, **Jeremiah 31:19, 20, 21**, with the prodigal, **Luke 15:16-19**, with Peter after his shameful backsliding and denial? Let this then be to all God's relapsed people as a valley of Achor, a door of hope, that they may be re-admitted. Shall Sarah receive Hagar into favour? Joseph his brethren? David his Absalom? Philemon his Onesimus? Shall that man Ahab show mercy to his professed enemies, the Syrians, that had the second time set upon him? And shall not God receive his repenting children? fetch home his banished yea, though they may seem to be as water spilt upon the ground? bring them back into his own bosom, though they have never so far wandered out of the way? He will, he will. Only he expects that they should say, and do, as the Church of Israel here, and as the Church of Ephesus is advised, **Revelation 2:4**. First, Remember whence ye are fallen: *sc.* not only from your former feelings and comforts, but also from your former fitness for God's kingdom; that *ius aptitudinale* (as the schools call it) that David himself had parted with for a season, and therefore is called plain David so oft together, and not my servant David, as formerly, **2 Samuel 24:12**, &c. Secondly, Repent: Sigh out that of Job, "Oh that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me; when his candle shone upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness; as I was in the days of my youth, when the secret of God was upon my tabernacle; when the Almighty was yet with me," **Job 29:2, 3, 4**. Oh, it was far better then with me than now. Thus relent, repent, revenge upon your backslidings; spare for no pains, but be extraordinarily humbled: detest yourselves, give God no rest till he return unto his rest. Thirdly, Do your first works with a redoubled diligence for your former negligence; and tie yourselves thereto by solemn covenant. Begin (though at first but faintly)

to pray, read, confer, meditate, cease from sin, shun the occasions, recover by degrees as a weak body doth by good diet, moderate exercise, &c. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 8. [[@Bible:Hosea 2:8]]{{field-on:Bible}} **For she did not know.** *i.e.* She would not be known or affected, of this she was willingly ignorant, **2 Peter 3:5.** *Ut liberius peccet libenter ignorat*, as Bernard. Her ignorance was not a mere nescience, or an invincible ignorance, such as she could not help; but it was wilful, affected, acquired: they not only desired not the knowledge of God's ways, but hated it, spurned and scorned at it, shutting the windows lest the light should come in: and being blinded by the god of this world, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them **2 Corinthians 4:4**, lest they should see and say that which nature and Scripture do both teach them, viz. that all their accommodations and comforts come from me alone. Had this their ignorance been merely negative, yet had they not been wholly excused (*Tu aedepol, si sapis quod scis nescies.* Terent.). The apostle noteth, that our Saviour laid down his precious life even for the not-knowings of the people which were such as they could not help, **Hebrews 9:7**; (ὕπὲρ τῶν τοῦ λαοῦ ἀγνοημάτων), but their ignorance being affected, it was a high degree of ingratitude and impudence, and a very great aggravation of their sin: it made it to be sin with an accent, wickedness with a witness. Israel was herein worse than the ox and the ass (that "knows his owner and his master's crib," **Isaiah 1:3**), they fell below the stirrup of reason, nay, of sense. Hence God so stomacheth the matter both there and here. *Non semel hoc peccatum carpit*, saith Mercer: he cannot satisfy himself in saying how much it troubled him to be thus unkindly, ungratefully, and unreasonably dealt withal: it runneth in his thoughts, his heart is grieved at it, and he must vent himself. And when he hath told his grief, and aggravated his wrong, yet he hath not done with it: but is upon it again and again; still convincing, upbraiding; charging Israel for their foul and inexcusable unfaithfulness and unthankfulness. *Eandem sententiam quia sancta et necessaria est, repetit*, saith Oecolampadius here; he repeats over the same he had said before, out of the trouble of his spirit, and that they might once lay it to heart and be humbled.

That I gave her corn and wine and oil, &c. A great deal more than she reckons upon, **Hosea 2:5**, and yet pays her rent there to a wrong landlord too. God is well content that we have the benefit and comfort of his creatures, so he may have the praise: this is all the rent he looks for; and this he indents with us for, **Psalms 50:15**; the saints also, knowing his mind, promise it him, and bind themselves to it, as did Jacob, **Genesis 28:20, 21**; David, **Psalms 51:15**. For they know that ingratitude forfeits all (as in this text. She would not know, but I will make her know: *ut qui ex copia datorero non senserunt, sentiant ex penuria*, for she shall fast another while, and go naked), like as the merchant's non-payment of customs may prove the utter loss of all his commodities. Hence their first care to see God in all, as Moses often urgeth this people in Deuteronomy, to taste the superabundant sweetness of God in the sweetness of the creatures; to look upon all as swimming towards them in the blood of Christ, as being a piece of his purchase; and this exceedingly sweeteneth all their comforts. "God give thee the dew of heaven," saith Isaac to his son Jacob, **Genesis 27:28**. Profane Esau, likewise, had the like, but not with a God give thee, neither cared he how he had it, so he had it any way; but it is otherwise with the saints. See but the difference in these two brethren long after this, **Genesis 33:9, 11**, Esau, as a mere natural man, contenting himself (like a brute beast made and taken to be destroyed) with a natural use of the creature, cries out, "I have enough, my brother: keep that thou hast to thyself." But mark how Jacob delivers himself in another manner: "Take, I pray thee, my blessing that is brought to thee; because God hath dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough." See a like difference between the rich fool's *Habes multa*, "Thou hast much goods laid up for many years," **Luke 12:19**, and David's doxology, **1 Chronicles 29:13, 16**, "O Lord our God, all this store cometh of thine hand, and is all thine own." And to the same purpose speaks Eliezer, **Genesis 24:35**, "The Lord hath given my master flocks, herds, silver, gold"; and Job, **Job 1:21**. The neglect of this observing of God and ascribing all to him is the

source of much sin in the world, and the mother of much mischief. **Jeremiah 2:5**, God chargeth his people that they were gone far from him, and had made his heritage an abomination, **Hosea 2:7**, and why? but because they did not say, "Where is the Lord that brought us up out of the land of Egypt?" &c., **Hosea 2:6**. Were men but sensible of what God doth for them every day and hour; they could not in equity and common ingenuity serve him as they do. He preserveth and provideth for us all; lays us down and takes us up, gives us all things richly to enjoy, commanding the best of his creatures to cater for us, **Hosea 2:21**, and to bring us in the best of the best for our subsistence, **Psalms 8**. Every good gift temporal, and perfect giving spiritual and eternal, cometh from the Father of lights, **James 1:17**, as naturally and as constantly as light doth from the sun, or water from the sea. Let us therefore imitate those lights of heaven and rivers of the earth, do all the good we can with those good things God hath given us, grain, wine, silver, gold, &c., and then reflect back toward, and return all the glory and praise unto the sun of our righteousness and sea of our salvation. The beams of the moon and stars return as far back to glorify the face of the sun which gave them their beauty, as they can possibly. Let us likewise ever send back to God's own glorious self the honour of all his gifts, by a fruitful improvement of them, and fresh Songs of praise. Let the streams of God's daily bounty lead us (as the water course doth, either upward to the spring, or downward to the main ocean) to the source and fountain whence they flow. Let the returns we make be from God, of God, to God; from him as the efficient, of him as the material, and to him as the final cause. David joineth these three together, **Psalms 86:4, 5**; and Paul, **Romans 11:36**. In fine, let us labour to be like the full ears of grain that hang down the head toward the earth, their original. Or if any be so graciously exalted, so freely favoured above his fellows, that his stalk is so stiff that it beareth him up above the rest of his ridge, let him look up to heaven; not in thoughts of pride, but humble vows of thankfulness. Be not as horse and mule, that drink of the brook, but never think of the spring; or as swine, that haunch up the mast, but never look up to the tree; or as the barren earth, that swallows the seed, but returns nothing to the sower.

Which they have prepared for Baal. Or, wherewith they have made Baal: lavishing gold out of the bag, and weighing silver in the balance, they hired a goldsmith, and he made it a god: they fall down, yea, they worship, **Isaiah 46:6**. This Baal was a special idol of the Zidonians, but first of the Chaldees, who called him Bel; the Carthaginians, Bal, whence those compositions Hannibal, Hasdrubal; as among the Babylonians Belteshazzar, Mehelabel, &c. Varro (though a heathen) inveighs much against idols and images, and saith, that they that first brought them increased error, and took away fear, *errorem auxerunt, metum dempserunt*. Plutarch saith, it is a sacrilege to worship by images, &c. It is thought they came first from Babylon. For Ninus having made an image of his father, Belus (this Baal in the text), all that came to see it were pardoned for all their offences; whence, in time, that image came to be worshipped. A great promoter of this kind of idolatry in Israel was Ahab, in favour of his wife, Jezebel, and to ingratiate with her kindred, **1 Kings 16:31**, and this was the ruin of his house. This Baal was by the Zidonians called Jupiter Thalassius, or their sea Jupiter, and is thought to be their chief god. They had their *Dii minorum gentium*, petty gods (called in Scripture the host of heaven, the queen of heaven, and a little farther in this Chapter Baalim); the Greeks called them *Δαίμονες*: which, saith Plato, are certain middle powers or messengers between God and man, to carry up prayers, and bring down blessings, &c. *Quam autem haec daemonum theologia conveniat cum sanctorum et angelorum cultu apud pseudochristianos, res ipsa loquitur*, saith learned Master Mede. How this doctrine of devils or heathen deities agreeth with saint worship and angel worship among Papists is easy to be discerned. A great stumbling it is to both Jews and Turks, who know it to be contrary to the first commandment, and image worship to the second (Melch. Ad. de Germ. Theol.). Whence the Turks will not endure any images, no, not upon their coins. And Paulus Jovius tells us, when Sultan Solymán had taken Buda, in Hungary, he would not enter into the chief temple of that city, to give praise to Almighty God for the victory, till all the images were first down, and thrust out of the place.

We read also of a certain Turkish ambassador who, being demanded why the Turks did not turn Christians? he answered, Because the Christian religion is against sense and reason; for they worship those things that are of less power than themselves, and the works of their own hands: as these in the text, that made them Baal, yea (as if God had hired them to be wicked), they made it of the very gold and silver which he had given them, though for a better purpose. And this was horrible wickedness, hateful ingratitude. This was to sue God with his own money, to fight against him with his own weapons, as David did against Goliath, as Jehu did against Jehoram, and as Benhadad did against Ahab with that life that he had lately given him. I read of a monster who, that very night that his prince pardoned and preferred him, slew him, and reigned in his stead. This was Michael Balbus, and he is and shall be infamous for it to all posterity (Zonarus in Annal.). Ingratitude is a monster in nature. Lycurgus made no law against it, *quod prodigiosa res esset beneficium non rependere*. To render good for evil is divine, good for good is human, evil for evil is brutish; but evil for good is devilish. And yet, alas! how ordinary an evil is this among us, to abuse, to God's great dishonour, our health, wealth, wit, prosperity, plenty, peace, friends, means, day, night, grain, wine, silver, gold, all comforts and creatures, our times, our talents, yea, the Holy Scriptures, the gospel of grace, and our golden opportunities, the offers of mercy, and motions of the Spirit, turning our backs upon those blessed and bleeding embracements, and pursuing our lusts (those idols of our hearts), those Baals, that is, lords and husbands that have us at their beck and check? But is this fair dealing? Do we thus requite the Lord, foolish and unwise as we are? **Deuteronomy 32:5**. Holy *Ezra* thinks there is so much unthankfulness and disingenuity in such an entertainment of mercy, that heaven and earth would be ashamed of it, **Ezra 9:13**. Should we do so? saith he, oh, God forbid us any such wickedness. Others render it, which they have sacrificed, or dedicated to Baal, for idolaters spare for no cost, *dum Deum alienum dotant*, as some render that text, **Psalms 16:4**, while they give their goods not to the saints (as David) that are on the earth, but to another god. They lavish gold out of the bag: as we read of a certain king of this land, who laid out as much as the whole crown revenues came to in a year upon one costly crucifix: and of another, that left by a will a very great sum of money for the transporting of his heart, to be buried in the Holy Land, as they called it. How profuse Papists are in decking their images and monuments of idolatry, is better known than that it needeth here to be spoken of. Their lady of Loretto, that queen of heaven, as they call her, *stilo veteri*, pillar of antiquity, hath her churches so stuffed with vowed presents and memories, as they are fain to hang their cloisters and churchyards with them. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 9. [[@Bible:Hosea 2:9]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Therefore will I return.** *i.e.* I will alter my course, change my stand, change the way of mine administrations, deal otherwise with them than yet I have done: they shall bear their iniquities, and know my breach of promise, as **Numbers 14:34**; they shall know the worth of mine abused mercies by the want of them another while. "I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early," **Hosea 5:15**. Finally, I will cut them short of alimony, and hold them to strait allowance; and then I shall be sure to hear them howling upon their beds for grain and wine, **Hosea 7:14**, as dogs do that are tied up, and cannot come at their meat.

And take away my corn and my wine. Those precious fruits of the earth, as St James calleth them, **James 5:7**, the product of God's great care, from year's end to year's end, **Deuteronomy 11:12**, without which the earth could not yield her increase: neither would there be a vein for the silver, a mine for the gold, iron taken out of the earth, or brass molten out of the stone, **Job 28:2**. All that we have is his, in true account, and he is the great proprietor who only can say (as he in the Gospel), "May not I do what I will with mine own?" **Matthew 20:15**. And what should he sooner and rather do than take away food from his child that mars it? If fulness breed forgetfulness (as the fed hawk forgets his master, and as the full moon gets farthest off

from the sun), so men, when they have all things at the full, forget God, and wickedly depart from him, what can he do less than forget them (that so they may remember themselves), and make fat Jeshurun look with lean cheeks, that they may leave kicking, and learn righteousness? **Deuteronomy 32:15; Isaiah 26:9**. Neither doth God do this till greatly provoked, till there is a cause for it, therefore I will return. He may well say, as that Roman emperor did, when he was to pronounce sentence of death, *Non nisi coactus*, I am even compelled to it, there is no other remedy, **2 Chronicles 36:16**. As a woman brings not forth but with pain; and as a bee stings not, but provoked: so here, *Ille dolet quoties cogitur esse ferox*, he afflicteth not willingly, nor grieves the children of men, **Lamentations 3:33**. It is sin that maketh him return, as here; that puts him out of his road of mercy into ways of iudgment, that putteth thunderbolts into his hand, and maketh him "do his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act," **Isaiah 28:21**. What can a prince do less than disarm a rebel? what can God do less than take away his own and be gone from such an impudent adulteress, as is here described? should he allowr her with his grain "to make cakes to the queen of heaven," **Jeremiah 7:18**, and to pour ou this wine for drink offerings to other gods, that they might provoke him to anger? No: rather than so, he will—

take away the corn in the time thereof, and his wine in the season thereof. He will cut off the meat from their very mouths, **Joel 1:16**, and pull their morsel from between their teeth. Just at harvest, when their grain is to be harvested, God will blast it, or otherwise blow upon it; when all their old store is spent, and they reckoned upon a good recruit, they shall be defeated and frustrated. "Therefore hath God watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us," saith Daniel, **Daniel 9:14**. Lo, God watcheth his time when to be even with his enemies: and taketh his fittest opportunity for their greater mischief. They that are wicked overmuch shall die before their time, **Ecclesiastes 7:17**. Not before God's time (for *stat sua cuique dies*, every man's time is set, **Job 7:1**, our bounds are prescribed us, and a pillar pitched up by him, who bears up the heavens, which we are not to trespass), but before their own time that they had propounded and promised to themselves, as that rich fool, **Luke 12:19**, who talked to himself (as fools use to do), **Luke 12:17**, saying, "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years." But we know what became of him that very night; his many years were quickly up, his glass was run when he thought it had been but new turned. God shot at him with an arrow suddenly, **Psalms 64:7**, he fetched off this bird with a bolt while he was gazing at the bow or pruning himself upon a bough. He chopped into the earth before he was aware as one that walketh in the snow chops into a pit. He died, *tempore non suo* (as some render that forecited text in Ecclesiastes), not in his own time, but in God's time; then when it had been better for that fool to have done anything than to have died, because (like Eli's sons) he died in his sins: and, like Jezebel's children, he was killed with death, **Revelation 2:23** This made Austin say, that he would not for the gain of a world be an atheist for one half hour: because he knew not but that God might in that time, call him; and then, "what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained when God taketh away his soul?" **Job 27:8**. He is troubled, when God taketh away "his corn in the time thereof, and his wine in the season thereof": he is hungry and hardly bestead, and therefore ready "to curse God, and look upward," **Isaiah 8:21**, howling against heaven, as the hungry wolf. But first he should consider, that the corn and wine and wool and flax that he hath in keeping is not his, but God's; and that he reserves the propriety of all in his own hand: neither hath any man aught, in reference to him, the monarch of the world, that he can call his own. The rich fool indeed talked much in this manner, **Luke 12:18**: "I will pull down *my* barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all *my* fruits and *my* goods." All was his own belike: God was not in all this man's thoughts; for if he had, he would soon have known what to have done: sc. he would have acknowledged God the author and owner of all (as Moses mindeth men, **Deuteronomy 8:17, 18**), he would also have fed the hungry with his corn, and clothed the naked with his wool and flax, as Tyre converted did with her merchandise, **Isaiah 23:18**, he would have said to God, as David did, "All things come of

thee, and of thine own we give thee," **1 Chronicles 29:14**. Bernard reports of Pope Eugenius, that meeting with a poor but honest bishop, he secretly gave him certain jewels wherewith he might present him. If God did not first furnish us out of his treasury we should have nothing wherewith either to honour him or to help ourselves or others God's poor, I mean, whom Solomon calleth owners of our goods, and maketh us but their stewards, **Proverbs 3:27**: withhold not thy goods from the owners thereof. Next, the hunger bitten hypocrite should consider that there is worse hunger yet behind, and a heavy account to be given of the grain, wine, wool, and flax, the creatures that he hath detained in unrighteousness, and spent upon his lusts, **James 4:3**. If the husbandman must be ashamed, and howl because the harvest of the field is perished; if the drunkards must wake, weep, and wail because the new wine is cut off from their mouths, **Joel 1:5, 11**; how shall they much more howl in hell, *ubi nullus unquam cibus est, nulla consolatio*, saith Bernard, where there is no manner of meat, no drop of water to be had for love or money; where they must fast, and find no mercy for ever; where they must hunger and thirst *in aeterno Dei*, as the schools speak, as long as God is God. The sufferings of this world to the wicked is but as the falling of the leaves in comparison of the trees that will fall upon him hereafter, in that eternity of extremities. If here, "In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits, and every hand of the troublesome shall come upon him. When he is about to fill his belly God shall cast the fury of his wrath upon him, and shall rain it upon him while he is eating," as it is threatened, **Job 20:22, 23**, what, think we, will their portion be in hell? Meanwhile God will

recover his wool and his flax. He will snatch it away (as the word signifieth) in great displeasure, as a man doth his stolen goods out of the hands of a thief; he will rescue them, as Abraham did Lot and the captives from Chedorlaomer, **Genesis 14:16**, as David did his wives, goods, and friends from the Amalekitish rovers, **1 Samuel 30:18-20**. The poor creatures, grain, wine, wool, &c., groan heavily under the abuse of graceless persons, **Romans 8:22**, and God heareth them, as he did the oppressed Israelites in Egypt, "for he is gracious," he hears them, I say, and recovers them; he spoils their possessors of them, as Jacob did Laban of his sheep, as the Israelites did the Egyptians of their jewels: the same word is used there, as here, **יתלצה**, **Genesis 31:10, 16**, and it is a wonderful significant word, saith Mercer. St Paul imitateth it when he saith the creature shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption. This God doth when he snatcheth away kingdoms from tyrants, wealth from worldlings, strength from roysters, spiritual common gifts from the proud and secure, **Zechariah 11:17**. (**See Trapp on "Zechariah 11:17"**) When men abuse mercies, they forfeit their right in them: wicked men have not only a civil title but a right before God to the things that they possess; it is their portion, **Psalms 17:14**. And what Ananias had was his own while he had it, **Acts 5:4**. And God gave Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar as pay for his pains in taking Tyre. True it is, all was forfeited in Adam; but wicked men have yet a right to all they do enjoy in a lawful way, by divine donation, till the day of execution: as when a traitor hath his life given him, for a time at least, he hath meat and drink also given him to maintain his life for that time. God dealeth not as that cruel Duke D'Alva did, who starved some prisoners after that he had given them quarter, saying, Though I promised you your lives, I promised not to find you meat (Hist. of Netherlands). That which wicked men are charged with, and shall be accountable for, is, not their right to use the creatures, but their not right using them. This makes the creature cry in its kind and long for liberty; even as birds do that thrust a long neck out of the cage (so much the apostle's word importeth, **Romans 8:19**, ἀποκαταδοκία). And God, who heareth the cry of the widow and fatherless, and looseth his prisoners, **Psalms 146:7**, hears and frees the poor creatures groaning under man's abuse.

Given to cover her nakedness. This is the end of garments, so called *quasi gardmentes*; they arm and fence our bodies against the injury of wind and weather, against heat of summer, cold of winter; they also cover our nakedness and deformity, those parts especially that are by an

antiphrasis called *verenda et pudenda* (here principally perhaps intended), because they ought never to be laid naked, but kept covered, *pudoris gratia*, for common honesty's sake (Vatablus), "that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear," **Revelation 3:18**. Nature teacheth to cover our nakedness; therefore also when a man hath committed a sin he blusheth; the blood, as it were, would cover the sin. But nothing will do that, save only the righteousness of Christ, the fleece of that immaculate lamb of God, whom therefore we must put on, **Romans 13:14**, in all his offices and efficacies. Our first parents indeed were born with the royal robe of original righteousness on their back; but the devil soon stripped them of it, and from that time on they became sore ashamed of their bodily nakedness (but chiefly of their spiritual), which therefore they sought to hide as they could, their privities especially. Whence some are of the opinion that to look upon the nakedness of another is a sin against nature. The prophet Habakkuk taxeth it in the Chaldees, **Habakkuk 2:15**, and the Hebrews there say, It was a filthy custom among them, common at their feasts. Clothes are the ensigns of man's sins and the cover of our shame. To be proud of them is as for a thief to be proud of his halter: to brag of them is as for the lepper to brag of a plaster laid to his filthy sore: the fineness of such is their filthiness; their neatness nastiness, as one speaketh. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 10. [[@Bible:Hosea 2:10]]{{field-on:Bible}} **And now will I discover her lewdness.** Or her filthiness, baseness, foolishness, saplessness; perhaps the same with her nakedness, **Hosea 2:9**. (See Trapp on "**Hosea 2:9**") How shameless the heathen idolaters were, the worshippers of Priapus especially (which Jerome and Isidore say was the same with Baalpeor, and made Maacha, the mother of Asa, guilty of that villany), with their infamous *Nos, pudore pulso, stamus sub love coleis apertis, &c.*, is notoriously known; how they ran about naked in their Lupercalia, Bacchanalia, and other beastly solemnities. God threateneth to make her naked here in another manner, to her utter disgrace and ignominy (*Chaldeus reddit ignominiam, ut quam velatam desiderabant, apertam contemnant*. Jerome). He had threatened her before with poverty, now with scorn and contempt: these go seldom asunder; but when self-procured they are very grievous. See **Deuteronomy 28:15-68**. Fornicators are fools, **Jeremiah 29:23**; **Genesis 34:7**, Shechem committed folly in Israel, and is therefore called a lad or a child (**Genesis 34:19**, *Neque distulit puer*) for his witlessness, as being carried not by right reason, but blind affection. So Amnon was for this as one of the fools in Israel, **2 Samuel 13:12**, a Nabal, *a Nebulo*, one that falls below the dignity of a man, below the stirrup of reason, flagitious and profligate.

Spiritual fornicators are all this and more. They hunt after lying vanities, and so forsake their own mercies, **Jonah 2:8**, being singularly foolish (as the word here used importeth) and miserable by their own election. The indignity and iniquity of their practice, see **Jeremiah 2:9-13**. Satan deals by them as he did by Adam when he gave him an apple for Paradise; and set him to the tree of knowledge that he might not taste the tree of life. And like unto them (saith a Lapid here) is every wicked person who by Satan's persuasion preferreth the creature before the Creator, earth before heaven, the devil before God, hell before heaven, sin before sanctity, evil before good. These are lewd persons of sordid and servile dispositions, *homines ad servitutem parati* (as Tiberius said of the Romans), men of an under-spirit, as those, **1 Chronicles 4:23**. Hedge rogues Mr Dyke calleth them.

In the sight of her lovers. That her whom they have so desired while she was veiled they may deride when laid open. There can nothing befall a woman more grievous than to be stripped naked, but especially before her sweethearts: **Lamentations 1:8**, "All that honoured her despise her, because they have seen her nakedness: yea, she sigheth and turneth backward." It is the paint or the dress many times that makes the lewd woman lovely. Think the same of idolatry: how pompous is it, and theatrical! but God will detect it, and make it ridiculous every day more and more. Erasmus was very instrumental this way, and did prejudice Popery by his witty jeering as much as Luther did by his stomaching and inveighing, saith Capito. Though it

cannot be denied but that *pruriginosa istorum hominum scabies asperiori strigili fricanda fuerat*, the scabby hides of those popelings called for a sharper currycomb, as another learned man phraseth it (Amama. Anibarb. Praefat.).

And none shall deliver her out of my hand. Not her idols, not her confederates. "An idol is nothing in the world," **1 Corinthians 8:4**, and all nations set by God are as a drop of a bucket, or dust of a balance: they can no more stand before him than a glass bottle can before a cannon shot. It was bootless, therefore, for this adulteress to hope for help from her lovers when God once took her in hand. He would give her her due, *ipsis spectantibus et stantibus instar stipitum*, while they looked on and stood like so many stocks, not daring to stir for her rescue and relief. See for this, **Revelation 18:10**. (See Trapp on "Revelation 18:10")

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Verse 11. [[@Bible:Hosea 2:11]]{{field-on:Bible}}**I will also cause her mirth to cease.** Idolaters are frolic and jovial, the greatest mirth mongers, the merry Greeks of the world; set altogether upon the merry pin, they spend their days in pleasure, and suddenly turn into hell, **Job 21:13**. Thus it was with these old idolaters. See **Amos 6:4**. And thus it is with the Papists at this day. They have a proverb among them, *Spiritns Calvinianus est spiritus melancholicus*, A Calvinistic spirit is a melancholy spirit. Turn Protestant once, and you must for ever bid adieu to mirth and jollity, and lead a monkish, melancholy life. In their supplication to King James for a toleration, they used this as an argument for their religion above ours, because more suitable and pleasing to man's nature. It is indeed an alluring, tempting, bewitching religion, **Revelation 13:14**. Sir Walter Raleigh knew what he said, That were he to choose a religion for licentious liberty, lasciviousness, and merry making, he would be a Papist. Hence the whole world is said to wonder after the beast, which is said to be like unto a leopard or panther (*πανθήρ*, *quod omnium animalium amicus sit*. Isidor). Now the panther is admired and followed by most other beasts of the field (and thence hath his name), either for the beauty of his hide, or for the sweetness of his smell. So is the pope for those sensual delights and swinish pleasures he alloweth his followers. *Lupanar utriusque Veneris Roma condidit*, saith Agrippa, concerning Pope Sixtus Quintus. But what should I rake in that dunghill? Such sinful mirth, as it is base born, so it is of short continuance: God will make it to cease, and to go soon out in a vexing snuff. For what reason? There is a snare (or cord) in the sin of the wicked, *sc.* to strangle their joy with, but the righteous sing and are merry, **Proverbs 29:6**, yea, they are merry (or right set in their minds, as the apostle's word, *ενθυμει*, signifies, **James 5:13**), and therefore they sing, yea, and shall sing for joy of heart, when wicked men shall cry for sorrow of heart, yea, howl again for vexation of spirit, **Isaiah 65:14**. Meanwhile their mirth is but the hypocrisy of mirth. It may wet the mouth, but not warm the heart; smooth the brow, but not fill the breast. It is like a little counterfeit complexion; as they repent only in the face, **Matthew 6:16**, so they rejoice only in the face, **2 Corinthians 1:5, 12**. Indeed, they revel rather than rejoice, and the end of that mirth is heaviness, **Proverbs 14:13**; as lightning is attended with thunder, and as comets end in a pestilent vapour. Let the Lord but turn his hand and take away his grain, &c., destroy vine and fig trees, &c., and this carnal mirth is at an end: their light is put out in obscure darkness, they lie down in sorrow, and are all amort, they are filled with unmedicinable perplexities, and are ready to run mad, **Deuteronomy 28:34**. Whereas a godly man, as he hath a constant spring of comfort within him, and can be merry without music, so he can stand under the greatest weight of affliction without buckling, as Paul: he can be *mediis tranquillis in undis*, as Noah: he can confidently say, with Habakkuk, **Habakkuk 3:17**, "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines, yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation."

Her feast days, her new moons. Not the matter of their joy only shall be abolished, but the times too; she shall neither have holy days nor good days (as they are called, **Esther 8:17**), to keep and celebrate. Here then the Lord shows how he will uncover this harlot's nakedness, viz.

first he will strip her of her spirituals, and next of her temporals, **Hosea 2:12**. Her feast days, new moons, sabbaths, and solemn feasts were but apish imitations of those commanded by God, whose ape Satan will needs be. *Habent et vespse favos; simiae imitantur heroines*: wasps also have honey combs as well as bees; and apes will be doing at men's actions. Satan's synagogue may seem a true Church. The ten revolted tribes kept also divers solemn days, partly commanded by the law (as new moons and sabbaths) and partly instituted by Jeroboam, in honour of their idols, as now among the Papists, in pretended honour of the saints, with feasting, dancing, ringing, roaring of organs, &c. These solemnities, therefore, the Lord here first utterly disowneth, calling them her feast days, her sabbaths, &c., and none of his, because they did *lacte gypsum miscere*, mingle lime with milk, as Irenaeus saith of Plato; *Non mea, tua sunt*, as Martial saith of his epigrams, ill read by another. And secondly, that he will take them away (*sc.* by carrying themselves away captive. See **Hosea 9:4, 5**), and so pull off their vizard, wash off their varnish of rites and ceremonies, and lay them open to all in their own colours. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 12. [[@Bible:Hosea 2:12]]{{field-on:Bible}} **And I will destroy her vines and her fig trees.** Not her wine and her figs only, *i.e.* her delicious drinks and deserts (even all her plenty), *sed vineta ipsa et ficeta*, as Rivet observeth: which shows a great deal of anger (for fruit trees were not to be destroyed in an enemies' country), like as he discovered a great deal of fear of the Spanish Inquisitors, that brought one of them his pears (which he had sent for), tree, and all by the roots. It is wisdom to meet God by repentance, lest he stub up root and branch together, lest he "overturn, overturn, overturn, so as it shall be no more," **Ezekiel 21:27**; lest he cry, "Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?" since it is not for fruit, let it be for the fire, **Luke 13:7**.

Whereof she hath said, These are my rewards. The wages of my wickedness, the hire of my harlotry, **Deuteronomy 23:18**; **Ezekiel 16:34**, *pretium meritorium*. Adultery is costly. Whores must have their rewards, they lie in wait for a prey, **Proverbs 23:21**, and will soon bring a rich man to beggary, **Proverbs 6:26**. Solomon himself was so exhausted by such she sinners (so they call them, *Cruces et crumenimulgas*, suck purses the poet calleth them) that he was forced to oppress his subjects to supply his coffers: which occasioned the loss of ten tribes. Harlots know no other language but that of the horse leech, Give, give; and may fitly be compared to the ravens of Arabia, that fully gorged, have a tunable sweet voice; but empty, they screech horribly.

*"Corpus, opes, animum, famam, vim, lumina, scortum,
Debilitat, perdit, necat, aufert, eripit, orbat."*

Idolatry also is no less costly: witness this harlot's habit, **Hosea 2:13**, and the purple whore of Rome, with all her trinkets, and those masses of money that she drains out of many parts of Christendom for the support of her state. Otto (one of her mice catchers, *musculata res*, as the story calleth him), sent hither into England by Gregory IX, after three years' raking together of money for pardons, and other palterments, at last departing, he left not so much money in the whole kingdom, as he either carried with him or sent to Rome before him. What will not men part with to purchase heaven? Now they persuaded the poor people (and still they do) that good works (and what so good as to gratify the pope with great sums?) were *mercatura regni coelestis*, the price to be given for heaven (Bellarm.). Idolaters are all merit mongers: they will have heaven as a purchase; they lay claim to it, as wages for their work. They say, with that wretched monk, *Redde mihi aeternam vitam quam debes*, Give me eternal life which thou owest me, "Give me the portion that belongeth to me," **Luke 15:12**. God forbid, saith another Papist, that we should enjoy heaven as of mere alms to us. On the other side, the godly disclaim their own merits, beg hard for mercy, expect a recompense of reward from him, but all of free grace; accounting all that they can do for God but a little of that much that is due

to him, and that they could well betem him: they do all righteousness, but rest in none: they know that God's kingdom is partum et non paratum; that their reward is the reward of inheritance, and not of acquisition; and that if they could do anything this way, yet would it be mercy in God to "reward every one according to his work," **Psalm 62:12**.

And I will make them a forest. See this more fully set forth **Isaiah 5:5, 6**. Such is the hatred God beareth to sin that he makes bloody weals, as it were, upon the backs of the insensible creatures for man's sake. "A fruitful land turneth he into barrenness for the wickedness of them that dwell therein," **Psalm 107:34**. Thus he dealt by Sodom, which was once as Egypt, yea, as Eden, but is now a place of nettles and salt pits; by Judea, that once *lumen totius orbis*, the light of the whole world, now laid desolate; as Babylon, where Strabo saith their barley yielded three hundred fold increase, and their palm tree three hundred and sixty several sorts of commodities, as bread, honey, wine, vinegar, &c.; but what devastation befell it by the Medes, see **Isaiah 13:19**, &c. It were easy to instance in the seven Churches of Asia, the Palatinate and other parts of Germany, in Ireland, and now Scotland: and what may England look for? Shall we altogether pass unpunished? Shall we still sit safely under our vines and fig trees, and not be forested, and by those wild beasts of the field devoured? Sure it is, that no beast of the field doth show itself more raging or ravenous than do the wicked, when God suffers, or rather sends, them to break into his vineyard. Witness those breathing devils, the Irish rebels, more cruel than any cannibals. Cursed be their wrath; for it was cruel, transcendently so, extending itself both to the living and the dead. *Ursi non saeviunt in cadavera*: but these bears, **Psalm 58:4**, boars, **Psalm 80:13**, lions, leopards, did rage against dead carcasses, and tore them with their teeth. Histories tell us that the first founders of Rome were nourished by a wolf: certain it is that the offspring of that people have the hearts of wolves, being savage and cruel above measure. Their city was first founded in blood, and so was the papacy: for the foundation of that see was laid when Phocas slew his liege lord and emperor, Mauritius, whom he stewed in his own blood. Whence the poet wittily;

"Suffocas, Phoca, imperium; stabilisque Papatum."

The habit of that harlot is, according to her heart, purple and scarlet; and her diet is the diet of the cannibals. "I saw her drunken with the blood of the saints," **Revelation 17:6**. They are wholly bloody, both in their positions and dispositions, their plots and practices. The pope is said to be a leopard, or panther, with his feet like a bear, and his head like a lion, **Revelation 13:2**. (See Trapp on "**Revelation 13:2**") And of their St Dominic (the father of the Dominicans) it is reported, that when his mother was with child of him she dreamed that she brought forth a wolf, with a firebrand in his mouth: and he proved, accordingly, a brutish man, skilful to destroy, to devour the man more righteous than himself, by his bloody inquisitors, **Ezekiel 21:31; Habakkuk 1:2, 3**. I pray that God would deliver his turtle from these savage creatures; that he would cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land, **Ezekiel 34:25**, that the beasts of the land may no more devour them, **Ezekiel 34:28**. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 13. [[@Bible:Hosea 2:13]]{{field-on:Bible}} **And I will visit upon her the days of Baalim.** That is, I will punish the sins committed in those days wherein they went after those multitudes of heathenish gods: 30, 000; of them Hesiod reckons up in his days. And Servius upon Virgil tells us, that for fear of offending any of them they used to close up their petitions with *Diique Deaeque omnes*, All ye gods and goddesses. Some of the Hebrews by Baalim understand *Dominos domuum*, the lords of the houses: for the planets are said to have their houses. Oecolampadius understands it to be those idols which they worshipped under the name of the stars, called elsewhere the queen of heaven, or the heavenly constellations. Others by Baal conceive to be meant their chief god; called also by them Baal-samen, or the lord of heaven: by Baalim their undergods, *medioxuma numina inter mortales caelicolasque vectores*. This was Plato's Demonology. (See the note above, upon **Hosea 2:8**; of this chapter.) St Paul is

thought to have been well read in Plato's writings (his ἀναζωπτύρειν, **2 Timothy 1:6**, is *verbum Platonicum*), and to have alluded to him in that passage, **1 Corinthians 8:5, 6**: "Though there be that are called gods" (Baalim signifieth lords), "whether in heaven or in earth (as there be gods many and lords many), but to us there is but one God, the Father, and one Lord Jesus Christ," that is, but one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who indeed in regard of his human nature is inferior to the Father, but yet such a Lord by whom are all things, and we by him. The Papists acknowledge but one God, but they have many Baalims, many lords and mediators, both of intercession and of redemption too. But this is a heathenish opinion, as indeed many of theirs are: whence they are called Gentiles, in opposition to the holy city, the Church, **Revelation 11:2**.

Wherein she burnt incense to them. Which typified prayer, both in the sweet savour and ascending property; *elationibus fumi*, with pillars of smoke, **Solomon's Song 3:6**. This should have been done to God alone, He is the proper object of prayer, as being omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent; and besides in covenant with his people: he never said to the seed of Jacob, "Seek ye me in vain." No: he scorns that, and leaves that to the heathen idols to do, **Isaiah 45:18, 19**. "Our Rock is not as their rock, our enemies themselves being judges," **Deuteronomy 32:31**. He is not like Baal, that, pursuing his enemies, could not hear his friends. Nor like Jupiter of Crete, that was carved without ears, and could not be at leisure to attend small matters, no, nor greater neither, unless it were at certain times when he was pleased to look down through certain chinks in heaven, as Lucian feigneth. He is not as Diana, who, being present at Alexander's birth, could not at the same time preserve her Ephesian temple from the fire. "O thou that hearest prayer" (saith David: that is one of his titles of honour, **Psalms 65:2**), "unto thee shall all flesh come." Whither else should I go? Basil makes prayer a chain tied to God's ear and man's mouth. Jamblichus saith it is *copula qua homines cum Deo coniunguntur*, a tie wherewith men are knit unto God. Damascen saith it is an ascent of the heart to heaven, ἀνάβασις τοῦ νοῦ. The Church is said to ascend out of the world by these pillars of incense, **Solomon's Song 3:6**. And as the angel that appeared to Manoah, by ascending up in the flame of the altar, is said to do wondrously, **Judges 13:19, 20**, so do the saints by their daily devotions coming up (as Cornelius's prayers and alms did) for a memorial before God, **Acts 10:4**, and being a precious incense, **Psalms 141:2**, far beyond that of Baal priests or chimney chaplains, who were called Chemarims, or black ones, *ab incensione thuris*, from their much offering up of incense, with the smoke whereof they were blacked and sooted, as some hold, **Zephaniah 1:4**.

And she decked herself with her earrings and her jewels. Harlot-like: matrons adorn not themselves so pompously. Whence Cicero compares the Latin tongue to a grave matron; the Greek to a sumptuous harlot in all her bravery. This draws the senses, and is therefore much in use among adulterers and idolaters: as Papists, for instance, with their excessive gaiety in God's service; their palls, copes, and other mass vestments of as great price, some of them, as Demetrius', king of Macedon, robe was: which none of his successors would wear, *propter invidiosam impendii magnificentiam*, for the richness thereof. God likes no such doings today in his service. The high priest indeed of old was sumptuously attired from head to foot. *Os humerosque Deo similis*, as representing the person of God, that he might dazzle the eyes of the beholders, and breed reverence in them by such an appearance. But now it is far otherwise. *Cor aureum requirit Deus, non vestem*. God looks not for gorgeous array, but gracious hearts: faith and love within, modesty and humility without: these are things of great price in the sight of God, **1 Peter 3:4**; these beautify the soul better than Isaac's jewels did Rebecca's body. It was therefore excellent counsel that Tertullian gave the young women of his time, and may be useful to us all: *Vestite vos serico pietatis, byssino sanctitatis*. Clothe yourselves, saith he, with the silk of piety, with the satin of sanctity, with the purple of modesty (Lib. de Cult. Femin.), so shall you have God himself to be your suitor: Christ will make love to you, and

greatly desire your beauty, **Psalm 45:11**. "The king's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold," **Hosea 2:13**. She is like that Spartan woman mentioned by Plutarch, who, when her neighbours were showing their apparel and jewels, she brought out her children, virtuous and well taught, and said, These are my ornaments and jewels.

And she went after her lovers. This is oft objected to her as a foul business indeed: this was the sin that disjointed God's soul from her, to the making of her desolate, a land not inhabited, **Jeremiah 6:8**. We must take special care that no creature creep into the bridal bed between Christ and the soul: or if any do, complain to him betime, and he will play Phineas's part, as Master Bradford phraseth it.

And forget me, saith the Lord. This is reserved to the last, as the foot and root of all the forementioned evils, both of sin and punishment. See the lack of God's holy fear: **Romans 3:18**, "There is no fear of God before their eyes." And thence it is, that their throat is a gaping grave, their mouth full of gall and guile, that destruction and misery are in their ways. Fearlessness and forgetfulness of God go always together, **Jeremiah 5:22, 23**; these that remember him and his presence cannot but bear an awful respect to him. It is a problem in Aristotle, why are men credited more than other creatures. His answer is, ὅτι θεοῦ νομίζουσι, μόνον, because they believe a deity. Man alone remembereth, and therefore reverenceth God. Those therefore that so forget him, after long experience, especially of his gracious care to protect them and to provide for them, as a husband doth for the wife of his bosom, these are strange creatures, and must look to be visited and reminded of him from whom they have so deeply revolted: for of all things God cannot abide to be forgotten. See **Isaiah 17:10**; **Deuteronomy 8:11**. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 14. [[@Bible:Hosea 2:14]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Therefore, behold, I will allure her.** A strange "therefore." It may very well have "behold" at the heels of it: for the sense is this; because she hath quite forgotten me, and will never be converted of herself, I will prevent her by my mercy, recalling her mildly but mightily by my gospel. *Seducam eam et deducam in desertum*. Such another sweet text as this we have in **Isaiah 57:17, 18**: "For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him: I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart. I have seen his ways, and will heal him." Ways? what ways? his covetousness, frowardness, &c. And it is as if God should say, I see these froward children will lay nothing to heart: frowns will not humble them, blows will not better them. If I do not save them till they seek me they will never be saved: therefore I "will heal him: I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him and to his mourners: I will create the fruit of the lips peace to him." Oh, the never enough adored depth of God's free grace and superabundant love to his people! This David well understood, and therefore prayed, "Pardon my iniquity; for it is great," **Psalm 25:11**. He knew that God both could and would remit more than he could commit, and that mercy rejoiceth against judgment; while God for his own sake (though not for ours) blotteth out the thick cloud as well as the cloud, enormities as infirmities, **Isaiah 44:22**. See his *non-obstante*, **Psalm 106:8**, his resolve, **Genesis 8:21**, and his *mandamus*, **Psalm 14:4**, and then it must needs be done, though no God would do it but himself, **Micah 7:18**, though no man could imagine how it should be done, **Isaiah 55:7, 8**.

I will allure her. That is, I will effectually persuade her by the preaching of the gospel. Men may speak persuasively, but God only can persuade; they may speak to the ear, but he to the heart: and this he doth to his elect, not only by a moral persuasion, but by an irresistible inward attraction, **Acts 11:17**, by a merciful violence, by making them willing to follow the Lamb wheresoever he goeth. They kiss the Son with a kiss of love and homage, having first been kissed with the kisses of his mouth: whereupon immediately follows, "Draw me, we will run after thee," **Solomon's Song 1:1, 4**. Elisha could do more with a kiss than his man could with a staff in raising the dead child. Christ works upon his people *fortiter*, but yet *suaviter*,

powerfully, but yet sweetly, he inclineth their hearts to his testimonies, and not to covetousness, **Psalm 119:36**, and brings them to the obedience of faith, *monendo potius quam minando, docendo quam ducendo*. (*Recte Calvin textum hunc reddit, Inclino eam.*) If he do seduce them (as some render the word here) it is for no hurt, it is but to speak a word in private to them, as one friend may with another: it is but to give them his loves, as he speaks in the Canticles; to show them his glory, as he did Moses; to spread before them his beauty, and so to catch them by guile, as St Paul did the Corinthians, **2 Corinthians 12:16**; to steal away their hearts before they are aware, according to that, **Solomon's Song 6:12**, that they thenceforth may be an Aminadib, a willing people, a free hearted people, **Psalm 110:3**, waiting for the law, **Isaiah 42:4**, and walking by the rule, **Galatians 6:16**, &c. Oh, it is a blessed thing to be thus allured, thus inveigled, thus seduced out of the ways of sin and death, into the ways of holiness and happiness, by the doctrine of the gospel, which is the true πείθω, the *suadæ medulla, qua capiuntur homines, sed bone sue*, the divine rhetoric, wherewith men's minds are taken, but for their greatest good.

And I will bring her into the wilderness. Look how I at first allured my people out of Egypt, where they sat by the flesh pots, and enjoyed the pleasures of sin for a season (out of Egypt have I called my son, that I might set him higher than the kings of the earth), and brought them into the wilderness, and there extraordinarily provided for them (never was prince so served in his greatest pomp), and spake to their hearts, giving them "right judgments and true laws, good statutes and commandments," **Nehemiah 9:13**, to their great comfort, **Psalm 19:8**. So will I again do for them, and much more than so, by Christ, in the days of the gospel. Indeed, as the people at their first setting foot upon the promised land met with trouble in the valley of Achor by the sin of Achan, so shall the saints be sure of troubles: but Christ will not leave them comfortless; a door of hope he will open unto them in their deepest distresses. Death shall be unto them, not a trap-door to hell (as it is to the wicked), but an inlet into life eternal, where they shall sing the Song of Moses and the Song of the Lamb, **Revelation 15:3**. Let the saints therefore rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation. Vineyards God will give them here, some grapes at least of the heavenly Canaan beforehand, spiritual benedictions, divine comforts to sustain them, such generous wine as shall make the lips of those that are asleep to speak, **Solomon's Song 7:9**; yea, to sing, **Ephesians 5:18, 19**. Lo, such wine of the breasts and such Song s of joy shall the saints have for those vines which before he threatened to destroy, **Hosea 2:12**, and that mirth which he would cause to cease, **Hosea 2:11**. Repentance can turn crosses into comforts, and (like the philosopher's stone) make golden afflictions, **1 Peter 1:7**. As it is the fair and happy daughter of an ugly and odious mother, viz. sin, ἐχθροῦ πατρὸς φίλτατον τέκνον; so it is the mother of all mercies and benefits: for it is repentance unto life, **Acts 11:18**, yea, to salvation, and therefore never to be repented of, **2 Corinthians 7:10**. It is that rainbow, which, if God sees shining in our hearts and lives, he will not only not drown us, but do us all good.

And speak comfortably to her. Heb. speak to her heart such things as shall cheer her up, and make her heart leap and even dance *levaltos*. See **Isaiah 60:1**; cf. **1 Samuel 15:35**. Observe that the same word נָחַם *nacham*, signifieth to repent first, and then to comfort. And to this purpose it is that some translate the text thus, "After I have brought her into the wilderness," and so humbled her thoroughly, as I once did her forefathers there, I will speak to her heart: yea, I will take her alone for the purpose, even into a solitary wilderness, where I may more freely impart my mind to her (so some sense it), that having her whole desire, she may come up from the wilderness leaning upon her beloved, **Solomon's Song 8:5**, and so be brought into the bride house with all solemnity. (*Confer Genesis 34:3; Ruth 2:13; Judges 19:3. Postquam perduxero eam. After I will guide her. Tremell. Benigne alloquar. Castalio.*) {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 15. [[@Bible:Hosea 2:15]]{{field-on:Bible}} **I will give her her vineyards from thence.**

Or, from thenceforth: either from that time, or from that place. God, as out of his melting heartedness toward her, he thinks she hath suffered double for all her sins, **Isaiah 40:2** (though she think she hath suffered less than her sins, **Ezra 9:13**); so he is ready, upon her repentance, to make her (strait) a plentiful amends. He destroyed her vineyards and damped her mirth, **Hosea 2:11, 12**. Now she shall have all again, with advantage: not her grain only for necessity, but her vineyards also for delight: yea, an honest affluence of both. She shall have real manifestations of his love: and although he take her into the wilderness, yet will he not be unto her a wilderness, or a land of darkness: wherefore then should his people say, "We are lords, we will come no more unto thee?" **Jeremiah 2:31**; why should they not rather reason thus with the prodigal: "I will go to my father; for in his house is bread enough." I will return to my first husband, for then was it better with me than now. I will repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand, &c. Lo, this is the right way of reasoning, *sc.* from mercy to duty, from deliverance to obedience, **Ezra 9:14**. "The love of Christ constraineth us," saith Paul: the grace of the gospel teacheth us to deny ungodliness, and to live godly, &c. The kindness of God leadeth to repentance: and if bethought by the mercies of God to present our bodies for a sacrifice to God, how can we do otherwise? **2 Corinthians 5:14; Titus 2:14; Romans 2:4; Romans 12:1**. If God bring vineyards out of wildernesses, comforts out of crosses, meat out of eaters, honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock, that is, mercies out of difficulties, they must needs be very hardhearted that are not melted and mollified thereby, **Deuteronomy 32:13**.

And the valley of Achor for a door of hope. The valley was near unto Jericho, that city of palm trees, and was fertile, fat, and full of vines, **Isaiah 65:10**, thought to be the same with Engeddi, which is often mentioned in the Canticles. This valley was a kind of door or inlet into the promised land: and here they began first to eat of the fruits of the land, which they had so much longed for, **Joshua 5:12**, and now hoped for the enjoyment of the whole; whereof that valley was a pledge and earnest. Hereby, then, is covertly promised to God's people deliverance by Christ, together with the firstfruits and earnest of the Spirit, whereby they shall be brought to an assured hope of the harvest of happiness, of the whole bargain of Christ's benefits. *Spes in humanis incerti nomen boni: spes in divinis nomen est certissimi*; **Hebrews 11:1**, this is hope unfailable, as proceeding from faith unfeigned, which can believe God upon his bare word, and that against sense in things invisible, and against reason in things incredible. It can take a man out of the valley of Achor, that is, of trouble, (*see Joshua 7:6*) and set him on the everlasting mountains, where, as from Pisgah, he may have a full prospect of heaven; the hope whereof maketh absent joys present, wants plenitudes, and beguiles calamity (as good company doth the way), yea, looks upon it as an inlet to mercy, a promise whereof to apostatizing Israel some make this fat valley of Achor to be, *dotis nomine*, as a dowry; in allusion to the manner of the Jews in their marriages, to give some piece of ground to the spouse as a pledge.

And she shall sing there. As rejoicing in hope, **Romans 12:12**. *Et res plena gaudio et spes*, as Bernard hath it. "They shall shout for joy, they shall also sing," **Psalms 65:13**. Some think the prophet here alludeth to that custom of the Jews to sing in the time of their vintage, see **Judges 9:27; Isaiah 16:10**. Others will have it to be an allusion to their marriage Song s; that being the time of the rejoicing of a man's heart, **Solomon's Song 3:11**, viz. at the recovery of his lost rib. The Septuagint render it, she shall be humbled; and indeed the word signifieth both to be humbled and to sing. Some are humbled, but not humble; low, but not lowly; these must look for more load; but they that mourn in a godly manner are sure to be comforted. God will turn all their sighing into singing; they shall sing aloud upon their beds, which they have soaked in tears, and made to swim again, as David, **Psalms 6:6**. A reconciled condition is a singing condition. Bernard was so overjoyed at his conversion, that he was almost beside himself. Cyprian telleth his friend, Donatus, that his comforts then were inexpressible. Austin saith the

like of himself. The saints cannot but sing at this door of hope, though they be not yet got in at it. See **Psalm 138:5**, "they shall sing in the ways of the Lord," though they be yet but wayfarers. "God's statutes are their Song s even in the house of their pilgrimage," **Psalm 119:54**, as hoping to sing shortly in the "height of Zion, to flow to the bountifulness of the Lord," **Jeremiah 31:12**. "As in the days of her youth, and in the day when she came up," &c., out of a low country, but a lower condition; being shiftless and succourless (helpless). Then did God put timbrels into their hands and ditties into their mouths. See **Exodus 15:20**. And so it is here said, he will do again in the time of the gospel. Let our non-singers here take notice, that singing (and that jointly with others) is a gospel ordinance; and for further proof let them read Mr Cotton's excellent treatise upon this subject. **{{field-off:Bible}}**

Verse 16. **[[@Bible:Hosea 2:16]]{{field-on:Bible}}** **And it shall be in that day.** A sweet promise of a thorough reformation, much like that **Zechariah 13:2**. God will turn to his people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord to serve him with one shoulder, **Zephaniah 3:9**, for which end he forms their speech for them, and tutors them here how to term him. *Ishi* they must call him, but not *Baali*, my husband, but not my lord: not that there was any hurt in the word, my Baal or Lord; but because it had been abused and given to idols, God would have none of it (so Tyrannus, *fur sophista*); or because it was grown among the better sort a name of contempt: like as for the same reason the word burden is rejected, **Jeremiah 23:36**. Or lastly, lest the people, while they spoke of one thing, should think of another; and naming Baal, should be put in mind of an idol. This is Jerome's reason. Some distinguish thus between the two words, that *Ish* is a name of love, *Baal* of fear (Lyra). Others observe that *Ish* signifieth an excellent man, and is therefore made choice of as every way better than *Baal*, or Lord (Oecolamp.). Augustus forbade men to call him Lord; and desired rather that more amiable name of Father of his country. It is wisdom, when we call upon God, to make choice of fit titles, not only such as he in his word hath warranted, but also such as may be suitable to our requests, and helpful to our faith in prayer; such as wherein we may see the thing prayed for coming towards us, as it were. This will notably excite devotion. Instances of it, see **Psalm 80:1; Acts 1:24; 4:24-30**; Note there and in the next verse, that there is no small danger in words and names. What a deal of mischief hath the word Huguenot done in France, and Puritan here. In 1572, Cardinal Allen at Rheims instructed his emissary seducers, sent over hither, to divide the people under the names of Protestant and Puritan: provoking them thereby to real and mutual both hate and contempt. His Rheimists in their annotations on **1 Timothy 1:20**; warn their readers of using the words of heretics (so they call us), though they have no great hurt in them, and hold to their old terms of mass, penance, priest, &c. They call us innovators, but we may call them so bettor. The truth is, we may not teach *nova*, new truths nor yet *nove* novelties. Castalion cannot be excused in his *Iana Genius Respublica* for *ecclesia* and other affected novelties. Melancthon's wish was that men would not only teach the same things, but *in iisdem verbis, in iisdem syllabis*, in the same words, yea, in the same syllables; for he that feigneth new words brings in new doctrines (it may be thought), as did Arminius. And yet it is not many years since here, among us, that he that would not be an Arminian was held no better than a practical Puritan. But let us keep our old words (said those veterans), and we shall easily keep our old faith. The devil doth sometimes speak the truth for his own ends. But was Winchester well advised when he made the Lord, and not to say our Lord, to be *symbolum haereticorum*, a note of a heretic. Or Dr Story, whose rule to know a heretic was this, they will say the Lord, and we praise God, and the living God. This was not *Novum nomen*, new name but *Novum crimen*, new fault, Gaius Caesar. Much like that of Pope Paul II, who pronounced them heretics that did not name the name academy either in earnest or in jest; and another pope made it heresy to hold that there were any in direct opposition to. **{{field-off:Bible}}**

Verse 17. **[[@Bible:Hosea 2:17]]{{field-on:Bible}}** **For I will take away the names of Baalim**

out of her mouth. So precise she shall be, so circumspect, according to **Exodus 23:13**, that she should spit out of her mouth those dunghill deities with utmost contempt, as David had done before her, **Psalms 16:4**. If bodily filthiness may not be once named among Christians, **Ephesians 5:3**, why should spiritual? The primitive Christians would not call their days of the week by the heathenish names of *Dies Martis*, *Dies Mercurii*, &c. (as Mercurius Trismegist had superstitiously named them), but the first, second, third, &c., day of the week: as not willing to have the names of those idols mentioned among God's people. Mentioned they may be (no doubt), recitative without sin, as Baal is, **Romans 11:4**, and Castor and Pollux, **Acts 28:11**, but not *honoris gratia*, for honour's sake, or without some expression of detestation of them; such as was that of Cyril, who, speaking of paganish idolatries, breaks out thus, **Βορβορουμεθα ταῦτα λέγοντες**, we rake a dunghill in a discourse of dunghill gods. What a pathetic speech or rather shriek is that of Almighty God, **Jeremiah 44:4**, "Oh! do not this abominable thing": do not honour idols in the least. Shall I bow my knee to yonder jackanapes? said that martyr, pointing to the Rood in Paul's. Should I kiss Baal? as, they did **1 Kings 19:18**; or so much as kiss my hand in honour to him? as **Job 31:27**; were not this to deny the God that is above **Job 31:28**. And how can those be excused that have so often in their mouths *Iupiter omnipotens* *Mehurcule*, *Mecastor*, *et caetera magis portenta quam numina*, saith Jerome? and those that think their verses nothing so neat, unless there be often naming, and sometimes invoking too, of Apollo Minerva, Venus, &c.? Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? **James 3:11**. Those that say they think no hurt in all this are no more excused thereby than he, that said (Ovid),

"Lasciva est nobis pagina, vita proba."

Those who thus borrow garnish from the Egyptians may therewith get their botches and boils. Howsoever, they may fear to have Bellarmine himself (who was no precisian) to rise up in judgment against them and condemn them; who would not have Paul called *Divus Paulus*, Divine Paul, but *Beatus*, blessed, because *Divus* and *Diva* were the words of the heathens for their gods and goddesses.

And they shall no more be remembered. so without indignation and detestation, without: "What have I to do any more with idols?" "Get you hence," **Hosea 14:1; Isaiah 30:22** *Abite hinc, abite longe*, Away from here, be far gone, as Charles V said of all his worldly pomp and achievements at the last as Amnon thrust Tamar out of doors when he had had his will of her, when he had moiled himself in that filthy guzzle, and sullied his conscience. "She multiplied her whoredoms" (saith the prophet) "in calling to remembrance the days of her youth wherein she had played the harlot in the land of Egypt," **Ezekiel 23:21; Hosea 2:8**. Not the new scent of meat, but the remembrance of their old flesh pots moved Israel they found sweetness in a lust twice sod, they had still the "broth of those abominable things in their vessels," as the prophet Isaiah hath phrased it, **Isaiah 65:4**. To remember with delight sins past is to recommit them; and herein the deceitful heart is with all care to be looked unto, that when we call to mind former evil practices, though with an intent to be humbled for them, we be not insnared, and drawn to commit them afresh by being tickled in the thought of them. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 18. [[@Bible:Hosea 2:18]]{{field-on:Bible}} **And in that day will I make my covenant for them with the beasts**, &c. At the first creation all things were subject to man on this condition that he should be subject to his Maker as his master. *Rebellis autem facta est quia homo numini, creatura homini* (Augustin). But no sooner did man rebel against God but the creature began to rebel against him. Look how a nobleman's servants wilt draw in defence of their lord, and soldiers fight for their general: so here, God is Lord of hosts. "They continue this day according to thine ordinance" (and fight in their courses, **Judges 5:20**), "for they are all thy servants," **Psalms 119:91**; ready pressed they are to seize a sinner, and to do execution upon him, as a traitor, and rebel to the highest majesty: as the sword that Hector gave Ajax

turned into his own bowels, when once he began to abuse it to the hurt of hurtless creatures. Now here God promiseth to abolish that enmity, to make peace, even *pacem omnimodam*, peace, peace, as the prophet Isaiah hath it, **Isaiah 26:8**, a multiplied peace, a perfect, sheer, pure peace with God, with themselves, with all creatures; and to restore them in Christ that dominion they once had over the works of his hands, **Psalms 8:6; Hebrews 2:7**, yea, power over all nations, **Revelation 2:26**, with a promise that all shall work together for their good, **Romans 8:28**, and they shall be fully freed, if not from the smart, yet from the hurt of every creature. Compare **Ezekiel 34:25; Job 5:23; Isaiah 11:6, 7**, where the prophet seemeth to allude to the carriage of the beasts in Noah's ark, all bloodiness and rapine laid aside. The Jews foolishly argue, from these texts, that Christ is not yet come, because the lion yet rageth, the wolf devoureth, serpents yet sting, and spare not the beast. And some interpreters of ours are of the opinion, that these promises shall be literally fulfilled at the restitution of all things, which they make to be at the time of the call of the Jews. But when I find Nebuchadnezzar and other enemies of the Church to be called lions, leopards, wolves, &c., as **Jeremiah 5:6**, and elsewhere, I cannot but think that these might be here meant, in part at least, *ponentque ferocia Poeni cords volente Deo* (Virg.); according to Peter's vision, **Acts 10:10-16**, and that God will so meeken the spirits of his converts, that they shall not hurt nor destroy in all his holy mountain, **Isaiah 11:9**. The literal sense is very good, I grant; but yet it is still to be taken (as all such promises are), 1. with exception of the cross here, 2. with expectation of the full accomplishment hereafter, in the state of perfection.

And I will break the bow, and the sword, and the battle out of the earth. These words seem to be opposed to that threat, **Hosea 1:5**, "I will break the bow of Israel," &c. And it is as if he should say, After that I have broken their power, and tamed their pride by the enemies' forces, then I will punish those enemies, and so take order with them, that they shall not hurt my people by any of their hostilities. Lo, peace is a piece of God's covenant; and covenant mercies are very sweet, when all the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth, **Psalms 25:10**; not mercy only, but truth too, that comes by virtue of a covenant. Mark what God saith to Abraham, **Genesis 17:20, 21**; I have blessed Ishmael; twelve princes shall he beget: but my covenant will I establish to Isaac. And in the same chapter, divines observe, that in ten verses thereof God repeateth his covenant which he made with Abraham thirteen times, to note thus much, that that was the mercy indeed that must satisfy Abraham in all his troubles, sorrows, and afflictions: for the covenant of God's peace shall not be removed, no, not "when the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed," **Isaiah 54:10**. "The Lord will give strength to his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace," **Psalms 29:11**.

And will make them to lie down safely. Being gathered under my wings, they shall repose themselves upon my power and providence, committing themselves to me in well doing. All true and solid security, whether inward or outward; all true peace, whether of country or of conscience, floweth from God's favour. **Psalms 3:3-4:8**; Hence the apostle wisheth grace and peace, and the angels sang, "Glory be to God on high, and peace on earth," even the peace of goodwill toward men, the goodwill of him that dwelt in the bush, **Ephesians 1:2; Luke 2:14; Deuteronomy 33:16**. "The Lord is with me," saith David, "I will not fear what man can do unto me." I will sleep and wake, and wake and sleep again; for the Lord sustaineth me, **Psalms 4:8**. No wonder I slept so soundly and safely (said King Philip) when Antipater watched me. Abner watched not so well, when David fetched away Saul's spear and pitcher, and was barely told of it. Ishbosheth was slain while he slept. The saints go ever under a double guard, the peace of God within them, and the power of God without them, and may therefore, *in utramque aurem dormire*, lie down safely, (see **Jeremiah 23:6**) call their souls to rest, **Philippians 4:7; 1 Peter 1:5; Leviticus 26:5; Psalms 116:7**. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 19. [[@Bible:Hosea 2:19]]{{field-on:Bible}} **And I will betroth thee unto me for ever.** This, because it could not be easily believed, is thrice repeated. We believe not (whatever men

may dream to the contrary) without much ado and many conflicts. When faith goes about to lay hold on Christ, the devil raps her on the fingers, and would beat her off. Hence she is fain to take great pains for it, to work hard for her living. The apostle speaks more than once of the work of faith, τὸ ἔργον τῆς πίστεως, **1 Thessalonians 1:3; 2 Thessalonians 1:11**. And it is no less difficult (say divines) to believe the gospel than to fulfil the law. No man can come unto the Son except the Father draw him, **John 6:44**. The soul naturally hangs back, and had as lief put off its immortality as put on Christ: the devil also doth his utmost to hinder. The contest was not so great between Michael and him concerning Moses' dead body as it is here between the believer and him concerning Christ's living body. And should not God mightily assist, the business would never be done. Hence faith is called the faith of God's power, **Colossians 2:12**, the faith of his operation; and what an Almighty power God doth therein put forth is elegantly described by the apostle in that sixfold gradation, **Ephesians 1:19**, which shows it to be more than a moral persuasion. Betroth thee, I will, I will, I will, saith God here; and some think the sacred Trinity is hero (though darkly, according to the manner of those times) brought in betrothing the Church in this *trina repetitio*. threefold repitition. And mark, that he doth not say, I will be reconciled unto thee, and receive thee again after thy foul plays with me (for *Reconciliationes fere sunt vulpinae amicitiae inter homines*, Men are seldom reconciled heartily), but I will espouse thee, marry thee unto me, and that for ever. I will null the bill of divorce, love you no less than if you had continued true to me, or were now a pure virgin. *Quis hanc Dei bonitatem digne collaudet?* saith Drusius. Who can sufficiently set forth this goodness of God? When God once pardoneth sin, he will remember it no more; he will not come with back reckonings. Discharges in justification are never repealed or called in again. *Peccata non redeunt* sins are not returned, is a true axiom; and it is no less true that *peccata non minuunt iustificationem*. God can pardon sins of all sizes, and as soon disperse the thick cloud as the cloud, **Isaiah 44:22**. See the matchlessness of his mercy to a repenting adulteress, **Jeremiah 3:5**. What greater love can he show to her than to marry her again, and rejoice over her as a bridegroom rejoiceth over his bride, **Isaiah 62:5**. Yea, to rest in his love, and to joy over her with singing, **Zephaniah 3:17**, and to do this for ever (as it is here promised), so that there shall be no more breach of conjugal love and communion for ever between them. *Area amorem illius*, Oh love this love of his, saith Bernard, and reciprocate. And as the wife will keep her bed only for her husband (saith Mr Bradford, martyr), although in other things she is content to have fellowship with others, as to speak, sit, eat, drink, go, &c.; so our consciences (which are Christ's wives) must needs keep the bed, that is, God's sweet promises, alone for ourselves and our husband; there to meet together, to embrace and laugh together, and to be joyful together. If sin, the law, the devil, or anything would creep into the bed, and lie there, then complain to thine husband Christ, and forthwith thou shalt see him play Phineas' part; and again, if Satan should summon us, saith he, to answer for our sins, or debts, in that the wife is no suitable person, but the husband, we may well bid him enter his action against our husband Christ, and he will make him a sufficient answer. Thus Mr Bradford in a certain letter of his unto a friend.

In righteousness and in judgment, in lovingkindness, &c. These are the gems of that ring that Christ bestoweth upon his spouse, saith Mercer. These are those **κειμήλια**, or love tokens, that Christ the bridegroom giveth to his bride the Church, saith Tarnovius. Here he promiseth to perform to her, and to work in her, all those offices and requisites due from married couples in that estate the one to the other. God will both justify her by the imputation of Christ's righteousness; and sanctify her by the Spirit of judgment, that is, of sanctification. (See **John 16:10, 11; Matthew 12:20**) (See Trapp on "Matthew 12:20") And because the best have their frailties, and although they be vessels of honour, yet are they but earthen vessels, and have their flaws, their cracks; therefore it is added, "I have betrothed thee unto me in lovingkindness and in mercies," *q.d.* My heart and ways towards you shall be full of gentleness and sweetness, without morosity or hardness. My lovingkindness shall be great, **Nehemiah 9:17**, marvellous great, **Psalms 31:21**, excellent, **Psalms 36:7**, everlasting, **Isaiah 54:8**, merciful,

Psalm 117:2, multitudes of lovingkindnesses, **Isaiah 63:7**; as for my mercies, or bowels of compassion towards you, they are incomprehensible, as having all the dimensions, **Ephesians 3:18**. "Thy mercy, O God, reacheth unto the heavens," there is the height of it, **Psalm 36:5**. "Great is thy mercy towards me, and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowermost hell," there is the depth of his mercy, **Psalm 86:13**. "The earth is full of thy goodness," there is the breadth of it. "All the ends of the earth have seen thy salvation," there is the length of it. O pray to see that blessed sight, **Ephesians 1:18; 3:18**, that beholding, as in a glass, this glory of the Lord, shining bright in his attributes, you may be "transformed into the same image, from glory to glory," **2 Corinthians 3:18**; and as in water face answereth face, as lead answereth the mould, as tallow answereth tallow, indenture, indenture, so may we resemble and express the Lord, our husband, in righteousness, holiness, lovingkindness, tender mercies, and faithfulness, that as the woman is the image and glory of the man, so may we be of Christ. For our encouragement it must be remembered that the covenant that Christ maketh with us is a double covenant, to perform his part as well as ours, to make us such as he requireth us to be in all holy conversation and godliness; for which end, also, we have a duplicate of his law written in our hearts, **Jeremiah 31:33**, a law in our mind, answerable to the law of his mouth, **Romans 7:23**. In a word, he graciously undertaketh for both parts; therefore is the covenant everlasting, and the fruits of it are sure mercies, compassions that fail not. *In foedere nero nihil potest incidere quo minus sit aeternum, quum non sit ei adiecta conditio*, saith Mercer upon this text; that is, in the new covenant there can nothing happen whereby it should not be everlasting, since there is no condition required on our part. That faith or faithfulness mentioned in the next verse God requireth not as a mutual restipulation of our part (as works were in the old covenant); but here it is rather a declaration of his pleasure what he would have us to do, and whereto he will enable us. It is not a condition, to endanger the covenant; but an assurance, that he will give us strength to keep it. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 20. [[@Bible:Hosea 2:20]]{{field-on:Bible}} **I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness.** Tremellius, Drusius, and Tarnovius render it *in fide*, in faith, and interpret it of *de fide vera et salvifica*, of that true justifying faith whereby we are united to Christ; and for this they urge the next words as an exposition of these. "And they shall know the Lord": alleging some other texts of Scripture wherein saving knowledge is put for justifying faith, as **Isaiah 53:11; Jeremiah 31:33 John 17:3**. The Septuagint also render it ἐπίγνωσις. Now ἐπίγνωσις in the New Testament is often used for saving and growing faith, **Titus 1:1; Colossians 2:1; 3:10**, which indeed is the bond of the spiritual marriage, and is itself nothing else but a fiducial assent presupposing knowledge. For man is a rational creature, faith a prudent thing, comprehending in itself these three acts; 1. Knowledge in the understanding; 2. Assent, or rather consent, in the will; 3. Trust or confidence in the heart; certainty of adherence, if not of evidence. The Papists fasten faith in the will as in the adequate subject, that they may the meanwhile do what they will with the understanding and the heart. To which purpose they exclude all knowledge, and detest trust in Christ's promises, expunging the very name of it everywhere by their *Indices Expurgatorii*. A blind belief, as the Church believes, is as much as they require of their misled and muzzled proselytes. Bellarmine saith that faith may far better be defined by ignorance than by knowledge. But how shall men believe on him of whom they have not heard? Let us leave to the Papists their implicit faith and their blind obedience, and cry after Christ as that poor man did, "Lord, that mine eyes might be opened," and that I may "know the Lord"; yea, "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." "These things have I written unto you" (saith St John to those that were no babies or zanies in faith or knowledge) "that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may (yet more) believe in the Son of God," **1 John 5:13**. David, though he had proceeded farther in the discovery of divine truths than those before him, **Psalm 119:99**, yet he was still to seek of that which might be known, **Psalm 119:96**. Even as those great discoverers of the newly found lands in America were wont to confess, at their return, that

there was still a *plus ultra*, more yet, to be discovered. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 21. [[@Bible:Hosea 2:21]]{{field-on:Bible}}**And it shall come to pass in that day.** In that time of grace and reconciliation, fitly set forth by the name of a day in regard of, 1. Revelation; 2. Adornment; 3. Consolation; 4. Distinction; 5. Speedy preterition.

I will hear, saith the Lord of hosts. That is, I that have the command of both the upper and nether springs and forces, sun, moon, stars, &c., **Deuteronomy 4:9**, those storehouses of God's good treasure which he openeth to our profit, **Deuteronomy 28:12**, and therehence makes a scatter of riches upon the earth by their influence. I that stop and unstop those bottles of the sky, the clouds, which there hang and move, though weighty with their own burden; I that make the earth to bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and meat to the eater, **Isaiah 55:10**, &c.

I will hear the heavens. Heb. I will answer, that is, I will so hear as that I will answer; so will not great ones sometimes, or if they do, yet the poor man speaks supplications, but the rich answereth him roughly, **Proverbs 18:23**. Solyman II, the grand signor, when many thousands of his poor Christian subjects, to be eased of their heavy taxations, fell down before him and offered to turn Mahometans, rejected their conversion, and doubled their taxations. God hath here a great sort of suppliants (the poets feign that *litae*, or supplications, are always about Jupiter); the heaven, the earth, the grain, &c., and he heareth and speedeth them all. Never any humble petitioner went sad out of his presence. Never said he to the house of Israel, Seek ye me in vain. The heathen idols may do so, but he scorns it. "Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain? or can the heavens give flowers?" **Jeremiah 14:22**. Surely they cannot, till God have heard and answered them. The genealogy of rain, of grain, and wine is here resolved into Jehovah; and he promiseth to endow his beloved spouse with them as part (though the least part) of her jointure. "All are yours, for you are Christ's," **1 Corinthians 3:23**. In marrying with the heir you have right to all. Here is *omnium rerum ubertas ob Dei semen Christum*, saith Jerome, plenty of all things for Christ's sake, who, wherever he comes, cometh with a cornucopia; a horn of salvation, besides a largess of outward comforts. This was a very necessary doctrine at all times to be taught in the Church, lest, pressed with miseries, men should faint in their minds. Christ knows we have need of these things also, and therefore not only bids us pray, but promiseth to give us our daily bread by a concatenation of causes, by a ladder of providences, which the heathens call destiny, but the saints call it the harmony of the world; a gallant description whereof we have in **Ezekiel 1**, far different from the Stoics' fate or the doctrine of Plato and Aristotle, and other of the world's wizards, concerning the Divine providence, which they either denied or imbasd.

And they shall hear the earth. Which, being chapped and scorched, seemeth to solicit showers and fattening influences by an elegant personification, as if these insensible creatures understood what they did. When men are once in covenant with God all the creatures will be serviceable to them, yea, greedy to do them good, they will even cry for it. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 22. [[@Bible:Hosea 2:22]]{{field-on:Bible}}**And the earth shall hear.** That is, shall bear great store of grain, wine, and oil (*vinum pendulum*, i.e. *uvas*). New and fresh oil the word signifies, newly expressed, clear and shining, such as is called golden oil, **Zechariah 4:12**. God's dear children shall have the best of the best, **Isaiah 55:1-6**. Even the kidneys of wheat, or whatsoever dainties the earth can afford them. They shall suck honey out of the rock; or, if it be but water, yet it shall be to them as sweet as honey, because therein they taste and see the Lord's goodness, and they have meat to eat that the world knows not of.

And they shall hear Jezreel. That is, they shall answer the pains and prayers of God's people, who are here called Jezreel still (though the Septuagint read it Israel), not to upbraid them with their former wickedness and calamities thereby procured (which yet was the first reason

of that name given them, **Hosea 1:4**), but rather to set forth the riches of his grace imparted to such a graceless people. And in addition to show that nothing could hinder them from partaking of those covenant mercies and that happy communion with God whereto they were now restored. This very name of theirs, once their shame, should now turn to their glory. Of Jezreel, scattered by God (which is one signification of the name), they should become Jezreel, a seed of God (which is another), that they might comfort themselves with the hope of Christ, the promised seed, and know that their posterity should not so degenerate into gentility, but that many of them should embrace Christ and inherit the promises, as did Araunah the Jebusite, who became a famous proselyte, **Zechariah 9:7**, (*See Trapp on "Zechariah 9:7"*) and as Jether the Ishmeelite, **1 Chronicles 2:17**, was for his faith and religion called an Israelite, **2 Samuel 17:25**, and as Christ calleth himself Jesus of Nazareth, as a title of honour, which was once cast upon him as a reproach. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 23. [[@Bible:Hosea 2:23]]{{field-on:Bible}}**And I will sow her unto me in the earth.** Not in the air, as once, when they were scattered into the four winds of heaven; but in the earth which the heavens should hear, **Hosea 2:21**, the inhabitants whereof should be multiplied, and become as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered, **Hosea 1:10**, (*See Trapp on "Hosea 1:10"*) and **Jeremiah 31:27; Ezekiel 36:37**. The preaching of the gospel is a kind of sowing of seed, **1 Peter 1:23**, and this seeding is in the earth, that they may be gathered into heaven, where the mower shall fill his hand, and he that bindeth sheaves his bosom, **Psalms 129:7**. And although God's elect lie here for a time under the clods, yet at length they shall fructify, and many spring from them by whom the name of Christ shall be so propagated. "He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand," **Isaiah 53:10**.

And I will have mercy upon her. Her unhappy name, Lorubamah, shall be done away, and the contrary come in place. Lo! this is as it were the epilogue of the sermon, and it is very comfortable. The Sun of righteousness loves not to set in a cloud. "Gracious is the Lord, and righteous, yea, our God is merciful." Be it that he is once righteous, yet he is both gracious and merciful for it, **Psalms 116:5**. The Jews, for their seventy years' captivity in Babylon, had seven seventies of years (set forth by Daniel's weeks) granted for the enjoying of their own country. God's mercies bear the same proportion to his punishments (when he hath to deal with his elect people) which seven, a complete number, hath to a unity. This promise here made the apostle testifieth, **Romans 9:25**, to be begun to be fulfilled in his time by the conversion of some Jews, and calling of some Gentiles. The full accomplishment thereof we daily expect and pray for.

And I will say to them. That is, I will make them so, as when he said to Lazarus, Come forth of the grave, he brought him forth; together with his word there went forth a power.

And they shall say. *Dicere nostra est fides et obedientia nostra*, saith Pareus here; we say thus when we believe and obey. There shall be, restored, therefore, between God and his people a most sweet harmony, and an intimate conjunction, such as he had before described to be between himself and all the second causes, for his Church's sake; and truly it is never well with us, indeed, till the heavens answer the earth till Christ, the Sun of righteousness, so shine into our hearts, that we melt and comply as here, and as **Zechariah 13:9**. (*See Trapp on "Zechariah 13:9"*) {{field-off:Bible}}

Chapter 3

Verse 1. [[@Bible:Hosea 3:1]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Then said the Lord unto me, Go yet, &c.** This yet is emphatic: and it is as if he had said, Go over the same subject again in shorter discourse, and lay before them the same truths, but in more lively colours, that the obstinate may be left without excuse, and the penitent may not be left without comfort. *Iterun abi*, Go to them once more, and be instant with them, or stand over them, as St Paul saith, **2 Timothy 4:2** (ἐπίστηθι), and as St Paul doth, in crying down the Jews' conceit of being justified by the works of the law, and in disgracing the sin of fornication so common at Corinth. Chrysostom at Antioch having preached sundry sermons agaist swearing, was at length asked when he would preach upon another subject? He answered, when you leave swearing I will leave preaching against swearing. Austin (De Doct. Christian.) would have a preacher so long to pursue and press the same point, until, by the gesture and countenance of the hearers, he perceive that they understand it, and will practise it. This is to whet the word of God upon people (as Moses' phrase is) by going oft over the same thing, as the knife doth the whetstone. (**Deuteronomy 6:7**, *Shanan et Shanah repetere sicut in acuendo*) A like type to the former is here first propounded, secondly expounded, that at length it might fasten. A preacher must not desist, though at first he prevail not (as some from this second injunction collect, that this prophet would have done), but he must turn himself into all manner of shapes and fashions both of speech and of spirit to win people to God, with all longsuffering and doctrine, **2 Timothy 4:2**. And this the Lord here teacheth Hosea to do by his own example of patience and tolerance, notably set forth in this ensuing type.

Love a woman beloved of her friend, yet an adulteress. This was a harder task than to take her, **Hosea 1:2**, in hope she would prove honest. But now that she hath played the adulteress and so deserved to be discarded, yet to love her, yea, and that when she is habituated and hardened in her lewd practices (as the Hebrew word signifieth), *Durus est sic sermo*, who can bear it? (*Non tam actum quam habitum significat. Rivet.*) If none else can, yet God both can and will, as appeareth by this whole parable, wherein the prophet is commanded to represent God, as in the former type, **Hosea 1:4, 5; 9-11**, and by loving that wife which he had taken before, though she had played false with him, to show what was the love of God toward Israel. She forsaketh me, saith he, who give her all the good she either hath or hopeth for, and followeth after those that put bottles of wine to her mouth, she loves those flagons, &c. Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, &c.: howbeit I will not relinquish her, but will love her freely as if she had never offended me. O matchless mercy! *O cocnio plena consolationis!* O most comfortable sermon! God so loved the world, the *mundus immundus*, dirty world, that he gave his only begotten Son. This was a *sic* so, without a *sicut*, like, there being nothing in nature that can possibly parallel it. See **Romans 5:8**. God loveth apostates, idolaters, adulterers, yet not as such, but as he intendeth and respecteth their conversion to himself; which nothing will sooner effect than the sense of such an undeserved love. I am not ignorant that another sense is set upon these words, as thus; Go, yet love a woman not married, as yet but espoused unto thee, who may hereafter be thy wife, but is for her adultery rejected for a long season: so God loved the Israelites as an adulterous spouse, and therefore for a long while neglected, but yet at length to be taken by him to wife, according to **Hosea 2:15, 19**.

Beloved of her friend. *sc.* of some paramour, as **Jeremiah 3:1**, "thou hast played the harlot with many lovers." These the Greeks called ἑταῖρους, fellow friends; the whore was called ἑταῖρα: so they flattered their own vices, putting gilded names on them, as our blades name drunkenness good fellowship, harlots, she sinners, &c. The Septuagint render it a woman that loveth naughty things or naughty packs. But I like the former interpretation better, and it is agreeable to the Chaldee Paraphrast.

Who look to other gods. Look and lust, *ut vidi! ut perii!* The mind lodgeth in the eye, and looketh out at that window of wickedness. "If I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking in brightness, and my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand," &c., **Job 31:26, 27**, alludeth to the practice of those old idolaters, which was to kiss their idols, if they could reach them, as **1 Kings 19:18**. (Cicero tells of the image of Hercules *cuius mentum osculis adorantium attritum fuit* who chin he will kiss and rub, and the Papists so kiss their pictures, that hard marble is worn with it, saith Sir Edwin Sands an eyewitness.) But when they could not come at the idol to kiss it, they looked up and kissed their hand, in token of homage; and this was called adoration (*quasi applicatio manus ad os*). This looking to other gods, imports a turning towards them. See **Deuteronomy 31:18, 20**, a loving them, a longing after them, and an expectation of some good from them. No wonder, therefore, that such whorish hankerings and honings were offensive to the jealous and just God: "but the unjust knoweth no shame," **Zephaniah 3:5**; men are forbidden so much as to lift up their eyes to their idols, **Ezekiel 23:27**. And shall I lift up mine eyes unto the hills (saith David, as some read that text), as if from thence came my help? **Psalms 121:1**. *Absit*. God forbid. Christ's spouse hath a dove's chaste eye, **Solomon's Song 4:1**; and he would have her like that Persian lady, who being at Cyrus's wedding, and asked how she liked the bridegroom? How? saith she, I know not. I saw nobody there but my husband.

And love flagons of wine. Luxury is the ordinary companion of idolatry, as **Exodus 32:6; 1 Corinthians 10:7; Revelation 18:13, 14**. See **Judges 9:27; Amos 2:8**. *O monachi vestri stomachi*, &c. Oh king of your belly. At Paris and Louvain the best wine is called *vinum theologicum*, the divinity wine; it is also called *vinum cos*, wine of the consul, *i.e. caloris, odoris, saporis optimi*. the best warmth, fragrance and taste. Those clergy locusts lick up all; those abbey lubbers are good for nothing but to devour grain, like vermin; those wine bibbers and flesh mongers (as Solomon calleth them) are no better than the excrements of human society, *gelulim*, belly gods, and fit servants of those dung hill gods, as idols are called, **Habakkuk 2:18, 19; cf. Jeremiah 10:3-5**. And a scavenger, whose living is to empty privies, is far to be preferred before such a one, as, looking to other gods, and making his gut his god, lives but to fill privies. For a flagon of wine, or a meal's meat, any god may soon have the hearts and the services of such as have (Poliphemus-like) no supreme deity but their belly. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 2. [[@Bible:Hosea 3:2]]{{field-on:Bible}} **So I bought her to me.** God is to be obeyed, though it go never so much against the heart and the hair with us. ἘΠΟΥ Τῷ ΘΕῷ. Follow God, was a heathen but an honest precept (Epictet.). This he that would do, must first deny himself, and say, with that Dutch divine, *Veniat, veniat, verbum Dei*, &c., Let a word of command come forth from God, and we will submit thereto, though we had six hundred lives to lose, yea, though we can see no reason for it. Indeed, in human governments, where reason is shut out, there tyranny is thrust in. But where God commandeth, there to ask a reason is presumption; to oppose reason is flat rebellion.

I bought her to me for fifteen pieces of silver. That is, fifteen shekels, or shillings, or thereabouts; no great price it was that he gave for her, whether for hire or dowry; probably it was in order to marrying her, and in reference to that law, **Deuteronomy 21:11**. Israel was once a precious people, God's peculiar treasure, such as comprehended all his gettings. The Jews have a saying, that those seventy souls that went down with Jacob into Egypt were more worth than all the seventy nations of the earth beside. But now, behold, how cheap they are grown; they are valued all of them at fifteen pieces of silver, a goodly price, **Zechariah 11:12; Matthew 27:9**. If the tongue of the righteous be as choice silver, yet the heart of the wicked is little worth, **Proverbs 10:20**. There (as in the sea) is that leviathan (the king of all the children of pride), and there are creeping things innumerable, crawling lusts, and lawless passions; but for anything of worth, it is not there to be had. Hence, as at the last destruction of Jerusalem, thirty Jews were sold for one penny, so here the whole body of the nation are bought and sold

for a small sum. "How weak is thine heart" (how light cheap), saith the Lord God to this light housewife, "seeing thou dost all these things, the work of an imperious whorish woman?"

Ezekiel 16:30. God and his people reckon of men by their righteousness. He looked down from heaven to see who sought after God, **Psalms 14:3**. As for others, he regards them no more than men do dross, draft, chaff, or such like refuse stuff, **Psalms 119:119; 1:4**, &c., whatever great thoughts they take up of themselves, and however the world rates them. Antiochus Epiphanes, that great king of Syria, is called a vile person, **Daniel 11:21**. And the adversary is this wicked Haman, saith Esther: that was his true title, which he perhaps never heard till now.

And an homer of barley, and an half homer of barley. God buys not this people (though for never so little) to starve them, but alloweth them alimony, though not so fine a food; barley, and not wheat. See **Revelation 6:6**, prisoners' pittance, coarse fare, such as slaves and beasts are fed with; as she had been like horse and mule, **Psalms 32:9**, and lest she should wax fat and kick, she is held to strait allowance. Whereby is signified the mean and low condition that the ten tribes (and afterwards all the Jews) should be in, till Christ came to marry them to himself. First, they should be valued but at half the price of a slave. Secondly, they should be coarsely fed, as beasts, with barley, or, perhaps, not so well as the Jews' beasts: for among them the mouth of the ox treading out their grain might not be muzzled. But the heathens were wont to put an engine (called **παραδικτήρ**) about their servants' necks, and it reached down to their hands, that they might not so much as lick of the wheat meal when they were sifting it. Now they were scattered among the heathen and sold to the nations for nought, **Psalms 44:11, 12**. They that were wont to feed delicately were desolate in the streets; they that were brought up in scarlet embraced dunghills, **Lamentations 4:5**, their flagons of wine were turned into tankards of water, and their bellaria, or junkets (so the Septuagint render it, and not flagons) into brown bread, horse bread: that so those whom pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness had undone, hardship and penury might reduce to duty, **Ezekiel 16:49**. God would seem for a time to have forgotten them, that they might at length remember themselves: he loves to chastise men's insolence with indigence, as he did Hagar's, **Genesis 21:15**, and the prodigal's, **Luke 15:16**, who for his swinish life was brought to swine's meat, and thereby brought home to his father. It is the way of God to humble those he intendeth good unto, to prepare them for mercy by cutting them short of these outward comforts. Though this be here a threatening, yet there is a promise in it, **Hosea 3:3**, that God will take off the smarting plaister so soon as it hath eaten out the proud flesh. It is in very faithfulness that he afflicteth his people, because he will be true to their souls, and save them. And hence it is that he so diets them, and keeps them short, that he may do them good in the latter end, that he may change their bricks (made in their bondage) into sapphires and agates. See **Exodus 24:10; Isaiah 54:11**. **{{field-off:Bible}}**

Verse 3. **[[@Bible:Hosea 3:3]]{{field-on:Bible}}** **Thou shalt abide for me many days.** Even till the last days, **Hosea 3:5**, or last year, as Ezekiel hath it, **Ezekiel 38:8**. Thus they have abode, or sat (as a desolate widow, so the Hebrew hath it), 700; years before Christ, and above 1600; years since, in a most forlorn condition; crying out in their, daily prayers to God, *Veniat regnum tuum, bimherah, beiamenu*, Let thy kingdom come speedily, even in our days. And again, *Aedifica templum tuum, aedifica, aedifica, cito, cito, cito*; Lord, build, build, build thy Temple quickly, quickly, quickly. But God's time is not yet come; for they are not yet thoroughly humbled. Were they but ripe, he is ready; when help is seasonable, his fingers itch (saith one) to be doing, as the mother's breast aches when it is time the child had suck, **Exodus 12:40, 41**. At midnight were the firstborn slain and Israel sent away, because then exactly the 400; or 430; years of their captivity in Egypt were expired. So **Daniel 5:30**, "In that night was Belshazzar slain"; because then exactly the seventy years were ended. God promiseth to take this Church again to wife, but having found her formerly so fickle and faithless, he would for a long time try her, and keep her unmarried as a probationer: he would lay her (as we do filthy

garments) a soaking and a frosting for many hundred years, to try them, "and to purge, and to make white, even to the time of the end, because it is yet for a time appointed," **Daniel 11:35**. And to presume to prescribe to him in this case is to set the sun by our dial. As he never fails his in his own time, so he seldom comes at ours. Here, then, our strength is to sit still, **Isaiah 30:7**, and not to start up, and say, as that impatient prince did, "What should I wait for the Lord any longer?" **2 Kings 6:33**. Shall Christ lose his right in his wife, because he takes her not by the day set down in our calendar? possibly the calendar of heaven hath a postdate to ours. Sure it is, that we are apt to antedate the promises in regard of the accomplishment, as those, **Jeremiah 8:20**, that looked for help that summer at farthest, but were deceived. See the disease and the remedy put together, **Habakkuk 2:2, 3**, and learn to wait. God will surely bring us to it if we belong to him: and thereby inure us both to patience and continence as here.

Thou shalt not play the harlot, &c. Thou sbalt not hasten after another God, and so multiply sorrows upon thyself, **Psalms 16:4**; as he that hath broke prison gets but more irons to be laid upon him and a stricter watch, **Psalms 44:19**; the Church, though sore broken in the place of dragons, and covered with the shadow of death, yet she stretched not out her hands to a strange God. She knew that was not the way to get off with comfort. Is it because there is no God in Israel, that thou gaddest to the god of Ekron? **2 Kings 1:3** "Should not a people seek unto their God? or the living to the dead?" **Isaiah 8:19**. Should they seek to slip out at a backdoor and to help themselves by sorry shifts or sinister practices? Is that ever like to do well? or will not such be miserable even by their own election? **Jonah 2:8**. Wherefore if God defer to help (as he doth usually), hold out faith and patience, wait upon him who even waits to be gracious, for he is a God of judgment, and well knoweth how and when to deal forth his favours, **Isaiah 30:18**; *Cito data cito vilescent*, Manna being lightly come by, was as lightly set by. He therefore suspends us, that he may commend his mercies to us; and when he comes with them, be the better welcome. The longer he holds us in request the more will he do for us at length; and if we abide for him many days we shall be no losers thereby.

For I also will be for thee. He will love those that love him, and honour those that honour him, **Proverbs 8:17**; **1 Samuel 2:30**. Yea, "if any man love me," saith Christ, "my Father will love him, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him," **John 14:21-23**. "I will gather them" (sc. into my bosom out of all nations) "that are sorrowful for the solemn assembly who are of thee, to whom the reproach of it was a burthen. Behold, at that time I will undo all that afflict thee," &c., **Zephaniah 3:18-20**. God esteems highly those that abide for him in their banishment, that stay for him till he mind marriage with them, that stick to him in affliction, that resolve to reserve themselves for him, so as if they cannot have comfort in God they will have none elsewhere. The Cherethites and the Pelethites that were with David at Gath, and afterwards stuck to him when Absalom was up, they were ever near about him, as his guard, and dear to him as his favourites. God is All in all to those that with the spouse will be his altogether: he will do good to them with his whole heart that seek him with their whole heart, &c., **Jeremiah 29:13**. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 4. [[@Bible:Hosea 3:4]]{{field-on:Bible}} **For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king**, &c. They shall be, as it is said of the Brazilians, *Sine rege, sine lege, sine fide*, without a king, without law, without hope, in a woeful confused estate, both for state and Church. This they had brought upon themselves by their idols set up at Dan and Bethel; that is, in the place of judgment, and in the house of God (so Dan and Bethel signify). Bethel was become Bethaven, and the place of judicature (called by Solomon the place of the Holy God, **Ecclesiastes 8:10**), so corrupted, that people were ready to say, as Themistocles once did, that if there were two ways showed him, the one leading to hell and the other to the tribunal, he would choose that which went to hell and forsake the other. That corruption caused this confusion. The children of Israel shall be without and withont, here are six withouts, that they

might be sensible of their abuse of mercies, and see *bona a tergo formosissima*, good things fairest behind, their worth best appearing by their want. The Persian law commanded that at the death of their kings there should be πένθ' ἡμερῶν ἀνομίαν, a suspension of laws, a lawless liberty, for the length of five days (Stob. Orat. 42), that subjects might know the necessity of government by being bereft of the benefit of it for a time; and the better prize it when they had it. The like custom they have now in Turkey at the death of the Grand Signor, which is no sooner known but every man doth what is good in his own eyes, till his successor be sent for, and set upon his throne. Israel hath neither king nor prince, ruler nor civil magistrates of their own, (the ten tribes, I mean: for Judah hath both prince and priests after the captivity, till the last desolation, since which they have) no form nor face of Church or commonwealth, no, not of a corrupt or depraved Church, meant here by image and teraphim, see **2 Kings 17:10; Judges 17:5**, which much less of such a one as God had prescribed, meant by sacrifices and ephod. Prosper's conceit was that this people were called *Iudaei* Jews because they received *ius Dei*, their law, from God's mouth. And Josephus calleth their commonwealth a theocracy, or government by God. They received their order both for Church and commonwealth from heaven: which no other people ever did in the same manner; and might truly take up that of the prophet, **Isaiah 33:22**, "The Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our King, he will save us." But man being in honour is without understanding. "Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked; then he forsook God which made him, and sacrificed unto devils, not to God, to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up," **Deuteronomy 32:15, 17**. When Ephraim spake and spake right there was trembling, and none dared budge against him: but when he offended in Baal he died, **Hosea 13:1**, then every paltry adversary trampled upon him as a dead man, then every scurrilous poet could insult over him and cry, *Credat Iudaeus Apella, Non ego*; then every common Turk could, by way of execration, say, *Iudaeus sim si fallo*; and in detestation of a thing, I would I might die a Jew then. A dispersed and despised people they are (none more) under the cope of heaven; partly for their former idolatry, but principally for their rejecting Christ crucified, whom they cannot but in their conscience know to be the Shiloh that should come, since the sceptre is so long since departed from Judah, and a lawgiver from between his feet, **Genesis 49:10**. That for their sins, which are many (say the Talmudists), he yet hides himself in the caverns and secret places of the earth, is σοφὸν φάρμακον, a simple pretence, or rather a subtlety of Satan, to hold them still in blindness till God unseal their eyes; till when things that are never so dear will not be believed. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 5. [[@Bible:Hosea 3:5]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Afterward shall the children of Israel return.** They shall come out of the furnace more refined than ever. "By this shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged; and this is all the fruit to take away his sin; when he maketh all the stones of the altar as chalkstones that are beaten in sunder; the groves and images shall not stand up," **Isaiah 27:9**. Then indeed hath Jacob the right fruit of his sufferings, when he makes all the stones of the altar as chalkstones, crumbling them to crattle; when he pulls down the groves and images, those Balaam's stumbling blocks that lay in his way to God, and now resolves to return.

And seek the herd. From whom they had deeply revolted; to seek his face and favour, to seek his ordinances and true worship, and lastly, to seek to know and do what is well pleasing in his sight. "Their hearts shall rejoice that thus seek the Lord"; and these are true converts indeed, these are those seekers, **Psalms 24:6**, yea, this is Jacob (as there), Israelites indeed, such as cannot be (wherever they are cast) without God in the world, without Christ, who is here called David by a patronymic (*surname*) (as also elsewhere), not without allusion to the apostasy of the ten tribes from the house of David, and so from the true God; which now also they shall bewail as the root of their sin and ruin, **Jeremiah 30:9; Ezekiel 34:24; 1 Kings 12:26**.

And David their king. Called by Daniel, Messiah the Prince, ***Daniel 9:25***; and by Peter, Christ the Lord, ***Acts 2:36***. See ***Luke 1:32***. Some think he is here called the goodness of God.

They shall fear the Lord and his goodness. Which also is his glory, ***Exodus 33:19***. The Hebrew is, they shall fear to the Lord (*pavebunt ad Dominum*); *trepidabunt*, that is, trembling they shall make haste to him (as frightened doves do to their columbaries, see ***Hosea 11:11***); they shall kiss the Son with a kiss of homage, and with reverential fear submit to his kingdom.

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Chapter 4

Verse 1. [[@Bible:Hosea 4:1]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Hear the word of the Lord.** This is the beginning of a new sermon, or judicial act of God against the ten tribes, which are here converted, convinced, sentenced. It begins with an *Oyez*, like that of St Paul, **Acts 13:16**, "Men of Israel, and ye that fear God" (if any such be in so general a defection), "give audience." Ye have heard God's mind before parabolically delivered and in types; now hear it in plain terms, that you may "see and understand and be converted, and I may heal you." Hear, and your souls shall live. Hear him that speaketh from heaven, even that excellent speaker as he is called, **Daniel 10:4-9**, that arch-prophet, whom ye are bound to hear, **Deuteronomy 18:18**; **Matthew 17:5**, upon pain of death, **Hebrews 12:25**, the Lord Christ I mean, who speaketh with authority, and is mighty in word and deed, **Acts 10:36**. He it was whom Isaiah saw upon his throne, and heard speaking, **John 12:41**. And it is a rule in divinity, that where the Old Testament bringeth in God appearing and speaking to the patriarchs, prophets, and people, it is to be understood of the Second Person. "Hear, therefore, and give ear; be not proud: for the Lord hath spoken it," **Jeremiah 13:15**. "The lion hath roared, who will not fear?" **Amos 3:8**. The Lord God hath spoken, who can but hear and fear, humble and tremble?

Ye children of Israel. But oh, how altogether unlike your father! Even as unlike as Jehoiakim (that degenerate plant) was to his father, Josiah, that "plant of renown," **Ezekiel 34:29**. His heart melted when he heard the law, **2 Chronicles 34:18, 19**, but Jehoiakim cut it with a penknife and cast it into the fire, **Jeremiah 36:23**. These were Israel's children, and named "the house of Jacob," as those in **Micah 2:7**; but an empty title yields but an empty comfort at last. Is the spirit of the Lord straitened? (saith the prophet there;) were these Jacob's doings? Do not my words do good to him that walketh uprightly? Were you Israelites indeed, I should not thus lose my sweet words upon you; but you would incline your ears and come unto me, **Isaiah 55:3**, hear as for life itself: especially since I am sent unto you (as once Ahijah was to Jeroboam's wife, **1 Kings 14:6**) with heavy tidings, with such a citation or process from heaven as may well be unto you as Samuel's message was to Eli, that made both his ears to tingle; or as the handwriting was to Balthasar, that made his knees knock together.

For the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land. The former title (children of Israel) was too good for them: they had disgraced their father's family, and were therefore (Reuben-like) fallen from their dignity. They shall henceforth be called the inhabitants of the land, as the wicked are called, **Revelation 12:12**, in opposition to "the heavens and those that dwell therein," the burgesses of the new Jerusalem. Abraham had seed of two sorts, some were as the dust of the earth, **Genesis 13:16**, others as the stars of heaven, **Genesis 15:5**. And all are not Israel that are of Israel, **Romans 9:6**. *Multi sacerdotes et pauci sacerdotes*, saith Chrysostom. There are many ministers, and yet but few; many in name, but few in deed, workmen that need not be ashamed; *Nomen inane, crimea immane*. It was cold comfort to *Dives* in flames, that Abraham called him son; or to Judas, that Christ called him friend; or to these rebellious Jews, that God sometimes called them his people, and had rooted out the cursed Canaanites to make room for them, when as they lived in God's good land, but not by God's good laws. For which cause the Lord hath here a controversy with them, a suit at law; and being himself both plaintiff and judge, he is sure to cast them; yea, to cast them out of that good land as evil tenants (*Malae fidei possessores*), that should hold no longer: for, **Hosea 4:3**, he threateneth to plead against them, *non verbis sed verberibus*, with pestilence and with blood, as **Ezekiel 38:22**, to make them say, as **Isaiah 45:9**, "Woe to him that striveth with his Maker," that hath him for his adversary at law; such a one is sure to be undone unless he agree with him quickly, **Matthew 5:25**, while he is yet in the way with him, and before he be brought to the tribunal. "For even our God is a consuming fire," **Hebrews 12:29**; his tribunal also is of fire, **Ezekiel 1:27**, his pleading with sinners "in flames of fire," **2 Thessalonians 1:7**, the trial of

men's works shall be by fire, **1 Corinthians 3:13**, the place of punishment a lake of fire fed with a river of brimstone, **Isaiah 30:33**. O pray, therefore, and prevent, that God enter not into judgment with us: for if so, no man living shall be justified in his sight. God's people may have and shall be sure to have the devil an adversary at law against them, as St Peter's word, **ἀντίδικος**, signifies, **1 Peter 5:8**. The accuser of the brethren he is called, which accuseth them before God day and night, **Revelation 12:12**. But him they may resist stedfast in the faith, and recover cost and charges of him, as I may so say; for they have Christ to appear for them in heaven, **Hebrews 9:24**, as a lawyer for his client, **1 John 2:2**, to thwart all the devil's accusations. The Spirit also (as a *paracletus* or advocate) maketh request for them to God in their hearts, and helpeth them to make apologies for themselves, **2 Corinthians 7:11**. Again, "If a man sin against another, the judge shall judge him," saith old Eli to his wicked sons; that is, the umpire may come and take up the controversy and put an end to the quarrel. "But if a man have sinned against the Lord, who shall entreat for him?" **1 Samuel 2:29**. Who dare be his daysman? no mediation of man can make his peace; no reconciliation can be here hoped for, but by running from God as a Judge, to God as a Father in Christ. Let men, therefore, be wrought upon by the reprehensions of God's faithful ministers, by whom he appealeth and impeacheth them. If they stand out as the old world did against that preacher of righteousness, by whom he went and preached to those spirits now in prison (because they would not take up the matter in time, but futued and fooled away their own salvation), he will break off his patience, and say, as **Genesis 6:3**, "My Spirit shall not always strive with these men, for that they also are flesh," &c., and are therefore the worse, because they ought to be better (*Ideo deteriores quia meliores esse debebant*); therefore they shall fare the worse, because they would be no better. I have hewed them by my prophets, **Hosea 6:5**, but can make no good work of them. Like ill timber, they fall to splinters; and like ill stones, they crumble all to gravel; they are therefore fitter for the highway and chimney corner then for my building. My Spirit shall therefore strive no more with these perverse persons, either by preaching, disputing, convincing, &c., in the mouth of my ministers; or in their own minds and consciences, by inward checks and motions, which they reject, refusing to be reformed, hating to be healed. I will take away my Spirit, and silence my prophets (as he doth **Hosea 4:4**), and resolve upon their utter ruin; since there is no good to be done upon them. See **Hosea 4:17**. (*See Trapp on "Hosea 4:17"*) *Currat ergo poenitentia, ne praecurrat sententia, &c.*

Because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. Lo, here the charge: and "knowing the judgment of God," you must needs say that "those that commit such things are worthy of death," **Romans 1:32**. For "if the word spoken by angels" (the law given by angels in the hand of Moses a mediator) "were stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience" (that is, every commission and omission) "received a just recompense of reward," **Hebrews 2:2**, how should these miscreants escape, that had left off to do good? and for evil, they did it with both hands earnestly; for the second table of the law, it is articulated against them (for matter of omission or defect) that there was "neither truth nor mercy in the land"; and for the first table, that there was no sound "knowledge of God" there; and, consequently, no care of God, either inward or outward worship: for there can be neither faith, nor repentance, nor due obedience yielded to an unknown God. A Samaritan service there may be ("ye worship ye know not what," **John 4:22**), but not a rational service, **Romans 12:1**, such as whereof a man can render a reason. Now God will not have a blind sacrifice, **Malachi 1:8**; **1 Chronicles 28:9**; it is worthless that men are virtuous, unless they join to their virtue knowledge, **2 Peter 1:5**; nor that they offer sacrifice, if they bring the "sacrifice of fools," **Ecclesiastes 5:1**. Those must needs be "abominable and disobedient" that are to "every good work reprobate," injudicious, as the word signifies, **Titus 1:11**; and what marvel though men be "alienated from the life of God" (or a godly life), "through the ignorance that is in them?" **Ephesians 4:18**. But let us take the words in order. "There is no truth." Here God declareth against them (as lawyers do against offenders in court), and not for trifles, but first for want of

truth or trustiness in word and deed; without which human society is but *funiculus ex arena*, a rope of sand, or *arena sine calce*, sand without lime, it cannot hold together. It was an old complaint of the prophets, that "Truth was fallen in the streets, and faithfulness failed from among the children of men," **Isaiah 59:14; Psalm 12:1**. When Varus was slain Augustus grieved excessively; and that because *non esset a quo verum audiret*, he had none about him that would tell him the truth of things, and deal plainly with him. *Multis annis iam transactis, nulla fides est in pactis*, &c. Jeremiah bewails it in his treacherous countrymen, that they "bent their tongues like their bows for lies; but they were not valiant for the truth on the earth," **Jeremiah 9:3**; they were *mendaciorum loquacissimi* (as Tertullian phraseth it), loud and lewd liars, and (as Hegesippus saith of Pilate) they were *viri nequam et pravi facientes mendacium*, naughty men, and such as made nothing of a lie. But God's people are said to be "children that will not lie," **Isaiah 63:8**, they are φιλαλήθεις, lovers of truth, which was the title of honour given to Arrian, the Greek historian; whereas of all other historians Vopiscus testifieth, that there is none *qui non aliquid est mentitus*, that taketh not the liberty to lie more or less. And for slipperiness in contracts and covenants nothing is more common among men; it is counted a peccadillo. But the God of truth, the faithful and true witness, as Christ is called, counteth it not so. See **Ezekiel 17:15-21; 1 Timothy 4:2; 2 Timothy 3:3**. There are those who take truth here for justice, according to **Zechariah 8:16**, and so it suits well with that which followeth.

Nor mercy. These two are set together, **Micah 6:8**; (to do justly, and to love mercy), as the sum of the second table. Mouth mercy there was enough, such as was that in St James' days, **James 2:15, 16**. "But there is not any one that taketh Zion by the hand," **Isaiah 51:18**, that "draweth out his soul to the hungry, and dealeth his bread to such," **Isaiah 58:7, 10**. Sodom hath fulness of bread, but would part with none to strengthen the hands of the poor and needy, **Ezekiel 16:49**. Therefore she had "judgment without mercy," that had showed no mercy, **James 2:13**. Whereas Tyre, when once she left heaping and hoarding, and brought forth her merchandise for them that dwell before the Lord to "eat sufficiently," and for "durable clothing," **Isaiah 23:18**, is renowned and reckoned among those that came to Christ with their desirable things, as some read that text, **Haggai 2:7**. *Colligent omnes suos thesauros* (so Calvin readeth it), they shall come with strong affections, with large contributions, as those primitive saints did, **Acts 4:34**. The same Hebrew word, *chasid*, signifieth both saint and merciful; and it comes of *chesed*, the word here rendered mercy, or bounty. The tender mercies of the Almighty shed forth abundantly upon such, leave a compassionate frame upon their hearts, as in the jailer, **Acts 16:33**. Their thoughts, steeped in the mercies they have received, are dyed of the same colour as cloth is in the dye vat, **Colossians 3:12**. This text, after no mercy, fitly adds,

Nor knowledge of God in the land. Heb. "And no knowledge of God": or, "because there is no knowledge of God in the land." Did men but know God savingly, had they but tasted and seen how good the Lord is, they would not be so hide bound, and strait handed to their poor brethren; but "ready to distribute, willing to communicate," **1 Timothy 6:18**. They are the "dark places of the earth" that are "full of the habitations of cruelty," **Psalm 74:20**. But in the kingdom of Christ they "shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain," saith the Lord: and why? "For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea," **Isaiah 11:9**. St Paul thanks his ignorance for his persecutions and blasphemy, **1 Timothy 1:13**, and resolves the sin of those killers of Christ into their "not knowing of him," **1 Corinthians 2:8**. Surely as toads and serpents grow in dark and dirty cellars, so doth all sin and wickedness in an ignorant and blind soul. Hence, in this text, after "no knowledge of God in the land," followeth that black bead roll of abominations in the next verse: "By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing," &c. As blind alehouses are sinks and sources of all villany, so are blind hearts.

In the land. Though it were a land of light, a very Goshen in comparison to the rest of the world; though in Judah was God known, and his name great in Israel, **Psalm 76:1**; men may

remain grossly ignorant amidst a multitude of means, and "in a land of righteousness deal unjustly": and why? they will not behold the majesty of the Lord, **Isaiah 26:10**. They will not see. They are "willingly ignorant," saith St Peter: *Ut liberius peccent libenter ignorant*, saith Bernard. They "hate the light," saith our Saviour, **John 3:20**; **2 Peter 2** it "is unto them as the shadow of death," saith Job, **Job 24:17**. Hence they shut the windows, lest it should shine upon them; or if it do, they rebel against it, rush against it, as bats do against torches in the night. That light they have by nature, or otherwise (as a prophet from God), they detain and imprison in unrighteousness, **Romans 1:18**. Their knowledge of God, if any, is only apprehensive, and not affective, *cognoscitiva, non vitae directiva*, enlightening, not transforming into the same image, so as to make them children of light: it is notional knowledge, not experimental and practical. Hence such outrages in their lives, such errors and enormities: for, {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 2. [[@Bible:Hosea 4:2]]{{field-on:Bible}} **By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing.** Heb. to swear, and lie, and kill, and steal, and commit adultery. To do all this is held, *licitum et solenne*, lawful, or at least pardonable. It is grown to a common practice; and custom of sinning hath taken away sense of sin.

By swearing. Heb. by cursing, or swearing with an execration and cursing, which was commonly added to an oath, to confirm it the more, **Deuteronomy 29:12, 21**; **Nehemiah 10:29**. And, indeed, in every lawful oath God is called to witness, to bless us if we swear right, and to curse us if otherwise. Such an oath is a special part of God's worship, and is oft put for the whole, as here false and frivolous oaths are put for the violation of the whole first table, and set in opposition to the knowledge of God in the land; like as lying is opposed to truth, and killing, stealing, whoring, to mercy or kindness. Before, God had complained of their defects, or omissions; here, of their commissions and flagitious practices. Swearers (but especially false swearers) are traitors to the state, as appeareth here and **Jeremiah 23:10**; they bring a curse, nay, a large roll of curses (ten yards long, and five yards broad, **Zechariah 5:2**), upon their hearts, and shall one day howl in hell. The same word that is here rendered swearing signifieth also to howl or lament, **Joel 1:8**. Go to now, therefore, ye swearers, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you, **James 5:1, 12**. Weep here, where there be wiping handkerchiefs in the hand of Christ: better do so, than yell with devils who have borrowed your mouths, to utter horrid blasphemies. Swearing is "of the devil," saith our Saviour, **Matthew 5:37**, and it brings men to the devil, saith St James, **James 5:12**. They object that they swear nothing but the truth. But that is not always so. Swearing and lying are here set together, as seldom sundered. The marvel, if he that sweareth commonly do not forswear frequently; for he sweareth away all his faith and truth. But, say they swear truth, yet that excuseth not. Truth is but one circumstance of an oath, **Jeremiah 4:2**. Men, as they must swear in truth, so in righteousness (not rashly, furiously), and in judgment, not in jest. Swear not in jest, lest ye go to hell in earnest. It is the property and duty of a godly man to fear an oath, **Ecclesiastes 9:2**, and not to forbear it only. As on the other side, no surer sign of a profane person than common and customary swearing. It were well if such were served as Louis IX of France served a citizen of Paris; he seared his lips for swearing with a hot iron. And when some said it was too cruel an act, I would to God, said he, that with searing my own lips with a hot iron I could banish out of the realm all abuse of oaths. Those that plead they have gotten a custom to swear, and therefore they must be borne with, shall have the like answer from God that the thief had from the judge. He desired the judge to spare him, for stealing had been his custom from his youth, and now he could not leave it. The judge replied, it was also his custom to give judgment against such malefactors; and therefore he must be condemned.

And lying. Fitly linked with swearing. Some gravel or mud ever passeth away with much water; so do some lies with much swearing. How oft do men forget their oaths, and swear again that they have not sworn at all! Should men's excrements come from them as oft, and

they not feel it, they would be full sorry, and ashamed thereof. Now swearing and lying defile men much worse than any jakes can do, **Mark 7:22**, and render them odious to God and good men. Lying is a blushful evil; therefore doth the liar deny his lie, as ashamed to be taken with it, and our ruffians revenge it with a stab. God ranks and reckons it with the most monstrous sins, and shuts it out of heaven, **Revelation 21:8**. Aristotle saith, It is in itself evil and wicked, contrary to the order of nature (which hath given words to express mens' minds and meanings), destructive to human society. Pythagoras was wont to say, that in two things we become like unto God: 1. In telling truth; 2. In bestowing benefits. Now, *Mentiri*, is *contra mentem ire*; to lie is to go against reason, to lie is to utter a known untruth with an intention to deceive or hurt. The Cretans of old were infamous for this, **Titus 1:12**, **Κρήτες ἀεὶ ψεύσται**, the friars of late. 'Twas grown to a proverb among our forefathers, a friar, a liar; 'tis now among us, every liar is, or would be, a thief. Hence, lying and stealing go coupled together here; but between them both stands killing, as ushered in by the former, and oft occasioned by the latter, **Proverbs 1:19**.

And killing. This follows fitly upon the former; for truth hath always a scratched face. The devil was first a liar, and then a murderer, **John 8:44**. He cannot so well murder without slandering first. The credit of the Church must first be taken away, and then she is wounded, **Solomon's Song 5:6**. The people here in England once complained that Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, that noble patriot, was twice murdered: first by detraction, and then by deadly practice. The French have a proverb: Those that have a mind to kill their neighbour's dog make the world believe he was mad first. This is their proverb, and accordingly was their practice in the massacre of Paris. A little before which they gave out, that the Protestants met by night, to plot against the state, and to commit all manner of uncleanness among themselves. This is an old trick of the devil and his instruments, first to slander the Church, and to represent her to the world in the ugliest hue, and then to persecute her, like as of old they used to put the poor Christians in bears' or lions' skins, and then bait them with dogs. Paulus Fagius reports a story of an Egyptian, who said that the Christians were a colluvies of moist, filthy, lecherous people. And for their keeping of the Sabbath; he saith, they had a disease upon them, and were therefore fain to rest every seventh day. The Papists accused the Waldenses (those ancient Protestants) for Manichees; and that they affirmed there were two beginnings of things, God and the devil, &c.; and all because they constantly affirmed that the emperor had no dependence upon the pope. They gave them out also for Arians (and published their croisados against them as enemies to Christ), and all because they denied that a crust was transubstantiated into Christ. To make way for the ruin of England by the gunpowder plot, they broadcast it abroad that the people here looked as black as devils, were grown barbarous, and did eat young children. That we held opinion to worship no God, to serve the times, to prefer profit before right, to pretend the public cause to our private lusts, to cover hatred with flattery, to confirm tyranny by shedding innocent blood, to keep faith no longer than will serve our own turns, &c. (Eudaem. Johannes.) And if the plot had taken effect, they had fathered it upon the Puritans (having proclamations ready framed for the purpose), that under that name they might have sucked the blood and revelled in the ruins of all such here as had but the love or any show of sound religion. The word here used for killing signifies to kill with a murdering weapon, such as David felt in his bones, **Psalms 42:10**, such as Colignius and other the poor Protestants felt in the French massacre: where the queen of Navarre was poisoned, the most part of the peerless nobility in France murdered, together with their wives and children; and of the common people a hundred thousand in one year, in various parts of the realm. What should I speak of the innocent blood of Ireland, for which God hath already and yet still will make diligent inquisition. If the blood of Abel had so many tongues as drops, **Genesis 4:10**, what then of so many righteous Abels? "Surely I have seen yesterday" (saith God) "the blood of Naboth," **2 Kings 9:26**. Murder ever bleeds fresh in his eye: to him many years, yea, that eternity that is past, is but yesterday. Neither is he wanting to punish it even in this present

world. He avengeth the innocent blood that Manasseh shed a long while after his death: he would not pardon it, no, though Manasseh repented of it, **2 Kings 24:4**. The mountains of Gilboa were accursed, for the blood of Saul and Jonathan spilt upon them, **2 Samuel 1:21**; and what a deal of do we find in the law made when a man was murdered! **Deuteronomy 21:1-4**, the valley which the expiatory sacrifice was slain in that case was from thenceforth to be neither eared nor sown: in all to show what a precious esteem God hath of man's life, and what controversy with a land for shedding of blood.

And stealing. Those *publici latrones* especially, public thieves that sit in purple robes, and by wrong judgment oppress and rob the poor innocents, are here intended, as Calvin thinks; see **Isaiah 23:17, 18; 33:1**. So are all others that either by force or fraud get into their hands their neighbours' goods; whether, I say, it be by violence or cunning contrivance, the Lord is the avenger of all such, **1 Thessalonians 4:6**. So that though haply they lie out of the walk of human justice, and come not under man's cognizance, yet God will find them out, and send his flying roll of curses after them, **Zechariah 5:2, 3**: "he shall vomit up his sweet morsels" here, **Job 20:15**, or else digest in hell what he hath devoured on earth; as his "belly hath prepared deceit," **Job 15:35**, so God will take it out of his guts again; either he shall make restitution of his ill-gotten goods, or for not doing it he shall one day cough in hell, as Father Latimer phraseth it (Serm. before King Edw. VI).

And committing adultery. "This is also a heinous crime" (saith holy Job), "yea, it is an iniquity to be punished by the judges," **Job 31:11**. Heathens have punished it very severely. Of one people we read that they used to put the adulterer's or adulteress's head into the paunch of a beast where the filth of it lay, and so stifled him. God punished those stinking Edomites with stinking brimstone for their loathsome brutishness; and adjudged adultery to death: because society and purity of posterity could not otherwise continue among men. We read not, in any general commandment of the law, that any should be burnt with fire, but the high priest's daughter for adultery, **Leviticus 21:9**; yet it seems it was in use before the law, or else Judah was much to blame for sentencing his daughter-in-law Tamar to the fire, **Genesis 38:2, 3**. Let us, beware of that sin, for which so peculiar a plague was appointed, and by very heathens executed see **Jeremiah 29:22, 23**. If men be slack to take vengeance on such, yet God will hold on his controversy against them and avenge the quarrel of his covenant (for so wedlock is called, **Proverbs 2:17**), either by his own bare hand, or else by the hands of the adulterers themselves. See an instance of both these even in our times. In the year 1583, in London, two citizens committing adultery together on the Lord's day were struck dead with fire from heaven in the very act of uncleanness: their bodies being left dead in the place, half burnt up, sending out a most loathsome savour, for a spectacle of God's controversy against adultery and sabbath breaking. This judgment was so famous and remarkable that Laurentius Bayenlink, a foreign historian, hath thought good to register it to posterity (*Opus Chronologiae Orbis Universi*, Antwerp, 1611, p. 110). Mr Cleaver reports of one that he knew that had committed the act of uncleanness, and in the horror of conscience he hanged himself, but before, when he was about to kill himself, he wrote in a paper, and left it in a place, to this effect: Indeed, saith he, I acknowledge it to be utterly unlawful for a man to kill himself, but I am bound to act the magistrate's part, because the punishment of this sin is death. This act of his was not to be justified, viz. to be his own executioner; but it shows what a controversy God hath with adulterers, and what a deep gash that sin makes in the conscience.

They break out. Like wild horses over hedges, or proud waters over the banks. The Septuagint renders it ἐκκέχυται, they are poured out. And St Jude hath a like expression, speaking of the libertines of his time, **Hosea 4:11**, they run greedily, Gr. ἐξέχυθησαν: they were poured out, or poured away as water out of a vessel: they ran headlong, or gave themselves over to work all uncleanness with greediness, to satisfy their lusts, and to oppose with crest and breast whatsoever stands in their way; bearing down all before them. So Sodom

and Gomorrah are (in **Jude 1:7**) said by unbridled licentiousness to "give themselves over to fornication," in *scortationem effusae* (Beza). And when Lot sought to advise them better, they set up the bristles at him, with

Base busy stranger, comest thou hither thus,

Controller-like, to prate and preach to us?

Thus these effractories (as the Psalmist somewhere calleth them), these breach makers, break Christ's bands in sunder (as Samson did the seven green withes, **Judges 16:9**), and cast away his cords from them, **Psalm 2:3**. These unruly Belialists get the bit between their teeth, like headstrong horses; and casting their rider, rise up against him. They, like men (or rather like wild beasts), "transgress the covenant," **Hosea 5:7**, resolving to live as they list, to take their swing in sin: "for who" (say they) "is Lord over us?" **Psalm 12:4**. Tremellius reads that text, *tanquam hominis*, just as man, they transgress it as if it were the covenant of a man: they make no more of breaking the law than as if they had to do with dust and ashes like themselves, and not with the great God that can tame them with the turn of his hand, and with the blast of his mouth blow them into hell. Hath he not threatened to "walk contrary to those that walk contrary to him," to be as cross as they for the hearts of them, and to bring upon them seven times more plagues than before, and seven times and seven to that, till he have got the better of them? for is it fit that he should cast down the bucklers first? I think not. He will be obeyed by these exorbitant, yokeless, lawless persons, either actively or passively. The law was added because of transgression: and is given, saith the apostle, **1 Timothy 1:9**, "not to the righteous," for they are *αὐτόνομοι*, a law to themselves (as the Thracians boasted), but to the lawless and disobedient, who count licentiousness the only liberty, and the service of God the greatest slavery; who think no venison sweet but that which is stolen, nor any mirth but that which a Solomon would say to, Thou mad fool, what doest thou? **Ecclesiastes 2:2**. Lo, for such rebels and refractories, for such masterless monsters as send messages after the Lord Christ, saying, "We will not have this man to reign over us," for these, I say, was the law made, to hamper them and shackle them, as fierce and furious creatures; to tame them and tear them with its four iron teeth, 1. Of irritation, **Romans 7:7**; 2. Of induration, **Isaiah 6:10**;

3. Of obligation to condign punishment, **Genesis 4:4**; 4. Of execration, or malediction, **Deuteronomy 28:16, 17**, &c. Let men take heed, therefore, how they break out against God: let them meddle with their matches, and not contend with him that is mightier than they: it is the wise man's counsel, **Ecclesiastes 6:10**.

And blood toucheth blood. *i.e.* there is a continuation, and, as it were, a concatenation of murders, and other horrible villanies, as was at Jerusalem in the murder of Zacharias, the son of Barachias; the blood of the sacrificer was mingled with the blood of the sacrifice, and, as **Luke 13:1**, the like occurred. So at Athens, when Sulla took the town, there was *ἀνελεής σφαγή*, a merciless slaughter; the gutters running with blood. And so at Samaria (which the prophet may here probably intend), when there was such killing of kings (and they fall not alone); Hosea killed his predecessor Pekah, as he had done Pekahiah; Menahem killed Shallum, as Shallum had done Zacharias: so true is that of the poet (Juvenal),

*"Ad generum Cereris sine crude et sanguine pauci,
Descendunt Reges, et sicca morte tyranni."*

What got most of the first Caesars by their adoption, or designation to the empire, *Nisi ut citius interficerentur*, but to be killed so much the sooner? All, or most of them, till Constantius, died unnatural deaths, as afterwards, Phocas the traitor killed the good Emperor Mauritius, stewing him in his own broth. Heraclius slew Phocas, putting him to a shameful and tormentful death. Conradinus, King of Germany and Duke of Sweden, was beheaded by

Charles, King of Naples and Sicily; and the headsman presently beheaded by another, *ne extaret qui iacraret tam generosum sanguinem a se effusum* (saith mine author), that there might not be any left to boast that he had spilt so noble blood. Our Richard III, that bloody and deceitful man, is said to have used the instruments of his cruel plots (his cut-throats, I mean) as men do their candles; burn the first out to a suuff, and then, having lighted another, tread that underfoot. Fawkes (that fatal actor of the intended gunpowder tragedy) should have been thus rewarded by his brethren in evil had the plot taken effect. It is that famous and never-to-be-forgotten 5th of November, 1651, wherein I write these lines, and therefore, in way of thankfulness to our ever gracious deliverer, I here think good to set down the relation as Mr John Vicars (in his Quintessence of Cruelty, or Poem of the Popish Gunpowder Plot) hath declared it to the world, as he had it from Mr Clement Cotton, the composer of the English Concordance, who also received it from Mr Pickering, of Titsmarsh Grove, in Northamptonshire, and it is thus: This Mr Pickering, being in great esteem with King James, had a horse of special note, on which he used to hunt with the king: this horse was borrowed from him (a little before the blow was to be given) by his brother-in-law, Keyes (one of the conspirators), and conveyed to London, for a bloody purpose, which thus was plotted. Fawkes on the day of the fatal blow was appointed to retire himself to St George's Fields, where this said horse was to attend him to make his escape as soon as the Parliament House was blown up. It was likewise contrived, that the said Mr Pickering (noted for a Puritan) should be that very morning murdered in his bed, and secretly conveyed away: as also that Fawkes himself should have been murdered in St George's Fields, and there so mangled and cut in pieces that it might not be discovered who it was. Whereupon it was to be rumoured abroad that the Puritans had blown up the Parliament House: and the better to make the world believe so, there was Mr Pickering with his horse ready to make an escape, but that God stirred up some, who seeing the heinousness of the fact, and he ready to escape by flight, in detestation of so horrible a deed fell upon him, and killed him, and so had hacked him in pieces. And yet to make it to be more apparent to be so indeed, there was his horse found also, which was of special speed and swiftness, to carry him away: and upon this rumour, a massacre should have gone through the whole kingdom upon the Puritans. But when this plot, thus contrived, was confessed by some of the conspirators, and Fawkes in the Tower was made acquainted with it (who had been borne in hand to be bountifully rewarded for his service in the Catholic cause), when he saw how his ruin was contrived, he also thereupon confessed freely all that he knew touching that horrid and hideous conspiracy, which (before) all the torture of the rack could not force him to. The truth of all this is attested by Mr William Perkins, an eminent Christian and citizen of London, who had it from the mouth of Mr Clement Cotton: which I could not but here insert, as coming to my mind and pen, on the very day whereon (46; years since) it should have been acted, when myself was but four years of age, and it being the utmost that I can remember; but if ever I forget, let my right hand forget her cunning. Remember, O Lord, these children of Edom, &c., these Romish Edomites, Esauites, Jesuits, who said, "Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation, O daughter of Babylon," &c., **Psalm 137:5, 7, 8**. The Rabbis call the Romists Edomites (they interpret the mount of Esau, Obad. **Obadiah 21**, to be meant of Rome), and well they may, for their blood guiltiness, for which they are hated of God, **Psalm 5:6**. Who cannot but remember that their sins (as a cart rope) have reached up to heaven, **Revelation 18:5**, there having been a concatenation, or a continued series of them, as the Greek there imports, [ἡκολούθησαν](#), and (as some here interpret) "blood touching blood," according to **Isaiah 1:15**, "Your hands are full of blood"; and **Hosea 4:4**, "The filth of the daughter of Zion, and the blood of Jerusalem." This sense, the Chaldee paraphrase maketh. The Septuagint (with their [μισγυουσι](#), "mingle blood with blood") seem to understand it of incestuous matches and mixtures forbidden, **Leviticus 18:6**, and yet avowed by David George and his disciples, and practised in the court of Spain, by papal dispensation. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 3. [[@Bible:Hosea 4:3]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Therefore shall the land mourn.** Here the

Lord proceeds to give sentence; and it is dreadful indeed. *Lugebit terra, languebit incola*, &c. You will not mourn, therefore your land shall; the ugly face of your sin shall appear in the miserable desolation of your country. "There is no truth, mercy, or knowledge of God in your land"; which even groans under your burden, its axle spokes being ready to break; therefore it shall be eased of you, by my sore, and great, and strong sword, which shall soon make work among you, and lay all waste. And as God's red horse of war is followed by the black horse of famine, and that black one by the pale horse of pestilence, **Revelation 6:4, 5, 8**, so shall it be here. As by swearing and lying, &c., you have broke out, so shall my whole wrath break out upon you as a mighty torrent. As blood hath touched blood, so punishment shall follow hard upon sin; for these two are knit together with chains of adamant, saith the poet. "If thou do evil, sin lies at the door," saith God, **Genesis 4:7**, that is, *supplicium imminer, idque proximum et praesentissimum*, saith Junius there. Evil shall hunt the wicked man to destroy him: his sin shall find him out as a blood hound, and haunt him as a hell hag. Where iniquity breaks fast calamity will be sure to dine; to sup where it dines, and to lodge where it sups. No sooner had man sinned but the earth was cursed for his sake, **Genesis 3:17, 18**. It was never beautiful nor cheerful since. At this day it lies bedridden, and looks to be burnt up shortly with her works, **2 Peter 3:10**. Here it is brought in as a mother in mourning, bewailing the loss of all her children, and refusing to be comforted. And surely though the land be eased of a very heavy burden, as I have said, when purged by God's just judgments of her ungrateful and wicked inhabitants; yet because she lies under the dint of Divine displeasure at such a time, therefore is she rightly said to mourn in this case, and to be in a sad, disconsolate condition, (see **Jeremiah 12:4**) she becomes a very Ahil (that is the word here used, see **Judges 11:33**), a Bochim, a Hadadrimmon, an Irisland; and being desolate, she mourneth unto thee: for she seeth that her convulsions are like to end in a deadly consumption.

And every one that dwelleth therein shall languish. Heb. shall wither as a flower, **Nahum 1:4**. Or, shall be weakened. Those that now stand upon their tip toes, and face the very heavens, stouting it out with God, shall then be weak as water, withered as a flower, strengthless as a moth eaten cloth, **Psalms 39:11**, low spirited and crest fallen, as the king of Sodom (erst man good enough to look four kings in the face, but a non-suppliant to Abraham, a forlorn foreigner, **Genesis 14:21**). Manasseh, that sturdy rebel, in trouble basely hides his head among the bushes, **2 Chronicles 33:11**. Caligula in time of thunder ran under beds and benches. Affliction will tame, and take down the proudest spirits: they break in adversity that bore their heads on high in prosperity: they speak out of the ground, and whisper out of the dust, **Isaiah 29:4**, that look to be brought into the dust of death, **Psalms 22:15**. It is the pestilence that here seemeth to be threatened (as before sword and famine), and a universal pestilence too; reaching not only to men, but to other creatures made for man's uses, which shows the greatness of the wrath: like as when a king not only executeth the traitor, but also pulleth down his house, confiscateth his goods, and disinheriteth his children, &c. But what have those sheep done? the beasts, birds, and fishes, that they must suffer also? It is but reason they should, since, first, they are part of men's enjoyments: secondly, they are many times (though harmless in themselves, yet) instruments of men's sin (Pareus); and therefore well doth the Chaldee here paraphrase *Diminutionem patientur propter hominum peccata*, they shall suffer for man's sin: who may therefore well say to them, as Judah did to Tamar, "Thou art more righteous than I"

With the beasts of the field. Which shall die by the murrain.

And the fowls of the air. Which shall catch the contagion, and fall down dead; as those birds do that attempt to fly over the Dead Sea.

And the fishes of the sea also shall be taken away. *Colligentur, conficientur*, they shall be gathered together, as seeking help one of another in a common danger: and yet they shall be

destroyed, the very waters being pestilential, as they were here in King Edward III's days; so that the very fowls and fishes had botches upon them. This was a heavier judgment than that which befell the old world; for then the fishes perished not, though the Jewish doctors would persuade us that these also died in the flood; for that the waters thereof were boiling hot.

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Verse 4. [[@Bible:Hosea 4:4]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Yet let no man strive nor reprove another.**

Let him not lose so much good labour, and spill so many sweet words upon this people; for they are grown uncounsellable, incurable, incorrigible. They have rejected the counsel of God within, or against, themselves, **Luke 7:30**, *corripiuntur sed non corriguntur*; it is because the Lord intendeth to destroy them, **1 Samuel 2:25**, yea, he hath determined it, **2 Chronicles 25:16**. Hence as dying men lose their hearing and other senses by degrees, so those that are destined to destruction grow stupid and stubborn, and will neither hear good counsel, nor see the things that concern their peace, but spurn at admonition and scorn at reproof.

"Tunc etiam docta plus valet arte malum."

And therefore God forbids to reprove such, as deplored and desperate; to cast pearls of good counsel before such dogs, who prefer loathsome carrion before sweet odours; yea, rage at them as tigers do, and fly in the faces of such as present them; or, at best, grunt and go their ways, as swine; leave good counsel where they find it, not putting it in practice. Now, as dogs and swine were counted unclean creatures, and unfit for sacrifice, so are such for admonition. Let a man be never so able and apt to teach, let him be *vir praestans, eximius, insignis*, a gallant man (as the word **אִישׁ** here used sometimes signifieth), and one that can do his work never so well, yet the wisdom of his words shall be despised, **Proverbs 23:9**. Let him strive till his heart aches, *et disputatos arguere*, as St Jude speaketh (**ἐλέγχετε διακρινόμενοι**, **Jude 1:22**), he shall but strive against the stream, and by reproving a scorner get him a blot, **Proverbs 9:7**. The Pharisees denied our Saviour, and blew their noses at him (**ἐξεμυκτήριζον**), **Luke 16:14**. Let them alone, therefore, saith our Saviour to his disciples, they be blind leaders of the blind, **Matthew 15:14**; there is no good to be done of them: therefore "let him that is filthy be filthy still," **Revelation 22:11**, and he that is ignorant let him be ignorant, since he will needs be so, **1 Corinthians 14:38**. Let him "pine away in his iniquity," **Leviticus 26:38**. Let him pine and perish, go on, despair, die, and be damned. My spirit shall no longer strive with him, unless it be by furious rebukes, **Ezekiel 5:15**, and by fire, **Amos 7:4**. Oecolampadius upon this text doubts not to say that the sin of such as reject admonition is the sin against the Holy Ghost: certainly it is worse than all the forementioned, swearing, lying, &c. Blind nature could see and say as much. Hesiod saith that there are three sorts of men: the first and best are those that live so well as not to need reproof (**οὗτος μὲν πανάριστος**, Hesiod. Oper. et Dier. V 29). The second (and those not bad) are such as do not so well, but can be content to hear of it. The third and worst are they that will neither do as they ought, nor be advised to do better. Plutarch saith those that are troubled with tooth ache will go to the physician; those that have a fever will send for him; but he that is frantic or stark mad will do neither, but reject the remedy and strike at the physician. So doth the scorner. See my commonplace of admonition.

For this people are as they that strive with the priest. Though God's officer, and in his stead, **2 Corinthians 5:20**, though the people's oracle to preserve and present knowledge to them, **Malachi 2:7**, and though to strive with such be to invert God's order, who hath appointed the people to hear and obey their teacher, and not to prescribe to them; to follow their guides, and not to run before them, **Hebrews 13:7, 17**; **1 Timothy 1:20**; **2 Timothy 1:15**; **Numbers 16:1-3**. From which texts and **1 Corinthians 11:2, 3**, a grave divine argueth thus. It is a vile sin to vex our ministers by our obstinacy, yea, though they were not able to make so full demonstration; yet when they reprove such and such things out of a spiritual jealousy and fear they corrupt their hearts, they are to be heard; how much more when they come "in the

demonstration of the Spirit and of power?" **1 Corinthians 2:4**. And yet how full is the Church and ever hath been of such Vilitigatores as contend with the best ministers, quarrel at God's word, and take up arms against it! snuffing at it, **Malachi 1:13**, chatting at it, **Romans 9:19, 20**, casting reproaches upon it, **Jeremiah 20:8, 9**, enviously swelling at it, **Acts 13:45**. The more you touch these toads the more they swell; the more you meddle with these serpents the more they gather poison to spit at you. Go about to cool them with fair words, you shall but add to their heat; as the smith's forge fries when cold water is cast upon it; and as hot water, if stirred, casteth up the more fume. *Vultures unguento irritantur et scaraboni rosa*: vultures cannot endure sweet odours (Plin. Elian.). Tigers, if they hear the sound of a drum, will rage and tear themselves. Ahab cannot abide Micaiah; nor Herod, John Baptist. The people contested with Jeremiah and cursed him, **Jeremiah 15:10**, though he were *concionator admirabilis*, as Keckerman hath it, an admirable preacher; yet they sought his life, saying, "Prophecy not in the name of the Lord, that thou die not by our hands," **Jeremiah 11:21** (Rhet. Ecclesiast. cap. ult.), yea, they told him, flat and plain, "The word which thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the Lord we will not hear," **Jeremiah 44:16**. O lewd losels (as that martyr in like case exclaimed), O faithless hard hearts, O Jezebel's guests, rocked and laid asleep in her bed! O sorrowless sinners and shameless harlots! (Bradford). Ministers are lights, offensive to sore eyes; the salt of the earth, which is bitter to wounds. Among the Athenians, if the comedians (which were their teachers, such as they had) pleased not the people, they were overwhelmed with stones. "Once was I stoned," saith Paul, **2 Corinthians 11:25**. And Jeremiah is said to have met with the like death from his flagitious countrymen in Egypt, among whom he was ever a man of strife, and his service was (in that behalf) like that of Manlius Torquatus among the Romans, who gave it over, saying, Neither can I bear their manners, nor they my government. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 5. [[@Bible:Hosea 4:5]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Therefore shalt thou fall.** How could they do otherwise that were a nation so incorrigibly flagitious, so unthankful for mercies, so impatient of remedies, so incapable of repentance, so obliged, so warned, so shamelessly, so lawlessly wicked?

Therefore shalt thou fall in the day. *Vivens vidensque peribis*, thou shalt stumble at noon day, because there is no knowledge of God in the land; but thou hast loved darkness rather than light, therefore shalt thou have enough of it; thy feet shall stumble upon the dark mountains, **Jeremiah 13:16**, yea, thou shalt stumble and fall and never rise again, which is threatened expressly to these swearers, **Amos 8:14**, and implied in the Hebrew word here used. Such was Eli's fall off his stool, and Haman's fall before Mordecai the Jew, **Esther 6:13**. Impenitent persons are brats of fathomless perdition, they are ripe for ruin, shall fall into remediless misery, and (though never so insolent and angry against those that deal plainly and faithfully with them, as in the former verse, yet) they shall never want a Hosea to tell them so to their teeth; that those that will not bend may break, that if they will needs fall they may fall with open eyes, and not have cause to say that they were not forewarned. And this shall be done today, αὐθιμαρ, that is, very shortly, in this present age (so some interpret it), *aut certe clarissima luce*, saith Mercer, or else in the open light, and in the view of all men, not in huggermugger. Tremellius thinks it is as much as *rebus adhuc integris subito opprimuntur*, Thou shalt be suddenly surprised when thou art in thy flourish, and fearest no changes. What can be more fair and flourishing than the field a day before harvest? than the vineyard a day before the vintage? *certissime citissimeque corrues*. Most certainly, most certainly, fall down. Every wicked man may apply it; wherefore also it is delivered in the second person singular, Thou, even thou: to thee be it spoken.

And the prophet also shall fall with thee in the night. The Chaldee hath it, "as in the night, if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him," **John 11:10**. The false prophet cannot lay his hand upon his breast and say, as dying Oecolampadius did, *Hic sat*

lucis, Here is store of light. Such are woefully benighted, yet more may look to be, for "their right eye shall be utterly darkened," **Zechariah 11:17**; (being blind leaders of the blind), yea, the night shall be upon them, and it shall be dark unto them; the sun shall go down over their heads, **Micah 3:6**, and when they fall together with those seduced souls into the ditch of destruction, themselves shall fall undermost, **Matthew 15:14**, and receive the deeper damnation, **Matthew 23:14**. If others shall be damned, they must look to be double damned, as *Dives* feared to be, if ever his brethren (by his example) came to that place of torment. Mercer's note here is very good, *Nocte casuros dicit*, &c. He saith they shall fall in the night, as signifying, by an allegory, that when calamity shall lay hold upon these false prophets, they shall also be pricked in their consciences, which shall tell them that *ventris causa*, for their bellies' sake, and other base respects, they have brought upon the seduced people so great mischiefs. This shall be as a dagger at their hearts, and shall fill their consciences with horror and distress.

And I will destroy thy mother. *i.e.* the whole synagogue, yea, the whole Church and state, the university of the Israelites; so that their nation and name should perish together. Is it not so with the ten tribes? who can tell at this day where to find them or whence to expect them? whether from China, as some think and allege, **Isaiah 49:12**, or from Tartary, as others, who say that Tartar (alias *Tatari*, or *Totari*) comes from **רתות** *Tothar*, a residue or remnant. This is no other than a vain and capricious fancy, saith learned Breerwood. Is it not altogether unlikely that the Lord in this threat might allude to that law, **Deuteronomy 22:6**, "Thou shalt not take the dam" (Heb. the mother) "with the young"; but I that am above law, saith God, will cut off dam and young together in the nest, I will utterly cut off the whole nation. This was fulfilled **2 Kings 17:5-7**, and our prophet lived to see it, to his great heart-break. O that we could be warned, &c. Let holy mother Church of Rome (as they call her) look to it, with her doctrine of infallibility. These Israelites gloried as much of their mother, and thought (as Dionysius did of his kingdom) that the Church had been tied to their nation with chains of adamant (**Ἀδάμαντι δεδεμένην ὤετο τὴν ἀρχὴν κεκτῆσθαι**), but their mother is here threatened to be cut off: and of the see of Rome it is long since foretold, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen," **Revelation 18:2**. It is a question among divines whether the Church can fail? It is answered, that the Catholic invisible Church cannot; but any particular and visible Church may, as this of Israel, and that of Rome, which hath long since cast off Christ, and the public exercise of true religion; and is become *ex aurea argentea, ex argentea ferrea, ex ferrea terrea: superest iam ut in stercus abeat*, said one of her own sons, an Augustine friar, in 1414, and many others of their own writers say the same, *necessario potius quam libenter*, as wrested from them by the truth, rather than of any itching humour to disgrace their mother by uncovering her nakedness. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 8. [[@Bible:Hosea 4:8]]{{field-on:Bible}} **They eat up the sin of my people.** That is, the sin offerings, as **Exodus 29:14**. This they might lawfully do, **Leviticus 6:16, 18; 23, 26, 29, 30; 10:17**. But they were greedy dogs; and looked every one to his gain from his quarter, **Isaiah 5:6, 11**. They winked at the people's sins, and cared not what evils they fell into, so that they would bring in store of fat and good expiatory sacrifices, which made for the priest's advantage. They ate that on earth which they were to digest in hell; they fed upon such diet as bred the worm of conscience, that never dies. Just so the Papists do at this day: they teach the people, though they sin, yet, by giving money for so many masses to be mumbled over by a greasy priest, or by so many indulgences and dirges purchased of the pope's pardon mongers, they shall be delivered, *etiamsi, per impossibile, matrem Dei vitiassent*. although impossible, they may damage the mother of God, I tremble to translate it. Tecelius told them so in Germany; and got huge masses of money for the pope's coffers. The common sort of Papists (for want of better teaching) will say, when we have sinned we must confess: and when we have confessed we must sin again, that we may confess again; and make work for new

indulgences and jubilees. But have these "workers of iniquity no knowledge, that eat up God's people as they eat bread?" **Psalm 14:4**, that drink up the blood of souls, much more worth than the lives that David's men had jeopardized to procure him the water of the well of Bethlehem, which therefore he dared not drink of? This surely is that filthy lucre (αἰσχροκέρδεια) ministers should be free from, **1 Peter 5:2**. Let all non-residents look to it, that carry only *forcipes et mulctrum*, tongs and a milking pail, those instruments of a foolish shepherd, **Zechariah 11:15**; (See Trapp on "**Zechariah 11:15**") feeding themselves, but starving the flock: a heavy account will they one day make to the arch-shepherd, of their sacrilegious rapacity.

And they set their hearts on their iniquity. Heb. they lift up their souls: that is, they not only prick up their ears, as Danaeus expounds it, to listen after sins and sin offerings, but they greedily desire and earnestly look after Such emoluments, such belly timber: being *gulae mancipia*, slaves to their guts, and wholly given up to gormandise. See the same expression, and in this sense, **Jeremiah 22:27**; **Deuteronomy 24:15**; **Ezekiel 24:25**, and compare the practice of Popish priests, who make infinite gain of everything almost, as their ringing of saints' bells, places of burial, selling of licences for marriage and meats, selling of corpses and sepulchres. All things are saleable and soluble at Rome; and the savour of gain sweet, though it comes out of a stinking stew, or Jew's counting house. The priests had a trick by wires to make their images here wag their chaps apace, if some good gift were presented; as, if otherwise, to hang the lip in token of discontent. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 9. [[@Bible:Hosea 4:9]]{{field-on:Bible}} **And there shall be like people like priest.** i.e. they shall share alike in punishment, as they have done in sin; neither shall their priesthood protect them, any more than it did Eli's two sons, whose white ephod covered foul sins. A wicked priest is the worst creature upon earth. Who are devils but they that were once angels of light? and who shall have their portion with the devil and his angels but those *dehonestamenta cleri malae monetae ministri*, bad lived ministers. It was grown to a proverb in times of Popery, that the pavement of hell was pitched with soldiers' helmets and shavelings' crowns. Letters also were framed and published as sent from hell; wherein the devil gave the Popish clergy no small thanks, for so many millions of souls as by them were daily sent down to him. The priests might haply hope to be privileged and provided for in a common calamity, for their office sake; as Chrysostom saith that Aaron (though in the same fault with Miriam, **Numbers 12:1**, yet) was not smitten with leprosy as she, for the honour of the priesthood (ὁὐκ τὸ τῆς εἰροσύνης ἀξίωμα. Chrys.), lest such a foul disease on his person should redound to the disgrace of his office. But I rather think he escaped by his true and timely repentance; whereby he disarmed God's indignation, and redeemed his own sorrow and shame. For God is an impartial judge; neither is there with him respect of persons: priest and people shall all be carried captive one with another (the priests for the people, according to that of **Isaiah 6:5**, "I am a man of polluted lips": for what reason? "I live among a people of polluted lips," and have learned their language; and especially the people for the priests, **Jeremiah 23:10, 14, 15**; from the prophets there goes profaneness quite through the land), so they shall fare the worse one for another; they shall all be involved in the same punishment. Only it shall be more grievous to the priest, by how much higher thoughts he had of himself; looking on the people as his underlings, as they did, **John 7:49**.

And I will punish them for their ways. Heb. visit them. So **Exodus 32:34**, "In the day when I visit I will visit their sin upon them." God hath his visitation days wherein to visit those visitors, the priests; and his articles will be as strict and as critical (saith one) as ever was the Inquisition of Spain or Lambeth. It was therefore good counsel that a martyr gave his wife in a letter, Among all other prisoners visit your own soul, and set all to rights there: for else, what will you do when God riseth up? and when he visiteth, what will you answer him? **Job 31:14**. And that which Tertullian gave Scapula, a pagan persecutor; *Si nobis non parcis, tibi parce: si*

non tibi, Carthagini: God will surely make inquisition for our blood: therefore if thou wilt not spare us, yet spare thyself; if not thyself, yet spare thy country, which must be responsible when God comes to visit.

And reward them for their deed. Heb. I will make to return your doings. Hence this is well observed, by a good interpreter: Sin passeth away in the act of it with much sweetness; but God will make it return back again in the guilt of it, with much bitterness. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 10. [[@Bible:Hosea 4:10]]{{field-on:Bible}} **For they shall eat and not have enough.** Only they shall be filled with their own ways, **Proverbs 14:14**, but that is but to feed upon the wind with Ephraim, **Hosea 12:1**, which breedeth nothing but troublesome belching, or a dog-like appetite (as they call it), that cannot be satisfied (βουλιμία, *appetitus caninus* desire of a dog). These greedy dogs, the priests, that did eat up the sins of God's people, and thought to have fully gorged themselves therewith, they met with that sore plague of unsatiableness for the present (a man may as soon fill a chest with wind as soul with wealth (*Non plus satiatur cor auro quam corpus aura*, Aug.); see **Ecclesiastes 5:10**) (*See Trapp on "Ecclesiastes 5:10"*) and for the future they coveted an evil covetousness to themselves, for they got God's curse along with their illgotten goods which will bring them to a morsel of bread they have not only sucked in the air, but pestilential air, that not only not fills them, but kills them too. (*See Trapp on "Haggai 1:6"*)

They shall commit whoredom, and shall not increase. The Chaldee renders it, They shall take wives, but shall not beget sons. *Sol et homo generant hominem*, saith the philosopher; but unless God, the first agent, concur, that cannot be neither. Lo, "Children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward," saith David to his son Solomon, who found it true by experience, **Psalms 127:3**, for by all his wives and concubines (no less than a thousand) he had but one son that we read of and he was none of the wisest; nothing like Edward VI, whom alone Henry VIII left (with his two sisters) to succeed him; though he had so many wives and concubines. Wantonness is a sin commonly punished with warn of posterity: especially when it is accompanied with obstinacy in evil courses, as in Ahab who, to cross God's threat of rooting out him and his posterity, took many wives; and so bestirred him, that he begat of them seventy sons, but with evil success; for they were all cut off in one day, **2 Kings 10:7**. Wicked men must not think to carry it against God; and to have their wills *al disputo di Dio*, as that profane pope said; and as that graceless Ahaziah, who sent a third captain, after that the former two had been consumed by fire; as if he would despitefully spit in the face of heaven, and wrestle a fall with the Almighty. Let no man expect to prosper in unlawful practices, to increase by whoredom, as these profane priests sought to do, that they might be full of children (anyhow): and leave the rest of their substance to their babes, **Psalms 17:14**. But fertility is not from the means (right or wrong), but from the author (many a poor man hath a house full of children by one wife; while Solomon hath but one son by many houses full of wives), and Job could tell that whoredom is a fire that consumeth to destruction, and would root out all his increase, **Job 31:12**.

Because they have left off to take heed to the Lord. God is not bound to render a reason for his proceedings, yet doth it oft, as here, that he may be justified, and every mouth stopped. Their apostasy is here shown to be the cause of their calamity. There was a time when they took some heed to God and his ways: they kept close to him, and observed his commandments to do them (as the word here importeth), but now they had left off to be wise, and to do good, (**Psalms 36:3**) until their iniquity was found to be hateful, and themselves altogether filthy, **Psalms 53:3**, wicked doers against the covenant, **Daniel 11:30, 32**. Apostates cannot choose unto themselves a worse condition, **2 Peter 2:20, 22; Matthew 12:43, 45**, let them look to it. Hath ever any waxed fierce against God and prospered? **Job 9:4**; even of late my people are risen up against me as an enemy, **Micah 2:8**, but what will they do in the end thereof?

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Verse 11. [[@Bible:Hosea 4:11]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Whoredom and wine and new wine have taken away the heart.** *i.e.* Have robbed my people of themselves, and laid a beast in their room. Any lust allowed and wallowed in will eat out the heart of grace; and, at length, all grace out of the heart. Hence temporizers grow in time so sapless, heatless, and heartless to any good; some unmortified lust or other there is, that, as a worm, lieth grubbing at the root, and makes all to wither; that, like a drone in a hive, proves a great waster; that, as a moth in fine cloth, consumes all; or, as the light of the sun, puts out the light of the fire: so here. But, above all others, sensual sins and fleshly lusts (such as are here instanced, whoredom and drunkenness) do war against the soul, **1 Peter 2:11**, do take away the heart; they besot and infatuate a man, they rob him of his reason, and carry away his affections, &c. Grace is seated in the power of nature. Now these carnal sins disable nature; and so set it in a greater distance from grace. They make men, that formerly seemed to give light as a candle, to become as a snuff in a socket, drowned in the tallow; or as a quagmire, which swallows up the seed sown upon it, and yields no increase. Who are void of the Spirit but such as are sensual? **Jude 1:18, 19.** And who are they that say unto God, Depart from us, but those that dance to the timbrel and harp, &c., **Job 21:11.** "They saw God, and did eat and drink," **Exodus 24:11**; that is, say some, though they had seen God, yet they turned again to sensual pleasures: as if it had reference to that eating, and drinking, and rising up to play, upon the dedication of their calf, which was presently after. Aristotle writeth of a parcel of ground in Sicily that sendeth forth such a strong smell of fragrant flowers to all the fields and grounds thereabouts, that no hound can hunt there; the scent is so confounded with the sweet smell of the flowers. Let us see to it that the pleasures of sin take not away all scent (and sense too) of heavenly delights; that the flesh, as a siren, befool not Wisdom's guests, and get them away from her, **Proverbs 9:16**; as Aelian tells of a whore that boasted that she could easily get all Socrates' scholars from him, but he could not recover one again from her. Indeed, none that go unto her return again, saith Solomon, **Proverbs 2:19**, for she gets their hearts from them: as David found, and Solomon complained. David was never his own worthy again, after he had fouled himself with that beastly sin. And Solomon, when he gave himself to wine and women (though his mother had sufficiently warned him, **Proverbs 31:3, 4**), he quickly took hold of folly, **Ecclesiastes 2:3**, his sensualities drew out his spirits and dissolved him, and brought him to so low an ebb in grace, that many question his salvation. Bellarmine reckons him among reprobates: but I like not his judgment. Let ministers of all men (this is spoken of the priests chiefly, as some think) see to it that they flee fleshly lusts: that they exhort the younger women with chastity, as St Paul did Timothy: and drink (if any, yet but) a little wine for their health's sake: remembering that the sins of teachers are teachers of sins; and that their evil practices flee far upon those two dangerous wings of example and scandal. Ministers should be no winebibbers or ale stakes, **1 Timothy 3:3**, *ne magis solliciti de mero quam de vero, magis ament mundi delicias quam Christi divitias*, lest being "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God," that should befall them that Solomon foretelleth, **Proverbs 23:33**, thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. *Venter aestuans mere spumat in libidinem*, a belly filled with wine foameth out filthiness, saith Jerome. Wine is the milk of Venus, saith Aristotle. *Vina parant animos Veneri*, saith Ovid. Whoredom is usually ushered in by drunkenness: hence they stand so close together in this text. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 12. [[@Bible:Hosea 4:12]]{{field-on:Bible}} **My people ask counsel at their stocks.** That is, at their images, which are here called stocks in contempt, as Hezekiah called the brazen serpent (when it was idolized by the people) Nehushtan, or, a piece of brass; and as Julius Palmer, martyr, called the rood in Paul's a jackanapes; and as the poet, in contempt of his own god Priapus, brings him in saying

"Olim truncus eram ficulnus, inutile lignum."

So the prophet cries shame upon the house of Israel for saying to a stock, Thou art my father, and to a stone, Thou hast brought me forth, **Jeremiah 2:27; Isaiah 44:11**. But to such senseless practices men fall many times when they grow sensual; see **2 Thessalonians 2:10; Revelation 17:5**. Spiritual whoredom and bodily go usually together. Rivet tells us here of a nobleman that went out of the church from hearing mass into the very next house, where he kept a whore; and said to the bystanders, *a lupanari ad missam unum tantum esse passum*, that there is but one step from the mass to a whore house.

And their staff. That is, saith Kimchi, their false prophets, upon whom they lean, and by whom they are led, as a blind man by his staff. But I rather think it is meant of rhabdomancy, ⁽¹³⁾ a kind of odd way of divining by rods and staves, as Nebuchadnezzar is brought in doing, **Ezekiel 21:22**, and was common in those eastern parts. Or else hereby are meant the soothsayers' and magicians' rods, as **Exodus 7:12; Hebrews 11:21**. It is said that Jacob worshipped leaning upon the top of his staff, and thereby lifting up his body to do reverence to God, where the Vulgate text, omitting the preposition, hath committed a manifest error, in saying that Jacob worshipped the top of his rod or staff; as if there had been some picture there engraven. The Hebrew is, towards the bed's heads. And it is certain that Jacob worshipped none but God; and bowed himself either towards the bed's head, or leaning upon his staff, to testify his humility, faith, and hope, which adoration how far it was from the worshipping of images (which the Papists urge from this place), who seeth not?

For the spirit of whoredoms hath caused them to err. That unclean spirit, **Zechariah 13:2**, the devil (who is εἰδωλοχᾶρής, as Synesius saith, a delighter in idols), drives them *satanico impetu*, to commit whoredom, both spiritual and corporal, with strength of affection. Now, if that spirit of error, **1 John 4:6**, and of giddiness, **Isaiah 19:14**, cause men to err, and carry them with a vehement impetus to idol worship (which indeed is devil worship), what wonder? Men that are that way bent know not of what spirit they are; little think that they are acted and agitated by the devil. O pray with David, **Psalms 143:10**, that that good Spirit of God may lead us into all truth and holiness.

And they are gone a whoring from under their God. *i.e.* from under the yoke of his obedience; they are gone out of his precincts, and therefore also out of his protection; as a whore that forsaketh her husband, and is therefore worthily cast off. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 13. [[@Bible:Hosea 4:13]]{{field-on:Bible}} **They sacrifice upon the tops of the mountains, and burn incense upon the hills,** &c. As nearer to heaven; and in an apish imitation of the patriarchs, who, before the tabernacle was set up, sacrificed in high places (as Abraham on Mount Moriah, &c.), that their bodies being mounted, aloof, they might the better lift up their hearts and eyes to heaven, saying, as it were, to all worldly cares and cogitations, as Abraham did to his servants whom he left at the foot of the hill, "Abide you here with the ass," **Genesis 22:5**. Jerome upon this place hath his note: Israel, saith he, loveth high places, for they have forsaken the high God; and they love the shadow, having left the substance. But what could be more absurd than to think, as they did, that God, who is omnipresent, was nearer to them on hills and high places, and farther off them in valleys. See **Isaiah 57:7; Ezekiel 6:13**. This they had partly also learned of the heathens; from whom nevertheless God had shut them up, as it were, in an island (so their land is called, **Isaiah 20:6**), that having little commerce with them, they might not learn their manners. But our nature is very catching this way; and doth as easily draw and suck idolatry to it as the lode stone doth iron, or turpentine fire.

Under oaks, and poplars, and elms, because the shadow thereof is good. So they proceed from one evil to another; for sin is infinite, and when a man is fallen down one round of hell's

¹³ Divination by means of a rod or wand; *spec.* the art of discovering ores, springs of water, etc., in the earth by means of a divining rod. (ED.

ladder he knows not where he shall stop, or how he shall step back. These idolaters, as they had their high places in imitation of the patriarchs, so their groves of shady trees consecrated to their idols; to strike reverence into their hearts, as they conceited, and for the greater solemnity. Sin comes commonly clothed with a show of reason, **Exodus 1:10**. Come, let us deal wisely, say they: yet every oppressor is a fool, **Proverbs 28:16**. It will so blear the understanding that a man shall think he hath reason to be mad, and that there is some sense in sinning. But especially will worship hath a show of wisdom, **Colossians 2:23**, or the reason of wisdom, as the word there signifieth, the very quintessence of it. Hence the Papists write rationals, whole volumes of reason for their rites and ceremonies in divine service,—the shadow is good, say these, therefore we get under trees. (See Dr Sheldon's Mark of the Beast, serm.) And John Hunt, a blasphemous Papist, in his humble appendix to King James, chap. vi, was not afraid to say, That the God of the Protestants is the most uncivil and evil mannered God of all those who have borne the name of gods upon the earth; yea, worse than Pan, god of the clowns, which can endure no ceremonies nor good manners at all. O tongue worthy to be pulled out, cut in gobbets, and driven down the throat of this hideous blasphemer; for he could not but know the God of the Protestants (as he scornfully termeth him) to be the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Did not Rabshakeh rail after this rate upon good Hezekiah, for taking down the high places and altars of God (as he called them), which yet God well approved of? **2 Kings 18:22**. Mr Burroughes maketh mention of a lady in Paris, who, when she saw the bravery of a procession to a saint, she cried out, Oh, how fine is our religion beyond that of the Huguenots? They have a mean and beggarly religion, but ours is full of solemnity and bravery, &c. The Catholics, in their supplication to King James for a toleration, plead that their religion is (*inter cratera*) so pleasing to nature, and so suitable to sense and reason, that it must therefore needs be the right. A proper argument surely; and not all out so convincing as that of Cenalis, Bishop of Auranches, who, writing against the Christian congregation at Paris, and basely slandering their meetings, as if they were to maintain whoredom, will, in conclusion, needfully prove (if he could) the Catholics to be the true Church, because they had bells to call them together; but the Huguenots had claps of harquebuses, or pistolets, for that purpose.

Therefore your daughters shall commit whoredom. Impune, they shall do it, and for a punishment of your idolatry; and inasmuch as you have prostituted your souls (that is, my spouse) to the devil, your houses shall be whore houses, to your utter disgrace and heart break. Certain it is, that where there is most idolatry there is most adultery; as at Rome, which is nothing else but a great brothel house, and hath fully made good that of the poet;

*"Roma quod inverso delectaretur amore,
Nomen ab inverso nomine fecit Amor."*

Thus God punished the idolatrous Ethnics, by delivering them up to passions of dishonour, or vile affections; to Sodomitical practices, which did abase them below those fourfooted beasts which they adored, **Romans 1:23-24**. Some put off all manhood, became dogs, worse than dogs, scalded in their own grease, **ἑξεκαύθησαν**, **Romans 1:27**, and this is there called a meet recompense, **ἀντιμισθίαν**, such as God here threateneth. Mr Levely (a very learned interpreter) thinketh that when God saith here, Your daughters shall commit whoredom, and your daughters-in-law (for so he renders it) shall commit adultery, he meaneth it not of voluntary whoredom, but of that which is forced, according to that of Amos to Amaziah **Amos 7:17**, "Therefore thus saith the Lord thy wife shall be a harlot in the city, and thy sons and daughters shall fall by the sword"; that is, thy wife shall be ravished by the enemy. Theodoret also is of the same judgment. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 14. [[@Bible:Hosea 4:14]]{{field-on:Bible}} **I will not punish your daughters when they commit whoredom.** *q.d.* I will not once foul my fingers with them, or be at pains to

correct them but they shall take their swing in sin for me &c. Origen in a certain homily, quoting this Scripture, saith, *Vis indignantis Dei terribilem vocem audire*, &c. (Hom. 8; in Exod. 20): Will you hear the terrible voice of a provoked God; hear it here, I will not punish, &c. You shall be without chastisement, for an argument that you are bastards, and not sons. Never was Jerusalem's condition so desperate as the time when God said unto her, "My fury shall depart from thee, I will be quiet and no more angry," **Ezekiel 16:42**. *Feri, Domine, feri*, cried Luther, Strike, Lord, strike, and spare not.

"Ferre minora volo, ne graviora feram."

There is not a greater plague can befall a man than to prosper in sinful practices. Bernard calleth it *miseriordiam omni indignatione crudeliorem*, a killing courtesy. **Ezekiel 3:20**, I will lay a stumbling block before him: that is, saith Vatablus, I will prosper him in all things, and not by affliction restrain him from sin. Job surely counts it for a great favour to sorry man, that God accounts him worth melting, though it be every morning; and trying, though it be every moment, **Job 7:17, 18**. And Jeremiah calleth for correction as a thing that he could not well be without: "Correct me, O Lord," &c.

For themselves are separated with whores. God seemeth to speak this to others by change of person: *Ac si puderet ipsum cum putidis hircis verba facere*, as if he were ashamed to speak any longer to such stinking goats (Rivet). Separates they were, but of the worst sort. They separated themselves with harlots, they got into byways, far from company (especially of those that know them), that they might more freely act filthiness (Auson.). But what could the heathen say, *Turpe quid acturus, Te sine teste time*. Shameful what he will do, fear you without witness. Conscience is a thousand witnesses: and men must not think long to lie hidden; for God will be a "swift witness against the adulterers," **Malachi 3:5**, (*See Trapp on "Malachi 3:5"*) and, it may be, "bring them into all evil, in the midst of the congregation and assembly," **Proverbs 5:14**. (*See Trapp on "Proverbs 5:14"*) Some render it, they beget bastards, such as the mule is (which also hath his name *pered*, from this root, *yithparedu*). Or they shall be unfruitful as the mule. Wantonness is commonly punished with want of children. (*See Trapp on "Hosea 4:10"*) Those children that they had took after them, it appeareth here, they were naught by kind, as being an adulterous generation, a seed of evildoers, a race of rebels; and therefore it was no matter how little they multiplied. Let those that have children, and others under their charge, keep home as much as may be; and not be separate from their families (with whores especially), lest their daughters meanwhile commit whoredom (counted but a trick of youth, a sin that that slippery age may easily slip into, and not easily be descried, **Proverbs 30:19**), and their spouses commit adultery, by occasion of their lewd absence, and to cry quittance with them at home. Let them also make Nebuchadnezzar's law, that none under their roof say or do aught "against the God of heaven," **Daniel 3:29**; and themselves be first in the practice of it, as so many living laws, walking statutes; so may they hope to keep their houses chaste and honest, and provide for the credit and comfort both of themselves and of theirs.

And they sacrifice with harlots. Heb. Holy harlots, sacrificing harlots, such as Solomon speaketh of, **Proverbs 7:14**, and as those wicked women that lay with Eli's sons at the door of the tabernacle, **1 Samuel 2:22**. Or as King Edward IV's holy whore, as he used to call her, that came to him out of a nunnery, when he wished to send for her (Speed). His kinsman, Louis XI of France (knowing his disposition), invited him to the court, promising him his choice of beauties there, and *adhibebimus tibi Cardinalem Burbonium*, then shall Cardinal Bourbon impose penance on you, and absolve you of all your misdoings (Comin.) It is well enough known what foul work the heathens made at their *sacra Eleusinia, Bacchanalia, Lupercalia, Priapdia* (the same with the sacrificing to Baal Peor, as Jerome holds). And to these this text may seem to refer; and this people too have separated themselves to that shame.

Therefore the people that doth not understand shall fall. Heb. shall be beaten, as some render it, shall be perplexed, and troubled, so as they know not what to do, or how to help themselves, as Aben Ezra from the Arabic. The Chaldee interprets it *collidetur*, shall be dashed in pieces. Ignorance is much instanced and threatened in this chapter, three or four different times at least. Not because men sin only by ignorance, as the Platonists think, *Omnis peccans est ignorans*; but, 1. To aggravate the hatefulness of this: sin, which men use so to excuse and extenuate; 2. To taunt and abase the rebellious nature of man, who now is set in gross ignorance, and ready to pitch headlong into hell, as the just reward of his aspiring and reaching after forbidden knowledge; 3. Because ignorance (affected especially) is the source of many sins, and a main support of Satan's kingdom. (*See Trapp on "Hosea 4:1"*) (*See Trapp on "Hosea 4:6"*) &c. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 15. [[@Bible:Hosea 4:15]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Though thou, Israel, play the harlot, yet let not Judah offend.** Lest if God lose his glory among them too, he lose it altogether. Judah was grown almost as bad as Israel (in the days of that stigmatic Ahaz especially, **2 Chronicles 28:22**); Aholibamah, as Aholibah, **Ezekiel 23:36**. But let it not be so, saith the prophet, since not to be warned by the harms of another is a just both presage and desert of ruin. *Alterius igitur perditio tua sit cautio*. Therefore by their destruction, let you be warned. Seest thou another shipwreck? look well to thine own tackling. God will take that from Israel which he will not from Judah; because these had many means and privileges that the other had not; as the temple, priests, ordinances, &c. Now good turns aggravate unkindness; and men's offences are increased by their obligations. Judah was and would be therefore the worse, because they ought to have been better. And God can better bear with aliens than with his own people, when they offend. The Philistines may cart the ark, but if David do it woe be to Uzzah. You only have I known of all the families of the earth, therefore (whosoever escape) I will punish you for all iniquities, **Amos 3:2**. The unkindness of your sins is more than all the rest: it grieves God's Spirit, and goes near his heart.

Come not ye unto Gilgal, neither go ye up to Bethaven. Alias Bethel, the house of God, so called by Jacob, who there had visions of God, and said, "How fearful is this place! It is even the house of God and gate of heaven." But now it was become the hate of heaven, and gate to destruction, as being abused to idolatry. *Corruptio optimi fit pessima*. Corruption of the best become the worst. Bethel is become Bethaven, the house of iniquity and misery, of sin and of sorrow: for "their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another god," **Psalms 16:4**. The word *gnatsabim*, there rendered *sorrows*, signifieth also idols, **Psalms 115:4; 106:36**, because they that worship them are sure of sorrows.

Come not therefore to Gilgal, &c. Gilgal was the key of Canaan, situated between Jordan and Jericho, famous for various services there performed to God, as were easy to instance; but now basely abused to idol worship. Hence this charge (and the like in **Amos 5:5**) not to come near it; and the rather because it was a border town, and so more dangerous. "Keep thee far from an evil matter," saith Moses, **Exodus 23:7**; "Come not nigh the doors of the harlot's house," saith Solomon, **Proverbs 5:8**. From such stand off, or keep aloof, saith Paul, **1 Timothy 6:5**. Shun them as the seaman doth sands and shoals, as the same apostle's word, στέλλεσθαι, imports, **1 Thessalonians 3:6**. A man cannot touch such pitch but he shall be defiled; nor live any while in Mauritania but he shall be discoloured. *Cum fueris Romae*, &c. Let them look to it that so much affect to see Italy, Rome, the pope, the mass &c. But, "What dost thou here, Elijah?" may God well say, as **1 Kings 19:9**. What protection hast thou here, either from infection of sin or infliction of punishment? Saith not the heavenly oracle, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues," **Revelation 18:4**. Mr Ascham (school master to Queen Elizabeth) was wont to thank God, that he was but nine days in Italy: wherein he saw in that one city of Venice more liberty to sin than in London he ever heard of in nine years. And is it safe pressing into such pest houses? tampering with

such temptations? Tertullian tells of a Christian woman, who being at a play, was possessed of a devil. And when he was asked by those that came to cast him out, how he dared possess one that was a Christian, he answered, I found her in mine own place. Take heed, therefore, ye come not where the devil hath to do. He that doth so, and yet prays, "Lead us not into temptation," may as well thrust his finger into the fire, and then pray that it may not be burnt.

Nor swear, The Lord liveth. *i.e.* Swear not by God and Malcham, **Zephaniah 1:5**, make not a mixture of religions; halt not between two opinions, think not to serve two masters, **Matthew 6:23**. What agreement hath Christ with Belial, or the temple of God with idols? **2 Corinthians 6:15**. Cast away (saith one to a neuter passive, Nicodemus) either thy wings or thy teeth; and loathing this bat-like nature, be what thou art, either a bird or a beast (Dr Hall, Epist. to W. Laud). There were (belike) in Judah, that thought they could both frequent places of idol worship, and serve Jehovah, swearing by his name. God will have none of that; if he be served by men at all he must be served truly, that there be no halting, and totally, that there be no halving, To swear *vere, rite, iuste*, truly, solemnly and justly, as **Jeremiah 4:1**, is a piece of God's service, and we may well reckon it among our good works. But to swear by idols, or before idols, made to represent the true God (as those bugs at Dan and Bethel, &c.), or by the creature, **Matthew 5:24**, is utterly unlawful. It is a great dishonour to God, and a great dishonour to ourselves also; for we always swear by the greater, **Hebrews 6:16**.

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Verse 16. [[@Bible:Hosea 4:16]]{{field-on:Bible}} **For Israel slideth back, as a back sliding heifer.** *Iuvenea petulca*, as an unruly heifer, which kicketh against the milk pail, and wriggles against the yoke. As a mad cow, **δάμαλις παροιστρῶσα**, so the Septuagint. Mr Dearing told Queen Elizabeth in a sermon, that whereas once she wrote in Woodstock windows, *tanquam ovis*, as a sheep to the slaughter; now she was *tanquam indomita iuvenca*, as an untamed heifer; and might well fear lest God would feed her as a lamb in a large place as here, and feed her with his rod, as **Micah 7:14**. The Chaldee rendereth, *sicut bos qui saginatur et recalcitratur*, as an ox that waxeth fat and kicketh. But the Hebrew word is feminine; and in all creatures, the female is observed to be more headlong and headstrong. (Virg. Georg. III):

"Scilicet ante omnes furor est insignis equarum."

Heifers also are more wild, wanton, and untractable: noting the children of disobedience, those refractory rebels: that, as false jades, will not stand and pull (as countrymen call it), set their shoulders to the yoke, and their sides to the work, but give in and kick against the prick.

Now the Lord will feed them as a lamb in a large place. *i.e.* He will keep them short, as a heifer kept in a sheep pasture, where there is nothing for her to bite on, it is so bare. A lamb can live where a heifer cannot; a lamb can pick up the grass of the wilderness, and pick a living out of it. God threateneth these heifers, they shall have henceforth short commons. Thus Gauthier carries it. Mercer will have it thus: I will feed them as a lamb, *i.e.* daintily and plentifully, that being the sooner fatted, they may be fitted for the shambles. Other thus, and I think better, he shall feed them, that is, punish them, (as **Micah 5:4, 6; 7:14**) as a lamb, one single helpless lamb, that goes bleating up and down in the wide waste wilderness, having none to tend it, or take care of it: it shall be all alone in a large place. How much better and safer were it to be in God's fold, where (though penned, or pent up in a narrower room, yet) God's lambs are sure to be fed daily and daintily. Whereas those that affect freedom from God's service, and hold themselves at best ease when they have elbow room enough to satisfy their lusts without restraint or control, they shall be fed with God's rod, **Micah 7:14**, yea, they shall find that he hath two rods, beauty and bands, **Zechariah 11:7**, the latter for those that fight the former. Or if he feed them as a lamb in a large place, alone, and at random, they will quickly become a prey to the wolf, and soon have enough of that wild liberty that they so much

affected. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 17. [[@Bible:Hosea 4:17]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Ephraim is joined to idols, let him alone.** Ephraim, that is, the ten revolted tribes, who are called Ephraim in opposition to Judah: 1. Because that tribe was the greatest of the ten; 2. Jeroboam, the ringleader of that revolt, was of that tribe; 3. They rebelled at Shechem, which was in that tribe, and from thenceforth was joined or glued to idols, as the fornicator is to his harlot, with whom he becometh one flesh, and from whom there is no dissuading him. Some fetch the metaphor from enchanters; who by their conjuring art have society and fellowship with the devils; so had Ephraim with idols; and like an enchanted person, he could not stir from them, but stood fastened to them as to a stock or stake. The Tyrians, when besieged by Alexander, fearing the departure of their god Apollo from them, laid chains upon his statue, and fastened him to his temple. Ephraim was so fastened to his idols (*terrículis* so Junius renders this text) that there is no likelihood of his being sundered from them: he had taken fast hold of deceit, **Jeremiah 8:5**, and would not loose his hold. Let him alone, therefore, saith either God to the prophet (lay out no more words, lose no more labour upon him) or the prophet to Judah; let them even go, have nothing to do with them, though they be your brethren, meddle not with them; let Christ alone, to deal with them at his coming: Maranatha, the Lord cometh. Meanwhile, they lie under a dreadful spiritual judgment, worse than all the plagues of Egypt; even a dead and dedolent disposition, whereunto they are delivered. This is worse than to be delivered to Satan: for so a man may be, and recover out of his snare by repentance, as the incestuous Corinthian did: but when God shall say, Let such a man alone, let him take his course, I have done with him, and let my ministers trouble themselves no more about him, there is thenceforth but an inch between him and hell, which even gapes for him, where he shall rue it among reprobates. Well he may flourish a while, and feel no hurt; as Saul did not of many years after his rejection; and as the Pharisees, after Christ had said of them, "Let them alone, they are blind leaders of the blind," **Matthew 15:14**; but they shall pine and swelter away in their iniquities, **Leviticus 26:39**, which is the last of those dismal plagues there, threatened; they shall not be purged till God's wrath hath rested upon them, **Ezekiel 24:13**, so that now they may go and serve every one his idols, since they have such a mind to it, **Ezekiel 20:39**, and since they have made a match with mischief, they may take their belly full of it. Oh let us fear, lest this should be any of our cases; that God should say, Let him alone, he is resolved of his way, and I of mine; he will have his swing in sin, and I am bent to have my full blow at him. "I am fully persuaded" (saith a reverend man, now with God) "that in these days of grace the Lord is much more quick and peremptory in rejecting men than heretofore: the time is shorter, neither will he wait so long as he used to do." See for ground of this, **Hebrews 2:8**, God is often quick in the offer of his mercy: Go and preach the gospel, saith Christ (go, and be quick: tell men what to trust to, that, as fools, they may not be *semper victuri*, always conquerors, ever about to be better, but never begin to set seriously to work), "He that believeth shall be saved, he that believeth not shall be damned": I shall not longer dally with him. "Destruction cometh, and they shall seek peace, and there shall be none. Mischief shall come upon mischief, and rumour upon rumour; then shall they seek a vision of the prophet; but the law shall perish from the priest, and counsel from the ancients," **Ezekiel 7:25, 26**; when men are even dropping into hell, and have a hell beforehand in their consciences, then they will send hastily for the minister, as they did in the sweating sickness here, so long as the ferventness of the plague lasted. Then the ministers were sought for in every corner, you must come to my lord, you must come to my lady, &c. But what if God had said of such a one, Let him alone, as he reproved Samuel for mourning for Saul, and as he forbade Jeremiah to pray for the Jews, and his apostles to take care for the Pharisees? Oh how dreadful is that man's condition! and what can a minister say more than what the king of Israel said to the woman that complained to him of the scarcity of Samaria, "If the Lord help thee not, whence shall I help thee? out of the barnfloor, or out of the winepress?" **2 Kings 6:27**. If any dram of comfort be applied to a wicked man, the truth of God is falsified,

and that minister will be reckoned among the devil's dirt daubers and upholsterers, that daub with untempered mortar and sew pillows under men's elbows, **Ezekiel 13:18**. Let such alone, therefore, and let God alone to deal with them. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 18. [[@Bible:Hosea 4:18]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Their drink is sour.** That is, they are past grace, and it is now past time a day to do them good: for thou seest how the matter mends with them, even as sour ale mends in summer: and how they even stink above ground, as **Psalm 14:2**. *Vina probantur odore, colore, sapore, &c.*, but their wine hath neither good colour, smell, nor savour or taste; it is dead and gone, and they are as trees twice dead and rotten, and therefore pulled up by the roots, such as the Latins call *vappae*, worthless fellows, that is, past the best, and now good for nothing: see **Isaiah 1:22**. What life or sweetness can be in apostates? yea, how sour and unsavoury to such are all fleshly comforts! They use to drink away their terrors, and drive away their melancholy dumps with merry company. But will that hold? what are such plasters better than the devil's drugs, than his whistle, to call men off from better practices? There is a cup in the hands of the Lord, it is full of mixture, but extremely sour; and the very dregs thereof all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them up, **Psalm 75:8**, though it be eternity to the bottom.

They have committed whoredom continually. Here they are taxed for whoredom, as before for drunkenness (so some carry it), and afterwards for covetousness. This is that chariotmen of shame, *flagitiorum trigae*, whereby the prophet persuadeth Judah to shake off Israel, as not fit to be conversed with. He had charged them before with fornication of both sorts; here he sheweth how unwearied they were in their wickedness, and in addition how intense, for *fornicando fornicati sunt*, they have done wickedly as they could, they have eked out their idolatries and adulteries, and though wearied and even wasted with the multitude of their wickedness, yet they have not given over, but are unsatisfied, and would sin in perpetuity: as that filthy fornicator who said he would desire no other heaven but to live for ever on earth, and to be carried from one brothel house to another. "She hath wearied herself with lies, and yet her great scum went not forth out of her: therefore shall it be in the fire," **Ezekiel 24:12**. Therefore shall graceless wretches be tormented for ever, because they would sin for ever; and therefore suffer all extremity, because they do wickedly with both hands earnestly, **Micah 7:3**; woefully wasting the marrow of their time, the flower of their age, the strength of their bodies, the vigour of their spirits, in the pursuit of their lusts, in the froth and filth whereof is bred that worm that never dieth; which is nothing else but the furious reflection of the soul upon its own once wilful folly, and now woeful misery.

Her rulers with shame do love, Give ye. Her shields (oh shameful!) do love, Give ye; where there is in the original an elegant alliteration that cannot be translated, **דילקו ובה** *Dilexerunt Afferte*, not *Afferre*, as the Vulgate corruptly readeth it. The Doric dialect, the horse leech's language, Give, Give, they are perfectly skilled in: **δωροφαια**, gift-greediness, is all their delight: like the ravens of Arabia, that fullgorged, have a tuneable sweet record, but empty, screech horribly. *Plerique officiarum*, saith one: Very many rulers do as Plutarch reporteth of Stratocles and Dromoclites, a couple of corrupt officers, *qui sese mutuo ad messem auream invitare solebant*, who were wont to invite one another to the golden harvest, thereby meaning the court, and the judgment seat (Plutarch in Politic.). These follow the administration of justice as a trade only, with an unquenchable and unconscionable desire for gain: which justifieth the common resemblance of the courts of justice to the bush, whereunto while the sheep do flee for defence in weather, he is sure to lose part of his fleece. Now are these shields? are they not rather sharks? Are they protectors, and not rather pillagers, *latrones publici*, public robbers, as Cato called them? These shields of the earth belong to God, saith David, **Psalm 47:9**, should they not then be like him "Now there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor accepting of persons, nor receiving of gifts," **2 Chronicles 19:7**, neither by, himself nor by his man Elisha, nor by his man's man Gehazi, without distaste. By one period of

speech, by one breath of the Lord, are they both forbidden: **Deuteronomy 16:18, 19, 20**, "Thou shalt not respect persons, nor receive a gift": For what reason: "A gift doth blind the eyes of the wise," yea, it transforms them into walking idols, that have eyes and see not, ears and hear not: only it leaveth them hands to handle, that the very touching whereof will infect and venom a man, as Pliny writes of the fish Torpedo. Let such, therefore, shake their hands from bribes, **Isaiah 33:15**, as Paul shook off the viper: and be so far from saying, Give ye, that he should rather say to those that offer it, "Thy money perish with thee." "He that hateth gifts shall live," **Proverbs 15:27**. Jethro's justice of peace should be a man of courage, fearing God, hating covetousness, **Exodus 18:21**; not bound to the peace (as one phraseth it) by a gift in a basket, nor struck dumb by the appearance of angels. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 19. [[@Bible:Hosea 4:19]]{{field-on:Bible}} **The wind hath bound her up in her wings.** The evil spirit (saith Jerome) hurries them towards hell, which is the just hire of the least sin; how much more of these afore mentioned abominations! Take it rather to be spoken of the suddenness, swiftness, and unresistableness of God's judgments, set forth by mighty winds rending the rocks, and tearing up the mountains by the roots, **Job 38:9**. How then shall wicked men (compared to chaff or "dust of the mountains") stand before the tempest of God's wrath, the thunder of his power? Well they may applaud and stroke themselves for a time; but the wind shall bind them up in her wings; God shall blow them to destruction, **Job 4:9**: his executioners have the "wings of a stork," large and long, and "wind in those wings," to note their ready obedience, **Zechariah 5:9**. And although, **Ezekiel 1:26**, God be represented as sitting upon a throne to show his slowness to punish, yet that "throne hath wings and hands under those wings," to show his swiftness and readiness to do seasonable execution upon his enemies.

And they shall be ashamed because of their sacrifices. Wherein they trusted, but now see themselves disappointed, their idols not able to help them. Then shall they cast their idols of silver and of gold, which they have made each for himself to worship, "to the moles and to the bats, to go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks," **Isaiah 2:20, 21**; see also **Isaiah 30:22**. If they be not thus ashamed of their former fopperies, they are the more to be pitied, *Illum ego periisse dice cui periit pudor*. He is an undone man that shames not, does not hesitate for his evil practices, that blusheth not, bleedeth not before God for them, lying down in his shame, **Jeremiah 3:25**, as fully ashamed of his former hopes, **Psalms 119:116**, which now he seeth how far they have abused him. {{field-off:Bible}}

Chapter 5

Verse 1. [[@Bible:Hosea 5:1]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Hear ye this, ye priests.** For you are not so wise but that ye may "hear and increase learning," **Proverbs 1:5; Hosea 4:6**; and besides, from you is profaneness gone forth into all the land, **Jeremiah 23:15**. For you, therefore, in the first place, I have a citation to appear before God's tribunal to hear your sin and your sentence, your crime and your doom. God cited Adam immediately and by himself, **Genesis 3:9**, "Adam, where art thou?" so he did Cain, Laban, Nabal, and others, when he sends for them by death, saying as once to that pope, *Veni miser in iudicium*, Come away, and hear thy sentence. *Centum revolutis annis Deo respondebitis et mihi*. Mediately he citeth men by the mouth of his ministers; as he did the Council of Constance by his faithful martyr, John Huss, and his word stood: and as he doth here the three estates of the kingdom, priests, people, and princes, by the prophet Hosea. That was very strange and extraordinary, that Mr Knox reporteth in his history of Scotland, of one Sir John Hamilton, murdered by the king's means; that he appeared to him in a vision with a naked sword drawn, and strikes off both his arms with these words, Take this before thou receive a final payment for all thine impieties: and within twenty-four hours two of the king's sons died. It is, indeed, but part of their punishment that wicked men here receive, seem it never so grievous, when God entereth into judgment with them, as here it is said.

For judgment is toward you. That is, I am about to pronounce sentence against you, and to do execution: and therefore hear, hearken, and give ear, the first, second, and third time I admonish you, that ye may know that my citation is serious and peremptory: and that your damnation sleepeth not. Priest and people are set before the house of the king; because theirs was *sedes prima, et vita ima*, a high place but a low life (Salvian). And besides, courtiers and great men, though they be in other cases forward enough to take the places of others, yet in point of punishment they slink back, and are well content that others should go before them. God regards none for his greatness (*potentes potenter torquebuntur*), neither spareth he any for his meanness, or because they were borne down either by the laws or lives of their superiors. The people are here placed between the priests and princes, and with them appealed and impreached, to show how frigid and insufficient their excuse is, who plead that they did but as they were taught by their ministers, and as they were commanded by their governors. "Ephraim is oppressed and broken in judgment, because he willingly walked after the commandment," as it is in **Hosea 5:11**. (See Trapp on "**Hosea 5:11**")

For judgment is toward you. Vengeance is in readiness for the disobedient, be he what he will, Caesar or captive, lord or losel, priest or people; every whit as ready in the Lord's hand as in the minister's mouth, **2 Corinthians 10:6**, neither shall multitudes privilege or secure them. Though they be quiet or combined, and likewise many, yet thus shall they be cut down, when he shall pass through, **Nahum 1:12**, yea, though they be briers and thorns that set against him in battle (and those never so much strengthened and sharpened), yet God will "go through them, and burn them together," **Isaiah 27:4**, he will cut off the spirit of princes, and destroy a whole rabble of rebels that rise up against him.

Because ye have been a snare on Mizpah. That God may be justified and every mouth stopped, a reason is here rendered of his most righteous proceedings, and the same recited (after the manner of men) in the preamble to their condemnatory sentences.

Because ye have been a snare on Mizpah, and a net spread upon Tabor. These were two very high hills, much haunted by hunters, and frequented by fowlers, to whom these idolaters (striving to catch people, *ritibus suis velut retibus et laqueis*, with their nets and snares of errors and superstitions) are fitly compared. For they lie in wait for men's souls, and catch many of them either by persuasions or punishments, by allurements or by causing fear, as

Julian the apostate did of old, and as the Papists do at this day. That Jeroboam and his counsellors set watchers in these two mountains, to observe who would go from him to Judah to worship, that he might intercept them and punish them, is a plausible opinion, but lacks proof. I know what is alleged, viz. **1 Kings 12:28; Hosea 6:8**, according to the Vulgate translation. I confess also that it is not unlikely that such things should be done then (as lately wait was laid by the Papists for such as had a mind to betake themselves to Geneva, Tygur, Basil, &c.) for conscience' sake. It is more probable that upon those high hills idolatry was committed, (**Hosea 4:13**) (*See Trapp on "Hosea 4:13"*) and thereby people ensnared, as birds and wild beasts are in the mountains; and so made slaves to the devil, and even fattened for his tooth. Hence in the next words, {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 2. [[@Bible:Hosea 5:2]]{{field-on:Bible}} **And the revolvers are profound to make slaughter.** They lay their nets and snares deep, and lie down upon the ground, that they may take the silly birds that dread no danger. He "croucheth and humbleth himself, that the poor may fall into his strong paws," **Psalms 10:10**. He studies the devil's depths, **Revelation 2:24**; poisonous and pestilent policies, Machiavellian mysteries of mischief. His head is a forge and fountain of wicked wiles: he hath store and strength of strange traps and trains, frauds and fetches, to draw in and deceive the silly simple. That these seducers were deeply revolted, **Isaiah 31:6**, they had deeply corrupted themselves, **Hosea 9:9**, they sinned not common sins; as Korah and his accomplices died not a common death. They made great slaughter of men's souls, and of their bodies too, that refused to yield to them. Craft and cruelty seldom sundered in seducers: as some write of the asp that he never wanders alone, without his companion with him; and as those birds of prey and desolation, **Isaiah 34:16**, it is said that none of them lack their mate. The devil lendeth them his seven heads to plot, and his ten horns to push and gore, &c.

Though I have been a rebuker to them all. Heb. a correction (רסומ). Understand it either to be the prophet, that he had dealt plainly with them, and done his utmost to reclaim them, yet they refused to be reformed, hated to be healed; We would have cured Babylon, but she would not be cured: or else of God, that he had both by words and scribes rebuked their superstitions, but nothing had wrought upon them. They "were tormented with the wrath of God, but repented not to give him the glory," **Revelation 16:9**. *Corripimur*, might they say, *sed non corrigimur*; *plectimur*, *sed non flectimur*. See how God complains of this stubbornness, **Jeremiah 6:28-30**, and learn to tremble at his rebukes, to profit by his chastisements, lest a worse thing befall us. "The just Lord is in the midst thereof; he will not do iniquity: every morning doth he bring his judgment to light, he faileth not; but the unjust knoweth no shame," **Zephaniah 3:5**. There are those who take the words passively, and render them thus, *Ego vero illis omnibus castigationi sum*, I have been rebuked or corrected by them all. See the like, **Lamentations 3:13**, and in the Psalms often: I am a reproach to mine enemies: Thou makest us a reproach to all that are round about us, &c. So the prophet here may seem to complain, as Jeremiah did after him, that he was "born a man of contentions, that all the people cursed him," that he was a common byword and but mark: that they sharpened their tongues against him and flew in his face. To preach, saith Luther, is nothing else but to derive the rage of the whole world upon a man's self, *totius orbis furorem in se derivare*. Wisdom (that should be justified of her children, ἐδικαιώθη) is again judged of her children, as some read those words of our Saviour, **Matthew 11:19**, *iudicatur vel sententia pronuntiatur*. But I like the active sense better. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 3. [[@Bible:Hosea 5:3]]{{field-on:Bible}} **I know Ephraim, and Israel is not hid from me.** Those that by Ephraim understand the princes, and by Israel the common people, *etiam hoc operae addant, et illud ex Scriptura probent*, saith Tarnovius, let them prove what they say by Scripture, and we will say with them: till then we take them for synonyms (*Repetitione etiam auget populi rebellionem. Rivet*). A hypocritical nation they were, **Isaiah 9:17**, and

atheistically they thought, by hiding God from themselves, to hide themselves from God. Hear them else, **Hosea 12:8**, "And Ephraim said, Yet I am become rich, I have found me out substance: in all my labours they shall find none iniquity in me that were sin": that were a heinous business that iniquity should be found in them, though they were a people laden with iniquity, **Isaiah 1:4**. But I know them through and through, *intus et in cute*, saith God, I am privy to all their plots and policies. And although they are profound to make slaughter (Tyndale reads it, They kill sacrifices on heaps to deceive), yet let not them be deceived, I am not mocked. They must not think to put me off with shows and shadows; to colour and cover their base spirits and vile ends with specious pretences. For I search the hearts, and try the reins: "neither is there any creature" (no, not the creature of the heart, the thoughts and intentions) "that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and open" (naked for the outside, **γυμνὰ**, and open for the inside; the Greek word, **τετραχελισμένα**, signifieth dissected, quartered, and as it were cleft through the backbone) "before the eye of him with whom we have to deal," **Hebrews 4:13**. Indeed, he is all eye; and every man before God is all window, **ολοφθαλμος**: so that no man needeth a window in his breast, *pectus clathratum* (as the heathen Momus wished), for God to look in at. "For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings. There is no darkness nor shadow of death where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves," **Job 34:21, 22**. "His eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men," **Psalms 11:4**. The former points out his knowledge, the latter his critical descant. David, **Psalms 139:8**, findeth God not only at his finger ends, but at his tongue's end too, **Hosea 5:4**. His knowledge stays not here in the porch or lobbies, but passeth into the presence, yea, privy chamber, **Hosea 5:2**, yea, my thoughts in potential before I think them. *Deus intimo nostro nobis intimior*. The word is to God a sea of glass, **Revelation 4:6**, a clear transparent body: "and his eyes are as a flaming fire," **Revelation 1:14**, which needs no outward light, because it seeth *extramittendo* by sending out a ray; so that the "night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to him," **Psalms 139:12**. What wonder therefore though he know Ephraim, and Israel is not hidden from him? And how should this both humble them (for which cause it is here urged) and caution them for the future, as it did that holy man, who had written upon the walls and windows of his study these verses,

*"Nehemiah pecces, Deus ipse videt, bonus Angelus astat,
Accusat Satanas, et lex, mens conscia culpae."*

For now, O Ephraim, thou committest whoredom, and Israel is defiled. In body and soul, rushing into all impiety without restraint; working all uncleanness with greediness, **Ephesians 4:19**, being filled "with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness: full of envy, murder, debate, deceit," &c., **Romans 1:29, 30**. All these evil things "come from within, and defile a man," **Mark 7:23**, worse than any leprosy, worse than the vomit of a dog, or the mire of a swine. It is the pollution of flesh and spirit, **2 Corinthians 7:1**, it is the putrefaction of a dead carcase, the sanies of a plague sore, the devil's excrement, and that which defileth far worse than that which is cast into the draught, **Mark 7:21**. It sets defilement upon ourselves, others, the whole land, **Jeremiah 3:1**, yea, upon the visible heavens, which must therefore be purged by that last fire. And this was typified by those many Levitical washings and purifications of garments, vessels, persons. "Wash you, therefore, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings," &c., **Isaiah 1:16**. "Wash thy heart from wickedness, O Jerusalem," not thy hands only, as Pilate, though those too, **James 4:8; Jeremiah 4:14**. "Cleanse yourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit," **2 Corinthians 7:1**. Of the flesh, that is, fleshly lusts and gross evils, as uncleanness, earthly mindedness; or of spirit, that is, those more spiritual lusts that lie more up in the heart of the country, such as are pride, creature confidence, self-deceit, presumption, &c. Out with all these: there is both a stain and a sting in them. Run to the bath of Christ's blood, that blessed fountain, **Zechariah 13:1**, and there wash and be clean. Look not upon God's Jordan with Syrian eyes, as Naaman did. Abanah

and Pharpar may wash and scour; but Jordan is for cure. And if God see fit to lay us a frosting to fetch out our filth, yea, or cast into the fire to take away our defilements, let us be contented. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 4. [[@Bible:Hosea 5:4]]{{field-on:Bible}} **They will not frame their doings to turn unto their God.** Or, their doings will not suffer them. That is, they are so habituated and hardened in sinful practices, that they are not only disenabled to conversion, but evil affected thereunto: they stand across to all good; to their sinews of iron they have added bows of brass, **Isaiah 48:4**; to their sin they add rebellion, which is as bad as witchcraft, **1 Samuel 15:23**; till at length they lose all passive power also of being converted, and so are transformed, as it were, into so many devils: having by custom contracted a necessity of sinning, they are become incurable; they neither will nor can return to their God; they will not frame their doings to it. The Vulgate hath it, their studies, the Septuagint, their counsels, Castalio, their endeavours, Pagnine, their pains, &c. The original is very elegant and metrical, מחילעמ ונתי אל מהילהלא לא בישל I scarce know a like text in all the Scripture, unless it be that in **Lamentations 5:16**, ונאטח יב ונל אנ־יוא, "Woe to us that we have sinned!" which is so elegant also in the original, that master Wheatly of Banbury (who used to be very plain in his preaching, and not to name a Greek, Latin, or Hebrew word) quoted it once in the Hebrew, as witness learned Master Leigh, who lived some while under his ministry (Master Leigh's Saints' Encouragement, &c. ep. dedic.). But to return to the text: whereas some might possibly conceive or reply, Ephraim is far gone indeed, but he may return. No, never, saith God; for he will not give his mind to it, or show his good will: he is even set, and there is no removing of him; he hath made his conclusion, and is as good as ever he meaneth to be. They are so far from yielding themselves unto the Lord, as **2 Chronicles 30:8**, that they stand in full opposition to him, yea, send messages after him, "We will not have this man to rule over us." The Jews were an untoward generation, saith Peter, **Acts 2:40**; they, by their obstinate refusal of the gospel, judged themselves unworthy of everlasting life, saith Paul, **Acts 13:46**: there were unmalleable, unframeable, so knotty, that they were fit for nothing but the fire; so nasty, that they were fit for no place but the dunghill. And why?

The spirit of whoredoms is in the midst of them. The devil is at inn with them, as Master Bradford said; he even sits abroad upon them, hatching all manner of evil counsels and courses, he worketh effectually in these children of disobedience, **Ephesians 2:2**, as a smith doth in his forge, an artificer in his shop; he acts them and agitates them, making their souls and all the powers thereof nothing else but a shop of sin, their bodies and all the parts thereof tools of sin, their lives and all their actions of both soul and body a trade of sin, a web of wickedness spun out and made up by the hands of the devil and the flesh, an evil spinner, and a worse weaver. Hence they lie rotting all their lives long in the graves of sin, wrapt up in the winding sheet of hardness of heart (they will not frame their doing to turn to God) and blindness of mind (they have not known the Lord); and as a carcase crawleth with worms, so do these men swarm with those noisome lusts, that are able to poison up an honest heart. How can it be otherwise? the spirit of fornication is in the midst of them, as a king in his kingdom; yea, hath filled their hearts from corner to corner, as he had done the hearts of Ananias and Sapphira, **Acts 5:3**. That unclean spirit besiegeth the purest hearts, and compasseth them about, seeking to devour them, **1 Peter 5:8**, but they keep him out, "stedfast in the faith," or if he in any way get in, they quickly cast him out again; so that he cannot long rest or roost, much less reign there; for the Spirit of God keepeth them, and that evil one toucheth them not *tactu qualitativo*, with a deadly touch, **1 John 5:18**; (Cajetan); they regard not iniquity in their heart, there is no way of wickedness found in them. Of the spirit of whoredoms. (*See Trapp on "Hosea 4:11"*)

And they have not known the Lord. He knows them well enough, **Hosea 5:3**, and they shall know it, **Jeremiah 16:21**, to their cost; but they know not the Lord, sc. savingly and effectually,

for if they did, they could not be so vile and vicious, so loose and licentious. A man is properly said to know no more of God's mind than he practiseth; like as of our Saviour it is said, that "he knew no sin," that is, he did none, **2 Corinthians 5:21**; with an intellectual knowledge he knew it (how else could he reprove it), but not with a practical; and as it is said of Eli's two sons, that they "knew not God," because they obeyed him not. Lo, such was the ignorance of this people, affected and acquired; and this is the *peccatorum omnium fons et fomes*, the mother of all mischief and misery, as hath been often set forth in the notes upon the former chapter.

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Verse 5. [[@Bible:Hosea 5:5]]{{field-on:Bible}}**And the pride of Israel testifieth to his face.**

Pride is the great pockmark of the soul; it will bud, and cannot be hidden, **Ezekiel 7:10**. It is the *grandiabolo*, that filthy spirit is gotten into the midst of men, into the very heart of the country as it were. It is the leprosy of the soul that breaks forth in the very forehead, and so testifieth to his face. It proceeds from ignorance of God and his will, of a man's self and his duty; hence that connection of this verse and the former. They "know not the Lord"; and the "pride of Israel testifieth to his face." The Laodiceans were therefore proud, because ignorant: thou knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, &c. So those question-sick fantasticks in St Paul were "proud, knowing nothing," **1 Timothy 6:4**. "And I would not have you ignorant of this mystery," saith he to the Romans, **Romans 11:25**, "lest ye should be puffed up in your own conceits." Humble Agur, though full of heavenly light, yet vilifies and nullifies himself to the utmost, **Proverbs 30:2**, and so exemplifies that proverb of Solomon, "with the lowly is wisdom," **Proverbs 11:2**. And as wisdom maketh the face to shine, and humility rendereth a man lovely, so pride, on the contrary, sitteth in the face, and deformeth it. The proud man flattereth himself in his own lies, till his iniquity be found to be hateful, **Psalms 36:2**, till his swelling break forth in loathsome ulcers. Thus Miriam's pride testified to her face, and Uzziah's, and Sodom's, **Isaiah 3:9**; the show of their countenance witnessing against them. Pride is a foolish sin, it cannot keep in, it will be aboveboard, and discover itself by lofty looks, big swollen words, proud gait, ridiculous gestures, garish attire, that nest of pride; but especially by stoutness and stubbornness against God and his ways (as here in this text it is to be taken), when men commit sin with a high hand, and, as it were, in despite of God, and on purpose to cross him. Hence it is that God so hateth this sin above other; for whereas all other sins flee from God, pride lets fly at him, nay, flies in his face, saying, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey him?" Hence he will be a swift witness against such, and a severe judge. Learned Mr Levey reads this text thus: "The excellency of Israel" (that is, God, as **Amos 8:7**; **2 Samuel 1:19**) "will testify to Ephraim's face," give in evidence against them. He will indeed be *index*, *iudex*, *vindex* sign, judge and protector to such; for he resisteth the proud, and delighteth to stain their glory, to cast dirt in those faces of theirs, that are so hatched with impudence, as to face the very heavens, and to contest with omnipotence. Hence their fall with a violence, with a vengeance.

Therefore shall Ephraim and Israel fall in their iniquity. *Corruet*, they shall fall with a push, with a powder, as we say, and in their iniquity, that is worse than all the rest. "Ye shall die in your sins," saith Christ to those rebellious Jews, **John 8:21**; that was a great deal worse than to die in prison, to die in a ditch, or in the world's disfavour. Or, "in their iniquity," that is, for their iniquity, which is indeed the cause of calamities. At the loss of Calais, when a proud Frenchman demanded of an English captain, When will you fetch Calais again? he gravely replied, *Quando peccata vestra nostra graviora*, When your sins shall weigh down ours. If any man ask (saith Tarvonius upon this text), *Unde hodie tanta passim in Germania vastitas? efficit hanc peccatorum atrocitas*. Whence so great desolations in Germany? It is for the grievousness of our iniquity. Why, this was better yet than the result of that consultation held once at Hamburg by some of his Lutheran fellow ministers concerning the cause and cure of Germany's calamities. They concluded (saith Mr Burroughes, vol. i. p. 465, on Hosea, from the

mouth of a minister there, who told it him with grief) that it was because their images in churches were not adorned enough, which therefore they would procure done. A sad business! Solomon would have told them that it is a man's pride that brings him low, **Proverbs 29:23**. And that "before destruction the heart of a man is haughty," **Proverbs 18:12**. And that "pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall," **Proverbs 16:18**. If the pride of Israel doth testify to his face, the next news we shall hear of him is, that "Israel and Ephraim are fallen in their iniquity." A bulging wall cannot stand; a swelling sore will shortly break. "This shall they have for their pride, because they have reproached and magnified themselves against the people of the Lord of hosts. The Lord will be terrible unto them; for he will famish all the gods of the earth," &c., **Zephaniah 2:10, 11**; all those *deunculi*, those pretty pictures that men so much dote upon; which should not be suffered, if for nothing else, yet for the distraction they may cause in divine worship. In the council chamber of the Lacedaemonians no picture or image was allowed, lest in consultation of weighty matters their minds thereby might be distracted. Irenaeus reproveth the Gnostics for their pictures of Christ, though made in Pilate's time, after his own proportion. Austin denieth that images can be set up in churches, *sine praesentissimo idololatriae periculo*, without exceeding great danger of idolatry. Epiphanius saith, it is an abomination of desolation to set up pictures in the churches of Christians. Plutarch, a heathen, saith it is sacrilege (Paul. Jovius, lib. iv.). And Solyman, the Great Turk, when he had taken Buda in Hungary, would not enter into the great church there, to give God thanks for the victory, till all the images were cast out. But this by the way only. Let us take heed by those mistaken Lutherans, whom a deceived heart hath turned aside, that we likewise fall not from our own steadfastness, **Isaiah 44:20**.

Lest Judah also fall with them. Lest we be wrapped up in the same condemnation, lest we follow Germany in her plagues, as we began apace to do in her sins; for the which we have also already severely smarted. If Judah comply with Israel in false worship, they shall fall with Israel. God is not tied to any people, but can well be without them. The Lord is with you while ye are with him. "If ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you," **2 Chronicles 15:2**. But will the Lord be certainly found of them that seek him? Yes, if they seek him seriously and seasonably, in a time when he may be found, and before he be utterly departed, **Psalms 32:6; Isaiah 55:6**. But here was the mistake, and the mischief of it. These apostates went to seek the Lord, and they went with their cost, but they came too late; they had sinned away their God, and wiped off all their comfortables, as Saul had done before them. "The Philistines are upon me," saith he, "and God hath forsaken me: he answereth me no more, neither by prophets nor by dreams," **1 Samuel 28:15**. It is said, **1 Chronicles 10:14**, that Saul did not inquire of the Lord, therefore he slew him. He did, and yet he did not, because he sought him not with all his heart; his devotion was feigned and forced. Now it is a rule in civil law, *Ficta pro factis non habentur; nec videtur fieri quod non legitime fit*. Feigned service is lost labour; neither is that done to any purpose that is not orderly done. And this was the case of these sacrificers in the next verse: Sodomites God calleth them, **Isaiah 1:10**. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 6. [[@Bible:Hosea 5:6]]{{field-on:Bible}} **They shall go with their flocks, and with their herds.** *Cursitabunt*, they shall cut up and down, from altar to altar, with all their stock, as if they would buy off their sins, redeem their sorrows, with hecatombs, (*a large number of animals for sacrifice*) and store of holocausts; (*whole burnt offerings*) and then be ready to say, as that heathen emperor did, when he was to meet his enemy in the field, *Non sic Deos coluimus, aut sic viximus ut ille nos vinceret* (Antonin. Philosoph.). We have not so served the gods, or lived so, that the enemy should have the better of us. They thought they had merited better at God's hands by their thousands of rams, and ten thousand rivers of oil, **Micah 6:7**, than to fall, as in **Hosea 5:5**, than to be relinquished by him, as here. Lo, this is the guise of graceless hypocrites: by their outward performances they think to oblige God unto them, and by their good deeds to set off for their bad. Thus Brunheldis (that French Athaliah), after many

murders and much mischief wrought by her, 600; AD, built many colleges for priests and monks in Burgundy and Austria, *eo scilicet beneficio maleficia sua expiavit*, saith the French chronicler; thereby thinking to satisfy for all her cruelty. So here in King Stephen's time, there were more abbeyes built than in a hundred years before. So the Papists at this day spend and are spent in their blind devotions; they "lavish money out of the bag," and run up and down from saint to saint with their cost; they pray publicly in public calamities, for forty hours together, by the pope's command, that they may pacify God, and divert his displeasure (*Quarantoras Italico nomine istas preces recant.* Polan. in loc.). For the same cause they make the same man (in their greater cities appointed) to preach every day in Lent without intermission; so as six days in the week he preacheth on the gospel of the days; and on the Saturday, in honour and praise of our Lady, as they call her (Spec. Europ.). Lo, thus they go, as they think, to seek God with their will worship and work done, but they find him as little as they did here, with their flocks, and with their herds. And why? First, they go to seek him; they run, but in a wrong way; and so fulfil that sacred proverb, "He that hasteth with his feet sinneth," **Proverbs 19:2**; for the faster he runs the farther he is out. Next, they pretend to seek him, but indeed they seek themselves; they seek him, but it is to be rid of his rod; they do not so much serve him as serve themselves, and their own turns upon him; as those hypocrites in Zachary fasted to themselves; not to get off their sins, but their chains, **Zechariah 7:6**. Thirdly, they go with their flocks, &c.; not mine, but theirs, saith God; he will not so much as own them, though they were tendered to him in sacrifice; because brought with a wicked mind, **Proverbs 21:27**, as Balak and Balaam did, **Numbers 23:1, 2**, and as Cain did, **Genesis 4:5**, to whom therefore God had no respect, because he brought *non personam sed opus personae*, not himself but his sacrifice, as Luther hath it; who also calleth all those Cainists that offer to God the work done, but present not their bodies for a lively sacrifice, **Romans 12:1**. Hence he rejects their services with infinite disdain, as **Isaiah 1:11, 12; 66:2, 3**, though never so numerous and precious, **Micah 6:7; Hosea 8:13**. And to set forth this, as he calleth them here, their flocks, and not his, so, fourthly, he calleth them flocks and herds, not sacrifices; that was too good a name for them. Thus, **Jeremiah 7:21**, in scorn he calleth their sacrifice flesh; such as was ordinary, sold in the meat markets. And thus also, **Hosea 9:4**, speaking of the meat offering appointed, **Leviticus 2:5**, he calleth it, their bread for their souls, or, for their life and livelihood, the bread for their natural sustenance; and saith, it shall not come into his house, he will have none of it. See **Malachi 1:7**. (See Trapp on "**Malachi 1:7**")

But they shall not find him. *Non erit ipsis domi, non favebit eis*, saith an interpreter here, he will not be at home, not within, to open to them when they knock at his door; it will be as strange to them as ever they were to him, because they bring him not that best sacrifice of a broken heart; and because they come too late when the gate of grace is shut, when the gale of grace is over, when he hath fully resolved upon their ruin, and will not repent.

When he hath withdrawn himself from them. Heb, **נָחַץ** hath snatched away himself, hath thrown himself out of their company, as Peter threw himself, **επεβάλων**, out from the rude soldiers into a bycorner, to weep bitterly, **Mark 14:72**. *Cum se proripuisset*, so Beza rendereth it. When God is well pleased with his people, they can no sooner cry but he will say, Here I am, **Isaiah 58:9**. And though they offer but small things unto him, as Samuel did a sucking lamb, **1 Samuel 7:9**, they are highly accepted, and graciously answered. "But woe unto them when I depart from them," saith God, **Hosea 9:12**; yea, woe upon woe when God's soul is once disjointed from them, **Jeremiah 6:8**. "An evil, an only evil, behold, is come. An end is come, the end is come: it watcheth for thee; behold, it is come," **Ezekiel 7:5, 6**. And why? Because God was withdrawing from them. Hence all evils came rushing in, as by a sluice. In the ninth, tenth, and eleventh chapters of that prophecy God maketh divers removals. And still, as he goes out, some judgment comes in. First he removeth from the cherubims in the oracle to the threshold, **Ezekiel 9:3**, and upon that removal, see what followeth, **Ezekiel 9:5-7**, &c. Secondly, he

removeth to the cherubims on the right side of the house, **Ezekiel 10:1**, and see what follows, **Ezekiel 10:2**. Thirdly, to the east gate of the house, and the first entrance into the temple, **Ezekiel 10:19**, and then see what succeeds, **Ezekiel 11:8-10**. Fourthly, he removed to Mount Olivet, quite out of the city, **Ezekiel 11:23**, and when God was quite gone, then followed the fatal calamity in the ruin thereof. As there is no light in the world but from the sun, no water but from the sea; so no sound comfort or happiness to be had but with and in God. Better have him angry with us than not have him at all with us. The loss of God is a piece of hell: in the suburbs whereof the saints feel themselves when but a while deserted. **{{field-off:Bible}}**

Verse 7. **[[@Bible:Hosea 5:7]]{{field-on:Bible}}** **They have dealt treacherously against the Lord.** They have dealt deceitfully in the covenant, they are a perfidious cursed crew of them; this I see well enough, saith God, though they may think to darken my eyesight with the smoke of their many sacrifices, or to stop my mouth with their great presents. See how he complaineth, as in this prophecy often, so **Jeremiah 3:20**, "Surely as a wife treacherously departeth from her husband, so have you dealt treacherously with me, O house of Israel." Now in such a case a man will not regard any ransom; neither will he rest content, though thou givest many gifts; he will not be a pander to his own bed unless he be very base indeed, **Proverbs 6:35**. Most certain it is, that God will not endure any such doings; but though he loves his spouse never so well, yet if she plays false with him, and admit any other into the bridal bed, he will forsake his house that has been so dishonest, he will leave his heritage that has been so embased, he will give the dearly beloved of his soul into the hand of her enemies, **Jeremiah 12:7**, who shall hate her more than ever they loved her, as Amnon did Tamar, and deal cruelly with her, as **Ezekiel 16**; is at large discoursed. The wickedness of this people was the greater, for that they pretended religion (*as in Hosea 5:6*) to their base beastly practices. Dissembled sanctity is double iniquity. See how heinously God takes it, **Jeremiah 7:9, 10**. And when others deal treacherously and unworthily with you, see whether you have not done as badly and worse against the Lord, Alphonsus, king of Aragon, in a speech to the pope's ambassador, professed that he did not so much wonder at his courtiers' ingratitude to him (who had raised various of them from mean to great estates) as at his own to God.

For they have begotten strange children. Bastards, such as the Jews call Mamzer, as ye would say, *aliena labes*, a strange blot. They call them also brambles, such as was Abimelech, who grew in the hedge row of a harlot, and scratched and drew blood to purpose, **Judges 9:14**. That which is here charged upon the Israelites is, that they had not only taken to wife the daughters of a strange god, or begotten bastards of harlots, but they had muzzled up their children in idolatry, and so made them sevenfold worse the children of the devil than before. This was a very great aggravation of their treachery, that they should empoison their posterity and propagate their wickedness from one generation to another; that there should be a line and a succession of it from their loins. None are so ready to drink in false principles and corrupt practices as young ones. Such parents as have a hand in undoing their children, either by ill counsel or example, are *peremptores potius quam parentes*, saith Bernard, rather parricides than parents. They shall give a heavy account to God for their children's misdeeds. Let it therefore be the care of parents, as to keep themselves pure, so to see to their little ones, that they be not corrupted. Satan bears an implacable spite and hatred to them, as the seedplot of heaven; and hath his emissaries abroad to mar them. Such was Protagoras, of whom Plato reporteth, that he gloried of this, that whereas he had lived sixty years in all, forty of them he had spent in corrupting young people (Plato in Menone). Of Julian the apostate it is reported, that being of excellent parts and proof, both in learning and religion, while he was young, he was afterwards corrupted by his two heathenish tutors, Libanius and Jamblichus, through the carelessness of Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia, who should have seen better to it and that this was a main cause of his apostasy.

Now shall a month devour them with their portions. Some read it thus, Now shall the

enemy devour them month after month; others put *menses* for *menstrua*, and give this sense. Like as this people make no bones to break their faith with God by spiritual fornication, mingling as it were their seed with strange gods and foreign people; so shall it come to them which happeneth to women worn with adulteries (as Ezekiel speaketh), that their monthly diseases, procured by inordinate lust, shall eat up and consume their bodies. (See Tremel. and Jun. Annot.) For confirmation, they allege (but not so properly) **Jeremiah 2:24**. I willingly concur with those that by a month understand a little short time. How soon is a month run out And yet what havoc will an enemy make in a month's time! as we have had woeful experience in these late stripping and killing times. Them and their portions shall one month make an end of. Death heweth its way through a wood of men in a minute of time from the mouth of a murdering piece. "The sword contemneth the rod," **Ezekiel 21:13**, as if it should say, What doth this silly rod do here? Let me come; I will quickly make work among them. I will dung the land with their carcasses, &c., with their portions, the lots of their inheritance. Wicked men also have their portions in this life, **Psalms 17:14**, they live in pleasure on the earth, and are wanton, **James 5:5**, but their portion is none other but a month may devour it: their pleasure none other but one drop of an evil conscience may damp and dissweeten it. But if God be thy portion, &c. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 8. [[@Bible:Hosea 5:8]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Blow ye the cornet in Gibeah, and the trumpet in Ramah.** *Clangite, clamate*, not with the inverse trumpets of Furius Fulvius, which sounded a retreat when they should have sounded an alarm. But blow ye the cornet; give notice to all the country, that *Hannibal est ad portas*, the enemy is at the very gates, sending a summons, and sounding for a surrender. The desolation of war had been denounced in the former verse; here it is proclaimed, as it were, by sound of trumpet; the prophet acting the part of a herald; and, by a rhetorical hypotyposis, representing the enemies' approach, as if it were already under view; and not foretold, but acted before their eyes. Rhetoric, we see here, is an art sanctified by God's Spirit; and may lawfully be used in handling of God's word. The Scripture is full of it in every part; and happy is that minister that thereby can make himself master of his hearers' affections; as potent in his Divine rhetoric as Pericles or Cicero were in their human. Let him (by our prophet's example) strive to make the things whereof he preacheth to the people as real before their eyes as possibly he can. The power of a ministry consisteth much in this: to set forth sin, Christ, heaven, hell, in such lively colours that the hearer (though unlearned) may be convinced of all, judged of all, and having the secrets of his heart made manifest, he may fall down on his face, worship God, and report that God is in the minister of a truth, **1 Corinthians 14:24, 25**; lo, this is preaching indeed. For as every sound is not music, so neither is every pulpit discourse preaching. *Nihil frigidius est doctore verbis solummode philosophante* (Chrysostom). Ezekiel must lay siege to Jerusalem, portraying it upon a tile, **Ezekiel 4:1**. So did Jeremiah and other prophets use signs and similitudes. St Paul's speech and preaching was not indeed with enticing words of man's wisdom (he did not so paint the window as to keep out the light), but yet in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power, close to the conscience, **1 Corinthians 2:4**.

Blow ye the cornet in Gibeah. That is, in the bounds of the kingdom of Judah, Gibeah of Benjamin, Gibeah of Saul.

And the trumpet in Ramah. Samuel's country, afterward called Arimathaea, Joseph's country: this is said to be in the borders of Israel. Strong garrisons they were both, and places of great resort: they are now alarmed, and bidden to prepare for the approach of the Assyrian.

Cry aloud at Bethaven. Or Bethel, as **Hosea 10:15**, a city (as it is said of Athens, *κατειδωλος*, **Acts 17:16**) wholly given to idolatry; and therefore more stupid and stubborn than the rest. Here, therefore, the prophet cries louder than ordinary, *classicum canit, sic clamat ut stentora vincere possit*, he sets up his note, that he may the sooner awaken them, and cause them to

apprehend their danger, as present and real. Bethaven was the great place of superstition, and now Rome is the nest of Antichrist, "the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, a cage of every unclean and hateful bird": therefore the angel crieth mightily with a strong voice, saying, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen," *certo, cito, penitus*, surely, suddenly, utterly, **Revelation 18:2**.

After thee, O Benjamin. Who art at the back of Bethaven, and farest the worse for her neighbourhood: like as Hamath did for Damascus, **Zechariah 9:2**. (See Trapp on "**Zechariah 9:2**") Some understand *Hostis adest*, the enemy is at thy heels; make away, or stand upon thy guard; for thou art like to be put to it. And this concise kind of warning here given implies a mind moved and disturbed, either with fear or anger. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 9. [[@Bible:Hosea 5:9]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Ephraim shall be desolate in the day of rebuke.** *Correptionis, vel Correctionis, ut Pagmnus;* "When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity," &c., **Psalms 39:11**. God hath a day for such sharp rebukes, or ahidings by way of conviction or argument (as the word signifieth), wherein he will be sure to carry it, with a great deal of sound reason and evident demonstration; so that Ephraim shall have nothing to say, why he should not be desolated; yea, so desolated as to make the beholders amazed thereat, as the Hebrew word importeth (הפצל *Vastari ita ut videntes obstupescant*). God will not now dally with Ephraim, or deal favourably with him as heretofore; he will not shake his rod at him only, but wait it to the very stumps; he shall be utterly destroyed from being a people; the day that now comes is a black day indeed, a day not of instruction, but of destruction, not of correction, but of execution; a very doomsday, wherein God will bring them into the furnace, and there leave them, **Ezekiel 22:20**. And that none may think this sentence overly severe, or not so sure but that it might be avoided or vacated, see what followeth in the text:

Among the tribes of Israel have I made known that which shall surely be. *i.e.* either, I have forewarned them sufficiently, but they would take no warning, which is both a just presage and desert for their ruin; or else thus: I am now fully resolved upon their ruin, neither is there cause that any man should deceive himself with a vain hope, as if these evils that I foretell should not befall you. Experience, the mistress of fools, shall teach you, that the sentence I now pronounce is precise and peremptory, not conditional, as heretofore, but absolute, and unchangeable; and this I here assure you of by this solemn contestation. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 10. [[@Bible:Hosea 5:10]]{{field-on:Bible}} **The princes of Judah were like them that remove the bound.** A wickedness condemned by the law and light both of nature and Scripture, **Deuteronomy 27:17; 19:14; Proverbs 22:28**. The princes are mentioned, because corruption in a people (as putrefication in a fish) begins at the head. Now the landmark of limit is removed many ways: as, first, *religione*, in religion; when the true is changed into that which is false, as was here in Queen Mary's days, against her promise to the Suffolk men (Tarnon.). Secondly, *in regione*, in the civil state; when one man violently invadeth the right of another (as Ahab did Naboth's vineyard), and no man must question them, because it is *facinus maioris abollae* (Juvenal), the fact of a great one. Thirdly, *in officio*, in a man's office or particular station, when he keeps not within his circle, but takes liberty to transgress, prescribing new worships, as **2 Kings 16:10, 11; 2 Chronicles 28:23**; taking upon them to teach ministers what to teach them, as **Micah 2:6**; or themselves invading the ministerial office uncalled thereunto, as did Jeroboam, **1 Kings 12:33; 16:3**, and Uzziah, **2 Chronicles 26:16**, to their cost. This (saith an interpreter) is *grandis culpa, et atrox crimen*, a foul fault, a crimson crime. Let our lay preachers and levellers look to it, unless they covet a curse. **Deuteronomy 27:17**, "He that breaketh a hedge, a serpent shall bite him." Fourthly, *in negotio*, in businesses and transactions, in contracts and covenants: he removeth bounds who defrauds and circumventeth another in any matters, **1 Thessalonians 4:6**. These must remember that

God is the avenger of all such; and that it is a fearful thing to fall into the punishing hands of the living God, **Hebrews 10:31**. The Papists fall foul upon us as innovators, and removers of the ancient bounds, because we reject their ecclesiastical traditions and unwritten verities (as they call them) commended unto us by the ancients, and embraced by whole nations tbr many ages. To whom we answer, that multitude and antiquity are but ciphers in divinity; they must (at least) have no more authority than what they can maintain. Let them boast, with the Gibeonites, of their old shoes, mouldy bread, &c., we hold us to the Scriptures, for our limits and landmarks unmoveable and immutable. And when they shall ask us, as they often do, where was your religion before Luther? we answer, as one once did, In the Bible, where yours never was. Erasmus met with an adversary so silly as to charge him for a remover of the ancient bounds, because he had anew translated the New Testament; a work of singular use to the Church of Christ in those dark times. (Erasm. in Apolog.).

Therefore I will pour out my wrath upon them like water. Which shall overflow the banks to overwhelm those that remove the bounds. Yea, God will pour it upon them by whole pailfuls, or spouts (as they call them at sea). Or if but by vials, (as **Revelation 16:1**, which are vessels of narrow mouths, and pour out slowly, howbeit) they drench deeply, and distil effectually the wrath of God, which wretched sinners shall never be able to avoid or abide. Oh when God shall set himself to set open the cataracts of his wrath as once at Noah's flood, and to come against a sinner with a deluge of destruction, to pour out his indignation upon him, as water hastily, heavily, irresistibly, what will he do, and where will he find refuge? This made David pray so hard, "Let not the waterfloods overflow me; nor the deep swallow me up," **Psalms 69:15**. It is the privilege of every godly person, that in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh to him, **Psalms 32:6**. Or if they come up to his neck, yet they shall not take away his breath: for his head is ever above water. Washed he may be (as Paul was in the shipwreck), drowned he cannot be. Sink he may seem to do once and again to the bottom; but he shall up again with Jonah, if out of the deep he call upon the Lord, who will set him on a rock that is higher than he. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 11. [[@Bible:Hosea 5:11]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Ephraim is oppressed and broken in judgment.** *Calumniam passus est Ephraim*, so the Vulgate hath it: Ephraim was falsely accused and slandered; he suffered much by malicious accusers, who depraved his good actions, drew him before the judgment seats, and there oppressed him, as **James 2:6**. But the word here used signifieth all manner of injuries and oppressions, whether by vexatious suits, by fraud or by force, virulent tongues or violent hands, wrangling or otherwise wronging a man, to his crushing and utter undoing many times: for a poor man in his house is like a snail in his shell; crush that, and you kill him. Ephraim was crushed in judgment by his countrymen, who would do him no right; but much more by the cruel Assyrians, who soon after this carried him captive, and left him without all remedy of law, without hope of a better condition or place for a worse. And what wonder though men so set against him, when God was pouring out his wrath upon him as water? since all creatures are up in arms against God's rebels. If the cause go against a man, though he have never so much right on his side (for often times *cedit viribus aequum*, might overcomes right), and he be broken in judgment, let him see whether things be right between God and himself; and if broken in judgment, let him be of a broken spirit, and he shall be relieved.

Because he willingly followed after the commandment. He was too sequacious and obsequious to Jeroboam and his princes, commanding him to worship the golden calves. *Quoniam voluit, iuvat*, like a tame fool, or at least as a foolish child (so this prophet calleth him), he was soon won over; he came off with litle ado. Jeroboam did but hold up his finger, and he had him straight; a mere crass stupidity carried away to those dumb idols even as he was led, **1 Corinthians 12:2**; a Melchite, such a generation of heretics there were in the primitive Church, so called because they followed the examples and decrees of the emperors;

resolving to be of the king's religion, whatsoever it were, right or wrong (Nicephorus). The Russians are such at this day. God and their emperor, they say, know best what is truth or falsehood; and it is their part to obey, not to inquire. But all Christ's sheep are rational; and will try before they trust, look before they leap; the spiritual man judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged by no man, **1 Corinthians 2:15**. Show him a clear text of Scripture for what you would persuade him to, and convince him thereby that it is the mind of God, and you may have what you will of him, **James 2:1**. But for these masters of opinions, such as are *magistri nostri Parisienses*, that obtrude their own placets upon people, and require to be believed upon their bare word without further proof, he abhors them. And for the decrees of princes and rulers, if they cross the Scriptures, he will take leave to disobey them, as the apostles did, **Acts 4:19**, as the three children in Daniel did, and Daniel himself, **Daniel 6:10, 11**, and as all the holy confessors and martyrs both ancient and modern did. The Bishop of Norwich asked Roger Coo, martyr, whether he would not obey the king's laws? he answered, Yes, as far as they agree with the law of God I will obey them. Then said the bishop, Whether they agree with the word or not, we are bound to obey them, if the king were an infidel. Coo answered, If Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego had done so, Nebuchadnezzar had never confessed the living God. True it is that magistrates must be obeyed; those that are good must be obeyed as God, those that are bad, for God (Θεὸν τὸν Θεὸν, Basil); but then it must be *in licitis*, in things lawful, and warrantable by the word and herein we must not frame excuse. The blessed Virgin, though inconvenient, went four days' journey (so far was it from Nazareth to Bethlehem) to obey Augustus' decree; the challenge was not so peremptory, but the obedience was as exemplary. "Whoso keepeth the commandment," sc. of the king, "shall know no evil thing," **Ecclesiastes 8:4, 5**. And whereas some might reply, Why, then, let us do all the king bids us without sciscitation, without further delay or inquiry; Solomon answers in the next words, "And a wise man's heart discerneth both time and judgment," that is, he knows both when and how, and how far forth, fitly and lawfully the commands of a king may be despatched, and no farther will he go than he can with a good conscience. The pope writing to Bernard, requiring him to do that which was unlawful, Bernard writes back again this answer, and it was taken; I as a child do not obey, and I obey in disobeying. Antigona in Sophocles saith well, *Magis obtemperandum est Diis, &c.*: We should rather obey God, with whom we must live ever, than men, with whom we have but a while to sojourn. Lo, blind nature saw so much. (**See Trapp on "Acts 4:19"**) It may not be forgotten or slipped over, that the word here rendered the commandment signifies Command thou, **ⲕⲓ**; because he willingly walked after Command thou; he danced after Jeroboam's pipe, saying to him, as he did once to Julius Caesar,

"Iussa sequi tam velle mihi quam posse, necesse est" (Lucan).

Or as Tiberius answered Justin (though upon a better ground and end), *Si tu volueris, ego sum si tu non vis, ego non sum*; If you will be willing, so will I, if you are not willing neither am I I am only thy clay, and thy wax, *utere me pro rota figulari*, to use me for the potters wheel. Plaut. Or lastly, as Luther at first submitted to the pope in these words (though afterwards, God gave him more courage in his cause), I prostrate myself at your Holiness' feet, with all that I am and have. *Vivifica, occide, voca, revoca, approba, reproba, vocem tuam vocem Christi in te praesidentis et loquentis agnoscam*; that is, Quicken me, kill me, call me, recall me, receive me, reject me; I shall acknowledge your voice as the voice of Christ himself ruling and speaking in you (1518; AD. Epist. ad Leon. Pontific.). Jeroboam is not once named here, nor the word (commandment) set down at large, out of detestation (likely) both of it and him, because it was a wicked commandment; and he no better than a usurper (Kimchi). For although he had it cleared to him that God's will was that he should be king over the ten tribes, yet because it was a will of God's decree, and not of his command, as of a duty done by him, he goes among divines for an intruder and usurper in and for that fact of his. It is obedience when we follow a divine precept; but not ever when we follow a divine instinct. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 12. [[@Bible:Hosea 5:12]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Therefore will I be unto Ephraim as a moth.** Their sin was the greater because they were so willing to it, and so easily drawn to idolatry, as most agreeable to their nature, and making much of their ease; which was Jeroboam's main argument. It may very well be that he threatened punishment to those that disobeyed his commandment: but here they should have stood out, and have bid the worst; choosing affliction rather than sin; which because they did not, therefore they should perish by their own hand and counsels; they shall be moth-eaten, as a garment that breedeth the moth, and as a tree that breedeth the worm that wasteth it. Not but that God had a special hand in their punishment; and this not permissive only, but active too: "I will be unto Ephraim," &c. For is there evil in a city and he hath not done it? The changes and periods of kingdoms are of him, **Psalm 75:6, 7**, that men may know that the heavens do rule, **Daniel 4:26**; so are the alterations in men's bodies and estates, as Job setteth it forth, **Job 4:19; 13:28; 27:18**. Every one (say some chemists) hath his own balsam within him; his own bane it is sure he hath; his clay cottage is every day ready to drop on his head, **2 Corinthians 5:1**. And for his estate, there are often times secret issues and drains of expense, at the which it runs out, as at a hole in the bottom of the bag, **Haggai 1:6**. (See Trapp on "Haggai 1:6") Howbeit God's holy hand is in all this; "I will be unto Ephraim as a moth," &c., that is, I will waste them *sensim, sine sensu*. Secretly, insensitively, slowly; but surely, and inevitably: this David after Job, acknowledgeth: **Psalm 39:11**, "When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth," thou castest him into a *corruptio totius substantive*, as the physicians call the hectic: "Surely every man is vanity. Selah." Yea, he is "altogether vanity"; yea, and that in his best estate, when he is best underlaid, when settled on his best bottom, **Hosea 5:5**; when he is gotten upon his mount with David, and thinks to die in his nest with Job; when he counts upon much good laid up in store for many years, as that rich fool, that reckoned without his host, as we say, **Psalm 30:7; Job 29:18; Luke 12:19**. *Tinea damnum facit, et sonitum non facit*, saith Gregory. The moth maketh no noise, but doth a great deal of harm among clothes. The worm here, rendered rottenness, is *minutissimus vermiculus*, saith Luther here, a very small creature, but doth no small mischief, (*teredo*), for it eats out the heart of the strongest wood, yea, of the strongest oaken planks at sea. See here what a poor creature is man, yea, a whole kingdom, whenas a moth and a little worm may consume them; when they may be crushed before the moth, as Job speaks, **Job 4:19**; he saith not before the lion, but before the moth. Learn also to take heed of sin, yea, of secret sins, **2 Kings 17:9**, lest we be secretly wasted, our graces cast into a consumption, our comfortables wiped away, our consciences wearied with secret buffets, as being smitten with the rod of God's mouth, **Isaiah 11:4**; our estates melted as the fat of lambs before the fire, and our land insensibly wasted, and by degrees desolated; as Ephraim and Judah were, as the Greek empire was, and as it began to be here with us, in Queen Mary's reign, which was never prosperous after she had abolished the gospel; for beside foreign losses, of Calais, extreme dearths raged, much harm was done by thunder from heaven, and by fire in the royal navy, and all things went to worse, till Queen Elizabeth came in, "a repairer of the breach, a restorer of paths to dwell in," **Isaiah 53:12**; according to that glorious epitaph, caused by King James to be inscribed upon her princely monument by him erected. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 13. [[@Bible:Hosea 5:13]]{{field-on:Bible}}**When Ephraim saw his sickness.** *i.e.* felt himself moth-eaten, hard-driven, and at a very great under, as those must needs be whom God setteth against.

And Judah his wound. Heb. his ulcer, that needeth crushing to get out the filth, **Jeremiah 30:13; Obadiah 1:7**. Ephraim was sick (God hath made him sick in smiting him, **Micah 6:13**) and Judah was sore, yet ulcerated, imposthumated, and they were both aware of it; but none otherwise than brute beasts, which, when they are smitten or sick, feel it, and howl out, but have not the reason to think whence the pain comes, what may be the cause and cure of it.

Ephraim and Judah make out indeed for help, but they run to wrong remedies and refuges; they turn not to him that smote them, neither do they seek the Lord of hosts; therefore is not his anger turned away, but his hand is stretched out still, **Isaiah 9:12, 13**. If God be angry, no other help can relieve us, no creature comfort us, no combination with King Jareb secure us. In a mine, if a damp come, it is vain to trust to your lights; they will burn blue and dim, and at last vanish: you must make haste to be drawn upward if you would be safe. So must men make to God; fleeing from his anger to his grace. Blood letting is a cure of bleeding, and a burn a cure against a burn; and the running to God is the way to escape him; as to close and get in with him that would strike you doth avoid the blow. In a tempest at sea it is very dangerous to strike the shore; the safest way is to have sea room, and to keep in the main, still, &c. Jareb cannot be a defender (according to the import of his name) if God come against a people or person. Brass and iron can fence a man against a bullet or a sword; but if he were to be cast into a furnace of fire it would help to torment him; if into a pit of water, to sink him. Now our God is a "consuming fire," and his breath a stream of brimstone, **Isaiah 30:33**, as a reverend man maketh the comparison (Dr Reynolds' Sermon before Parliament, July 27, 1642).

Then went Ephraim to the Assyrian, and Judah sent to king Jareb. Or, to the king of Jareb, or to the king that should plead, and revenge his cause and quarrel. *Ad regem propugnaturum*, saith Junins. Help, O king, said she in the holy history. Kings should be helpers, propugnaters, protectors; sanctuaries of safety to the oppressed, whether subjects or neighbours; such as the late king of Sweden was to the oppressed princes of Germany; and before him, Queen Elizabeth to the Low Countrymen; whose protection when she undertook, the king of Sweden that then was said, that she had taken the crown off her own head, and set it upon the head of fortune. But what a madness was it in Ephraim and Judah to call in the Assyrians to their help, as they did, **2 Kings 16:7; 2 Chronicles 28:16, 21**; but especially **2 Kings 15:19, 20; 17:3**. This was to invite the enemy into their kingdom, and to show gold-thirsty Babel where she might have her full draught. Thus Judea was (after the return from Babylon) lost again to the Romans, by their calling Pompey to decide the controversy between the disagreeing brethren. And such an ungainly course was attempted by John, king of England, when, being overlaid in his barons' wars, he sent to the monarch of Morocco for aid, offering to hold his kingdom for him, and to receive the law of Mahomet; but he was rejected with scorn. Afterwards, he passed away his kingdom to the pope, in hope of help; but had so little joy of it, that he was heard to complain, *Postquam me ac men regna (proh dolor) Rom. subieci Ecclesiae, nulla mihi prospera, sod omnia contraria advenerunt*, I never prospered since I subjected myself and my kingdoms to the see of Rome. No more did the Greek Churches, as above hath been mentioned. "By iniquity," saith Solomon, "shall no man be established," **Proverbs 12:3**. "Shall they escape by iniquity?" saith David. What! no better means and ways to help themselves by? "In thine anger cast down such a people, O God," **Psalms 56:7**. It is not more a prayer than a prophecy; and it was fulfilled upon this people.

Yet could he not heal you, nor cure you of your wound. Kings have their names in Greek from healing ("Ἀνάξ from ἄκος, *medela*, cure); they should be physicians, and binders-up of wounds, as **Isaiah 3:7**. (See Corn. a Lapide on that text.) But King Jareb proved a physician of no value: instead of healing the wound, he made it wider; instead of helping King Ahaz, "he distressed him," saith the text, **2 Chronicles 28:20**. The creature was never true to those that trusted to it. Such are sure to be frustrated, **Jeremiah 14:3**; subjected to God's wrath, **Psalms 78:22**; cursed with a curse, **Jeremiah 17:5, 6**; pointed at as forlorn fools, **Psalms 52:7**.

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Verse 14. [[@Bible:Hosea 5:14]]{{field-on:Bible}}**For I will be unto Ephraim as a lion.** I, that is, my Assyrian, the rod of my wrath, will be as a lion, or leopard, a creature swift and fierce above measure. The Vulgate rendereth it a lioness, which, saith Aelian, is *robustissimum et bellicosissimum animal*, a most strong and stout creature; hence Semiramis gloried much when

in hunting she had taken not a lion, but a lioness. "What is stronger than a lion?" said those Philistines to Samson, **Judges 14:18**. See **2 Samuel 1:23; Proverbs 30:30**. The lion (but especially the young lion, that is in his hot blood) fears no other creature, falls upon his prey with great fury, and teareth it; carrieth it away when he hath done in his mouth, or devours it in the place, and fears no rescue. If pursued he altereth not his gait, though he die for it. Some say that he is frightened at the crowing of a cock, or the creaking of wheels. But the Lion of the tribe of Judah cannot be terrified by anything or turned out of his track. And Nebuchadnezzar, his servant, is often compared to a lion, **Isaiah 5:29; Jeremiah 41:7; Daniel 7:4**, as being set to work by God to revenge the quarrel of his covenant upon a perverse and perfidious nation. Hence that often repetition here of the pronoun I

even I, will tear and go away. Tear the very core of their heart in sunder, tear them by the teeth of my terrible sword, which shall devour flesh and drink blood; yea, be drenched and drunk in the gall of these ungodly wretches. They have no way to help themselves better than to fall down flat before this Lion (*satis est prostrasse leoni*. Plin. lib. 8, cap. 15), to rend their hearts and not their garments, to break off their sins by repentance, and to be abrupt in the work, lest he tear them to pieces, and there be none to deliver them. If this be not timely and truly done, God will go on in his wrath, and of a moth and little worm become a ramping and a roaring lion. The little cloud, though at first but as a handbreadth, will soon overspread the whole heaven: yea, as one cloud followeth thick upon another, so will one judgment upon another, if the sun of repentance do not interpose and disperse them. Light afflictions not improved to this purpose will be but as a drop of wrath forerunning the great storm: as a crack forerunning the ruin of the whole building. That is a known text, "If you will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more," and seven times more, and seven to that, **Leviticus 26:18, 28**. Three different times God raiseth his note, and he raiseth it by sevens, and those are discords in music. Such sayings will be heavy Song s, and their execution heavy pangs to the wicked. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 15. [[@Bible:Hosea 5:15]]{{field-on:Bible}} **I will go and return to my place.** To my palace of heaven: so the Chaldee rendereth it. will withdraw my majesty, and return into the habitation of my holiness, which is in heaven. I will go from them, that they may come to themselves with the prodigal; I will forget them, that they may remember themselves; I will trouble myself no farther with them (when God comes against sinners he is said to come out of his place, and so to disease himself, **Isaiah 26:21** cf. **Lamentations 3:33**), that they may be afflicted and weep and mourn after me, **James 4:9**; I will take my rest, and I will consider in my dwelling place, as **Isaiah 18:4**. "I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be: for they are a very froward generation," &c., **Deuteronomy 32:20**, and they shall see that I will be as froward as they, for the hearts of them, **Psalms 18:26**. "I will gather them in mine anger and in my fury, and I will leave them there," **Ezekiel 22:20**; that they may know the worth of my gracious presence (which they have not prized) by the want of it, and be pricked on thereby to pray, "Return, O Lord, how long? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants. O satisfy us early with thy mercy," &c., **Psalms 90:13, 14**. Thus mothers use to leave their children (or at least turn their backs upon them) till they mourn and make moan after them. Thus the lion seems to leave her young ones till they have almost killed themselves with roaring and howling, but at the last gasp she relieves them, whereby they become the more courageous. God also will return to his people when they once turn short again upon themselves, and see their sin-guiltiness, and seek his favour. This is God's end, **1 Corinthians 11:32**, and the happy effect of affliction sanctified, **1 Kings 8:47**.

Till they acknowledge their offence. Heb. till they become guilty, till they plead guilty, and carry themselves accordingly, blushing and bleeding in my presence. Thus St James, be afflicted, or be miserable, **Hosea 4:9**: ye are so, but see yourselves to be so; tremble and humble at God's feet for mercy; give glory to God, my son, and confess thy sin, **Joshua 7:19**.

The viper beaten, casts up her poison. The traitor on the rack confesseth all. He that in affliction acknowledgeth not his offence, and seeketh God's face, is more hard-hearted than a Jew, as is to be seen here and ***Psalms 78:34***; and ***1 Samuel 7:6***. In the year of grace 1556, at Weissenstein, in Germany, a Jew, for theft, was in this cruel manner to be executed. He was hanged by the feet with his head downward, between two dogs, which constantly snatched and bit at him. The strangeness of the torment moved Jacob Andreas, a grave divine, to go to behold it. Coming thither, he found the poor wretch as he hung repeating verses out of the Hebrew Psalms, wherein he cried out to God for mercy. Andreas hereupon took occasion to counsel him to trust in Jesus Christ, the true Saviour of mankind (Melch. Adam. in Vit. Jac. Andrea). The Jew, embracing the Christian faith, requested but this one thing, that he might be taken down and baptized, though presently after he were hanged again (but by the neck, as Christian malefactors suffered), which was accordingly granted him. Latimer reports a like story of one in his time, who being executed at Oxford, was cut down, but not quite dead. And means being used to recover him, he came again to himself, and then confessed all his villany, which before he would not be drawn to do. In the Life of Master Perkins also mention is made of a lusty fellow at Cambridge, who being upon the ladder, and frightened with the forethought of hell torments, was called down again by Master Perkins, who prayed with him and for him so effectually, as that the beholders could not but see a blessed change thereby wrought in the prisoner, who took his death with such patience and alacrity, as if he actually saw himself delivered from the hell which he feared before, and heaven opened for the receiving of his soul, to the great rejoicing of the beholders (Master Fuller and Mr Clark, in Mr Perkins' Life). How well might these men say with Themistocles, *Periissem nisi periissem*, I had been undone if I had not been undone. David was brought home by the weeping cross, ***Psalms 119:67***. Affliction was a better schoolmaster to Queen Elizabeth than Master Ascham. *Nocumenta documenta*, Harmful lesson, said Croesus, when he was in the hands of his enemies, **παθήματα μαθήματα** (Herod. lib. 1). The Burgundians, well beaten by the Huns, fled to Christ, the God of the Christians, and embraced his religion.

And seek my face. Out of a deep sense of their sin-guiltiness. This is the work of faith, as the former of repentance. God was not so gone from his people, nor so far out of their call, but that if they could find a praying heart he would find a pitying heart; if they would acknowledge their offence he would forgive the iniquity of their sin, ***Psalms 32:5***. If they would set their faith a work (as she in the Gospel did, of whom it is said, that when Christ would have hid himself it could not be, for a certain woman, whose daughter was diseased, came and fell at his feet, fetched him out of his retiring-room, ***Mark 7:24, 25***), he would break the heavens and come down from his place, ***Isaiah 64:1, 2*** he would come leaping over all lets and impediments, those mountains of Bether, or of division, to the relief of his people. (*See Trapp on "Solomon's Song 5:1"*) &c. Provided that they seek not so much their own ease and ends as his face and favour, the sense of his presence and light of his countenance, the fear of his name, and comforts of his Spirit. Thus David, ***Psalms 63:1***, "O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee in a dry and barren land." Carnal prayers in time of misery are but such as the dry earth or the hungry raven make. They are the prayers of nature for ease, not of the spirit for grace; such as was that of Pharaoh, when the rack made him roar, the rod flatter: see ***Zechariah 7:5, 6***. (*See Trapp on "Zechariah 7:5"*) (*See Trapp on "Zechariah 7:6"*)

In their affliction they will seek me early. *Manicabunt*. They will morning me, so the original hath it, **ἄρθριοῦσι**, Sept. They will do it, saith God, for I will give them to do it; both to will it and to work it; for otherwise afflictions (God's hammers) do but beat cold iron. Wicked men grow worse for corrections, as water is more cold after a heat, as naughty boys are more stubborn or more stupid after a whipping. These also may cry to God, as prisoners at the bar, or malefactors upon the rack. Yea, seek him early, after a sort, and yet not find him, ***Proverbs 1:27***; no, though they seek him with their herds and flocks ***Hosea 5:6***, because they seek him

not early, and earnestly, or diligently, as **Proverbs 7:15**; inflamedly, as Baruch, **Nehemiah 3:20**, and Jabez, **1 Chronicles 4:10**; accurately and anxiously, as the Church sought her Beloved, **Solomon's Song 5:1**, as the Virgin Mary sought her lost Son, **Luke 2:43-46**. They seek him not for himself, but for his grain, wine, and oil, **Hosea 7:14**; they seek not him, but his; they seek him not till they have nothing else to seek to. Most justly, therefore, may God reject their suits and regeſt upon them, Depart from me, ye wicked, get ye to the gods whom ye have choſen, **Judges 10:14**. Juſtly may he ſay to them, as once Jephthah did to his countrymen, Do ye now come to me in your diſtreſs, who in your proſperity ſaid unto me, Depart from us, we will have none of the knowledge of thy ways? Thoſe that will find God muſt ſeek him early: "O, ſatisfy us early with thy mercies," **Pſalm 90:14**. They muſt ſeek him early and late too, **Iſaiah 26:9**; "always and by all means," as the apoſtle ſpeaketh in another caſe; but eſpecially in affliction, as here; for he looks for it. Our Saviour, being in an agony, prayed more intenſively; ſo did David out of the deep, Jonah out of the whale's belly, the Church when ſhe was in danger; as ſhe thought of loſing God, then ſhe ſet up her note and cried, "Thou art put in the miſt of us, leave us not," **Jeremiah 14:9**. *Extingui lucem nec patiare tuam*. Thus affliction exciteth devotion in the ſaints; and although they "ſeek the Lord and his ſtrength, ſeek his face evermore," yet eſpecially, in their diſtreſs they cry unto the Lord, and he heareth them, **Pſalm 120:1**; in the night of affliction they take the light of a lively faith, and ſeek him early. And that they may not fail to find him, they call in help of others, as here in the next chapter: "Come, and let us return," &c. **{{field-off:Bible}}**

Chapter 6

Verse 1. [[@Bible:Hosea 6:1]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Come, and let us return unto the Lord,** &c. So sweetly was God's expectation answered, as likewise it was in David, ***Psalm 27:8***. No sooner could God say "Seek ye my face," but his holy heart answered (as it were by an echo), "Thy face, Lord, will I seek." Look, what God aimeth at in his administration to his elect he will have it; he will have out the price of his Son's blood, who gave "himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity," ***Titus 2:14***, "and that he might give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins," ***Acts 5:31***. See the proof and practice hereof in these Jewish converts, "Come, and let us return to the Lord," &c. See how "in those days, and at that time, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping: they shall go, and seek the Lord their God. They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten," ***Jeremiah 50:4, 5***. Judah and Israel could not agree at other times; but when they are in a weeping condition then they could; when they passed through the valley of Baca, and made it a Bochim with their penitent tears, even they could go "from strength to strength," or from company to company (one company coming this way, and another that), and not rest until "every one of them in Zion appeareth before God," ***Psalm 84:6, 7***. This was fulfilled, partly when the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion out of Babylon, and those that had sown in tears reaped in joy; those that went forth weeping and bearing precious seed came again with rejoicing and brought their sheaves with them, ***Psalm 126:5, 6***; cf. ***Jeremiah 29:13***; partly, under their captivity and oppression by the Romans, which was the time in which Christ came and by his apostles converted thousands to the faith, so that multitudes of them were daily added to the Church, ***Acts 2:41, 47***; And, lastly, at that long looked for calling of the Jews; when they shall flee to Christ crucified "as the doves unto their windows," ***Isaiah 60:8***; when they shall "bring their brethren as an offering to the Lord upon horses, in chariots, and in litters": that is, though sick, weakly, and unfit for travel, yet rather in litters than not at all; every one exciting others, and saying, "Come, and let us return unto the Lord," &c. Return "unto him, from whom the children of Israel have deeply, revolted," ***Isaiah 31:6***. Let us not pine away in our transgressions, as these, ***Ezekiel 33:10***, for "yet there is hope in Israel concerning this thing," ***Ezra 10:2***. We have "done all this wickedness; yet let us not turn aside from following the Lord"; for this were to add rebellion to sin, ***1 Samuel 12:20***, this were worse than all the rest.

Come, let us return unto the Lord. By our sins we have run from him; by repentance let us return unto him. See for this the note on ***Zechariah 1:2***. If the wicked have their Come, ***Proverbs 1:11***; ***Isaiah 56:12***, should not the saints have theirs? as ***Isaiah 2:3***; ***Zechariah 2:6***. Should not Andrew call Philip, and Philip Nathaniel, as one link in a chain doth another, &c. True grace is communicative, charity is no churl; the saints like not to go to heaven alone.

For he hath torn. *Rapuit*, not *cepit*, as the Vulgate, by a foul mistake of *capió* for *rapio* in the Hebrew Lexicons. Here these converts confess that their affliction neither came "forth of the dust," ***Job 5:6***, nor without their desert; they acknowledge God to be the lion that tore them, ***Hosea 5:14***, and not without cause; for that they had wickedly departed from him. This is one property of true repentance, still to justify God, and to say, as Mauritius the emperor did (after David) when he saw his wife and children slain by the traitor Phocas, &c., "Righteous art thou, O Lord, in all thy ways, and just in all thy proceedings," ***Psalm 119:137***. Another property of it is to bring a man to God with some assurance of healing.

He will heal us. For he is "Jehovah the physician," ***Exodus 15:26***. Now *omnipotenti medico nullus insanabilis occurrit morbus*, saith Isidore, to an Almighty physician no disease can be incurable. Ephraim went to the Assyrian upon sight of his disease; but he could not heal him, ***Hosea 5:13***. But God both can and will. Here he is compared both to a physician, he will heal;

and to a surgeon, he will bind up. That which the poets' fable concerning Telephus' spear is here only verified: *Una eademque manus vulnus opemque ferat*, the same holy hand that tear us must cure us; and the sound persuasion of his readiness to do it for us will soonest of anything bring us into his presence: *Initium poenitentiae est sensus clementiae Dei*. The beginning of repentance is the feeling of the mercy of God. Judas confesseth his wound, and despaireth of the cure. But Peter is confirmed by the love of Christ to weep bitterly, and believe. A stroke from guilt broke Judas' heart into despair; but a look from Christ broke Peter's heart into tears. There is no mention of Israel's lamenting after the Lord while he was gone; but when he was returned, and settled in Kirjathjearim, then they poured forth water, **1 Samuel 7:6**, then they gather about him and will do anything that he commandeth them. "Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith," **Hebrews 10:22**.

*"Deiecit ut relevet; premit ut solatia praestet,
Enecat, ut possit vivificare Deus."* {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 2. [[@Bible:Hosea 6:2]]{{field-on:Bible}} **After two days will he revive us.** Whereas some of those who were called upon to "Come and return unto the Lord," might say with those in **Jeremiah 18:12**, "Nay, for there is no hope," God hath mortally wounded us, so that we are already in the jaws of death, "free among the dead," as the Psalmist hath it, **Psalms 88:5**, free of that company. The better sort of them, fullest of faith, answer, dead though we be, yet God will revive us; and long though it seem, yet after two days, or such a matter, in a very short time, as soon as ever it shall be convenient, and for our greatest good, "He that shall come" to our comfort, "will come, and will not tarry," **Hebrews 10:37**. And for the certainty of it, as sure as the third day followeth the second, so sure shall deliverance come in due season; fear ye not.

In the third day he will raise me up. He will, he will, never doubt it. Oh, the rhetoric of God! Oh the certainty of the promises! See the like expressions, **Isaiah 26:20; 10:25; Haggai 2:7; Habakkuk 2:3; Hebrews 10:37**, and have patience. God's help seems long, because we are short: *Nec quia dura, sed quia molles patimur* (Seneca). We should draw forth hope as a line; and think we hear Christ saying, as he did to Peter, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter," **John 13:7**. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 3. [[@Bible:Hosea 6:3]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Then shall we know.** Heb. And we shall know, we shall follow on to know, *Sciemus sectabimurque* (Vatablus). We shall experimentally know the Lord if we turn unto him; we shall taste and see that the Lord is good. We shall not only be raised "out of the dust of death," that is, of deep afflictions (wherein we "lay as among the pots"), and "live in his sight," that is, comfortably, **Psalms 22:15; 68:13**; but we shall know him, which is life eternal; yea, we shall prosecute knowledge, follow on to know, as unsatisfiable, and not content with any measures already required; yea, we shall proceed therein and make progress, as the morning light doth to the perfect day. Those that turn from their iniquities shall understand God's truth, **Daniel 9:13**, shall be of his counsel, **Psalms 25:14**, shall have the mind of Christ, **1 Corinthians 2:16**, the wisdom of God in a mystery, **1 Corinthians 2:7**, such as the great Rabbis of the world can no more understand than the Philistines could Samson's riddle, **1 Corinthians 2:8**, yea, these "pure in heart shall see God," **Matthew 5:8**, see him and live, see him, and eat and drink, being much cheered and refreshed, as those nobles of Israel, **Exodus 24:10, 11**. Provided that being once enlightened, and having tasted of the heavenly gift, they be not slothful, but show the same diligence, **Hebrews 6:4, 11, 12**, in the use of means to get more knowledge, till they all "come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ," **Ephesians 4:13**, or (as the words may be read) of that age wherein Christ filleth all in all, **Ephesians 3:19**, so as to be able to comprehend with all saints the several dimensions, and to "know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge." Lo, this is indeed to follow on to know the Lord; when we are still adding to our virtue knowledge, till (with those famous Romans) we

be full of goodness, filled brimful with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another, saying, "Come, and let us return to the Lord," &c. "Come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord," **Isaiah 2:5**, walk in that light we have, and we shall have more; for "to him that hath," *sc.* for use and practice, "shall be given," **Mark 4:25**. He that first begs, and then digs for knowledge, searching for her as for hidden treasure, **Proverbs 2:3, 4**, he shall be sure of some daily comings in from Christ; he shall understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God, **Hosea 6:5**; Christ will say unto him, as once he did to Nathaniel, "Thou shalt see greater things than these," **John 1:50**, even "great and mighty things, which thou knowest not," **Jeremiah 33:3**.

His going forth is prepared as the morning. That is, as sure as the morning followeth the night, and shineth more and more unto the perfect day, so sure shall God appear for our comfort, and shall dispel the night of our calamity. Mourning lasteth but till morning, **Psalms 30:5**; and as before the morning light is the thickest darkness, so before deliverance our afflictions are usually increased upon us. God appeareth on the sudden and beyond expectation (as out of a cloud, or as out of an engine, *ἐκ τῆς μηχανῆς*), and shows himself then usually when things are at their worst. Hence that of Job, *Post tenebras spero lucern*; After the darkness I look for the light, and that of the Church in Micah, "Though I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me," **Micah 7:8**. Vatablus applieth this text to the coming of Christ, that Day Star from on high, that Sun of righteousness, to whom all the prophets point God's people, when they would comfort them indeed (*oriatur Christus ut aurora quae adventu suo depellit tenebras*); arise Christ so that dawn with its arrival dispells the darkness, for he is the consolation of Israel, the desire of all nations, for whom their souls waited more than they that watch for the morning wait for the morning, **Psalms 130:6**. But because God's going forth is opposed to his departure, when he retired to his place, **Hosea 5:10**, therefore, his settled going forth here, is by most interpreted of his manifestations of his mercy to his poor prisoners of hope, those disconsolate captives, whom he not only brought back from Babylon, but also shineth into some of their hearts, by the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

And he shall come unto us as the rain. As the showers of blessing, **Ezekiel 34:26**, rain of liberalities, **Psalms 68:9**, rain of righteousness, **Hosea 10:12**. *Cito exaudi me, Domine; complue me*, saith Austin upon those words of David, my soul thirsteth after thee as a thirsty land. Hear me quickly, O Lord, rain righteousness upon my dry soul, fill me with the fruits of thy Spirit; whose work it is to illuminate and sanctify, as it is the Father's to heal, **Hosea 6:1**, and the Son's to revive, and raise us together with himself, the firstfruits of them that sleep, **Hosea 6:2**.

As the latter and former rain unto the earth. *sc.* in perfection of gifts and graces, by degrees wrought in our hearts; or, in seasonable and suitable comforts, as rain in seedtime, softening the ground; and a little before harvest, to plump and fill up the grain in the ear.

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Verse 4. [[@Bible:Hosea 6:4]]{{field-on:Bible}} **O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee**, &c. See how soon the prophet changeth his note. Hitherto he had set forth their repentance in sense of mercy; now all of a sudden he upbraideth and threateneth them for their incorrigibleness and inconstancy. Ministers must turn themselves, as it were, into all shapes and fashions, both of speech and spirit, to win people to God. Aaron's bells must be wisely rung, saith one. Sometimes the treble of mercy sounds well, at other times the tenor of judgment, or counter tenor of reproof, sounds better; and it often happens that the means of exhortation soundeth best of all. It is his wisdom to observe circumstances, and know how to curse as well as bless, chide as well as comfort, and speak war to a rebel as well as peace to a friend. And herein indeed lieth the wisdom and faithfulness of a teacher. Then, and only then, shall he prove himself sincere and impartial, when he holds this course. "What shall I do unto thee?" It is as if

God should say, I have done my utmost, as **Isaiah 5:5; Micah 5:3**, and now am I at a stand, and can scarce tell what to do more. See the like expostulatory complaints, **Jeremiah 2:30, 31; Hosea 5:3; Amos 4:6; Isaiah 26:10; Matthew 11:16, 17, 18; 23:37**. I would, but thou wouldst not. As the loving hen is always caring for her chickens, and calling them about her, that she may gather and guard them from the mischief of all vermin; but they will needs be straggling, and so perish; so if God's people will not hearken to his voice, if Israel will none of him, what can he do less than give them up to their own hearts' lusts, **Psalms 81:12**, yea, give them up to the devil, to be further hardened to their just destruction, saying, that which will die, let it die? All that God can do is, as here, to mourn for their obstinacy and fool-hardiness in rejecting his grace, as he wept over Jerusalem, **Luke 19:42**. We should also do the like, crying out with Isaiah, "My leanness, my leanness!" and with Jeremiah, "My bowels, my bowels!" and with Paul, I have "great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart," for my perverse countrymen, **Isaiah 24:16; Jeremiah 4:19; Romans 9:2**. Peter calleth them an untoward generation, **Acts 2:40**; such crooked pieces that there was no working upon them. A cunning carver can cut the similitude of any creature, yet not on a crooked or rotten stick. Where lieth the fault? surely in the crookedness of the stick, and not in the carver's cunning; so is it here. When men wrestle with God, as **Deuteronomy 32:5**, shift him off, as the apostle's word, **παραιήσῃς**, signifieth, **Hebrews 12:25**, take up the bucklers against the sword of his Spirit, lest it should prick them at heart, as **Acts 2:37**, and let out the life blood of their lusts, that they might live; what can the Lord do in this case more than pity their unhappiness, and punish them for their stubbornness, as the judge pitieth a malefactor, as he is a man, but yet condemneth him as a thief or murderer? Tell me not here, that God could have done more for Ephraim and Judah than he did; and they might have said in answer to God's question here, as that leper in the gospel did, Why? "Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make me clean," **Matthew 8:2**. Hence it is God by his absolute power can make iron swim, rocks stream forth water, stones to yield children to Abraham; he can do whatsoever he pleaseth; save without means, &c. But it is his actual power that men must look to. And so he (having tied the end and means together) cannot (say divines), because he will not, bring men to the end, without their using those means which tend unto the end; for that is the ordinary course which he hath decreed to use, and which he will not alter, but upon special occasion, as our Saviour noteth in the cure of Naaman, and in the feeding of the widow of Sarepta, **Luke 4:26, 27**.

For your goodness is as the morning cloud, &c. This people hearing God say, What shall I do unto you? might possibly reply, Why? what should you do but rain down righteousness upon us, and load us with loving-kindness? for we are good all over, we have returned and done right in thy sight, as it is said of those hypocrites, **Jeremiah 34:15, 16**, and as Peter saith of some apostates in his time, that they were clean escaped from them who live in error; and (for matter of practice) they had also escaped the pollutions of the world; knew the way of righteousness, and seemed very forward in it; were as the fore-horses in a team, ringleaders of good exercises, &c.; who yet afterwards fell off to the world, turned from the holy commandments, and returned with the dog to their vomit, and with the washed sow to her wallowing again in the mire. And this is that which the Lord here upbraideth this people with (and so stops their mouths), viz., that their goodness or mercifulness, their piety toward God and charity toward men, was nothing else but a morning cloud, **Jude 1:12**, a waterless cloud, as Jude hath it, a mere flaunt, or flash, an outside only, an empty sound, a vain pretence. It was also as the morning dew, which is soon dried up by the sunbeams. In a word, they were both false and fickle, unsteady and unstable, constant only in their inconstancy. Hence this pathetic complaint of them; God knew not where to have them, and therefore not what to do with them. These were never right with God, because not stedfast in his covenant, **Psalms 78:36, 37**; they are unstable as water, therefore they shall not excel, **Genesis 49:4**; they never were a willing people in the day of Christ's power, **Psalms 110:3**, his power was never put forth upon them, to subdue their wills to God's will. They never yet attained to that spirit of power, of

love, and of a sound mind, **2 Timothy 1:7**. Inconstancy comes from weakness. "The strength of Israel repenteth not," **1 Samuel 15:29**. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 5. [[@Bible:Hosea 6:5]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Therefore have I hewed them by my prophets.** Therefore? wherefore? because there is so little stability and solidity in them; because they are so off and on, so light and false-hearted; therefore I have spared for no pains (though all to small purpose), but have sharply rebuked them that they might be sound in the faith, **Revelation 2:16**; yea, I have fought against them with the sword of my mouth, and slain them by powerful convictions of conscience; so that they are self-condemned, and the judgments are written as it were with a beam of the sun, they are so clear to themselves and others. This is the coherence, and the reason of the illative particle "therefore." It is the sad complaint of a late reverend writer, when we have spent all our wind on our people their hearts will be still apt to be carried away with every wind of doctrine. They are won, saith another, with an apple, and lost with a nut; no man knows where to find them in one mind for a month's time; such a generation of moon calves never appeared in the world before. Our giddy hearers (saith a third), after all our pains taken with them, have no mould but what the next teacher casteth them into; being blown, like glasses, into this or that shape at the pleasure of his breath.

I have hewed them by the prophets. Who are here compared to masons or stone hewers, **2 Kings 12:12**; **1 Chronicles 22:2**; **Job 19:24**; **Isaiah 51:1**; to carpenters, **1 Kings 5:15**; **Proverbs 9:1**; **Isaiah 5:2**; to day labourers, who dig pits and cisterns, **Deuteronomy 6:11**; **8:9**; **2 Chronicles 26:10**; **Nehemiah 9:25**; **Jeremiah 2:13**. A minister's life is no idle man's occupation; they meet with many rough stones, knotty pieces, hard quarries, tough work. Some are stones crumbling all to crattle as soon as we begin to hammer them, and as timber falling to splinters when we fall to the hewing of them; and other such sons of Belial there are that a man cannot speak to them, **1 Samuel 25:17**; they are "thorns that cannot be taken with hands, but the man that shall touch them must be fenced with iron and with the staff of a spear." These shall be thrust away as thorns, and utterly burnt with fire, **2 Samuel 23:6, 7**. And for the better sort, those lively stones, **1 Peter 2:5**, and smoother pieces that are to be set into God's building, being made by his grace more malleable and tractable, there must be a great deal of pains taken with them, that they may be as the polished corners of the temple; they must be humbled and hammered, **Jeremiah 23:29**, pared and planed here in the mount; for there may neither hammer, nor axe, nor any tool of iron be heard in the heavenly house, for which they are fitting, **1 Kings 6:7**. And herein we are "labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building," **1 Corinthians 3:9**. In which laborious kind of life, "I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may be saved," saith Paul, **2 Timothy 2:10**. And I dare be bold to say, saith Luther, that faithful ministers do labour and sweat more in a day than husbandmen do in a month. And for mine own part, saith he, *si mihi esset integram vocationem deserere*, if it were lawful for me to leave my calling, I could with less pains and more pleasure dig and do day work than labour as I now do in the work of the ministry. Pareus thinks that the next words,

I have killed them with the words of my mouth. are spoken by God of the prophets: *q.d.* I have set them so heavy a task and put them so hard to it, that it hath been the death of them; such crabbed and rugged spirits they have met with, such stubborn and tough timber, that had long lain soaking in the waters of wickedness; these tools of mine are even worn out with working. But though this be a pious interpretation, and not altogether improbable, because of the change of person here, viz. them for you; yet because such a change is ordinary in Scripture and emphatic also, namely, when God seemeth deeply displeased with any one, and therefore leaveth talking to him, and turns himself suddenly to another, (see **Hosea 4:14**; **5:8**, **4**) I conceive it may very well be so in this place. *Occidi istos*, I have slain these refractories and rebels with the words of my mouth (*sic enim contemptim loquimur*), I have beaten so hard

upon their consciences, that they have had no joy of their lives. I have marked them out for destruction, by threatening it, as **Jeremiah 18:7, 8**, and **Hosea 1:10**. Elisha hath his sword as well as Jehu and Hazael, **1 Kings 19:17**; and when Elisha unsheatheth and brandisheth his sword, it is a fair warning that the sword of Jehu and Hazael are at hand. See **Ezekiel 11:13**, "And it came to pass that when I prophesied Pelatiah, the son of Benaiah, died." So did Ananias and Sapphira, **Acts 5:5, 10**. So do many despisers today, though it appear not by them. A man may have his bane about him, though he fall not down dead in the place. If any man harm Christ's two witnesses, fire (though not felt) "proceedeth out of their mouths, and devoureth their enemies," **Revelation 11:5**.

And thy judgments are as the light that goeth forth. *i.e.* I have clearly denounced them, and will as openly execute them in the sight of this sun. "The righteous shall see it and shall say, Lo, this is the man," &c., **Psalms 52:6, 7; 119:137**. Thou, by thine hypocrisy and external services, as **Hosea 6:6**, hast cast a mist before men's eyes, that they cannot think thee to be so near a judgment: but I will dispel that mist, and make my works a comment upon my word; and having sent unto thee a powerful ministry, but to no purpose, I will make thee, who wouldst not hear the word, "to hear the rod, and who hath appointed it," **Micah 7:9**. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 6. [[@Bible:Hosea 6:6]]{{field-on:Bible}} **For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice.** That is, rather than sacrifice: I prefer the marrow and pith of the second table before the ceremony and surface of the first.

I desired mercy. Heb. רַחֲמִים I desired it with singular delight and complacency. *Aurea certe sententia*, saith Rivet. This is a golden sentence, twice quoted by Christ himself, **Matthew 9:13; 12:7**, which noteth the eminence of it. And with it agreeth that answer of the scribe so much approved of by our Saviour, **Mark 12:38**, "To love thy neighbour as thyself is more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices." And that of the author to the Hebrews, "But to do good and to communicate forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased," **Hebrews 13:16**; a great deal better pleased than with all the outward services and sacrifices of the law, which yet were commanded by God, but not to be rested in. These be famous sentences indeed; such as a man would fetch upon his knees from Rome or Jerusalem, as a reverend man saith of certain brave sayings of Luther, which he had recited (Mr Sam. Clark, Life of Luther). Mercy is here put for all the duties of charity; as the knowledge of God is for those other of piety, whereof it is the rise and foundation. Mercy is set first *non ut potior sed ut notior*, not as better, but as better known, and more noticed. They are set together, because they must not be sundered in our practice. Obedience must be universal, extending to the compass of the whole law. A man must not be *funambulus virtutum*, as Tertullian speaks, going in a narrow track of obedience, pinking and choosing what he will do and what not; following God in such duties as will suit with him and no farther. He must follow after God as Caleb, **Numbers 14:14**, have respect to all God's commandments, and do all his wills, as David, **Acts 13:22**, walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless, as Zacharias and Elizabeth, **Luke 1:6**. These partial and perverse Jews walked in all the ordinances, but they cared not for the commandments; they were altogether for the ceremonial law, but neglected the moral. Or if they did anything that way, it was but the outward act of a commandment, which men may naturally perform. Thus Ahab humbled himself: and some think that Urijah which Isaiah calleth the faithful witness, (**Isaiah 8:2**) the same with him that brought in the altar of Damascus, **2 Kings 16:10**, yet reputed a faithful man of his word. A hypocrite may show mercy, but not love mercy, **Micah 6:8**, and know God, but not effectively, practically, according to that of St John, "Hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments," **1 John 2:28**. This is that obedience which is better than sacrifice, **1 Samuel 15:22; Jeremiah 7:21**; and no wonder, *quia per victimas, aliena caro, per obedientiam voluntas propria mactatur*, saith one; in sacrifices the flesh of another, but in obedience our own wills are offered up: and this the very heathen, by the dim rush light of nature, saw to be better. Hold thou it the fairest sacrifice and best service

to keep thyself pure and upright, saith Isocrates. O Nicocles, θῦμα κάλλιστον καὶ θεραπεία μεγίστη. Isoc. And, Ovid. Epist.,

"Non bove mactato caelestia numina gaudent.

Sed, quae praestanda est et sine teste fides." {{{field-off:Bible}}}

Verse 7. [[@Bible:Hosea 6:7]]{{{field-on:Bible}}} **But they like men.** Heb. like Adam, that archrebel, that old παραβάτης, after the similitude of whose transgressions these men had sinned, **Romans 5:14**, and so deserved in like sort to be punished, by being cast out of their country, as he was out of paradise. Thus some sense it; as if the prophet would here reduce these covenant breakers to that first transgressor Adam, in whom they all were; as the whole country is in a parliament man, and as Levi was in Abraham's loins, and paid tithes in him, **Hebrews 7:9**. Others take Adam for an appellative, and give a reason for it out of the text, because it is *Keadam*, and not *Kahadam*, with ⲛ emphatic. And of these some again read it thus, *Illi tanquam hominis transgressi sunt foedus*, they transgressed the covenant, as if it had been a man's covenant (*perinde ae foedus alicuius hominis infirmi et infirmi*, Polan.); they made no more of breaking it than as if they had had to do with dust and ashes like themselves, with their fellow creatures, and not with the great God: and might therefore deal by their covenants, as monkeys do by their collars, which they fit on for their master's pleasure, and slip off again for their own. Others read it, as we do; "They like men have transgressed," &c., sorry men, fickle and false hearted men, such as David pointed at when he said, "All men are liars," **Psalms 116:11**, and Paul, **1 Corinthians 3:3**. Are ye not carnal, and walk as men, that is, as profane men, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel? Singular things are expected from God's peculiar, **Matthew 5:47**, as to be eminent in good works, **Titus 3:14**, to get above others, as Saul was above the people by head and shoulders; to get to the very top of godliness, as the apostle's phrase importeth, ἀκριβῶς παρὰ τὸ εἰς ἄκρον βαίνειν, **Ephesians 5:15**, to keep God's covenant as the apple of the eye, as Solomon saith, **Proverbs 7:2**, that little man in the eye, Ishon, that cannot be touched but he will be distempered. This the world counts preciseness, and makes nothing of transgressing, of leaping over the hedge of any commandments, so they may shun a piece of foul way. Lo, this is the manner of most men, yea, of all men by nature; they make no bones about transgressing the law, of changing the ordinance, of breaking the everlasting covenant, **Isaiah 24:5**. And this when they do, they work *de suo et secundum hominem*; for *Homo est inversus Decalogus*, the natural man stands across to the law of God, to the whole Decalogue; the two tables whereof are called the tables of the covenant, **Deuteronomy 9:9, 11**. Neither is this any excusing or extenuation of their sin, that they do but their kind, they do it as men. It is an aggravation rather, *q.d.* they not only transgress my covenant, but they do it naturally, and out of the vileness of their proper inclinations; like as the devil, when he speaketh a lie, he speaketh *de suo*, of his own, **John 8:44**, he can do no otherwise. It is as impossible for those that are carnal and walk as men to keep covenant with God as for a toad to spit cordials. If at any time they make an overture of doing it, if they make an essay, it is but as the morning cloud, and as the early dew that goeth away, as **Hosea 6:5**, with which this verse applies; **Hosea 6:6**; coming in between as it were by a parenthesis.

There have they dealt treacherously against me. There? where? in the very point of the covenant, which by their sacrifices and burnt offerings they so solemnly professed and engaged to observe; lo, therein have they prevaricated, and then at the same time have they falsified, as the same word is used, **Psalms 14:5**. I have been near in their mouth, but far from their reins, **Jeremiah 12:2**. In words they profess to know me, but in works they deny me, being abominable and disobedient, and to every good work reprobate, **Titus 1:16**. Or there, that is (as the Chaldee paraphrast senseth it), in that good land which I have given them, even in Gilead, as in the next words. They live in my good land, but not by my good laws; yea, "they

have filled it" (as the cursed Canaanites did before them, **Ezra 9:11**) "from one end to another with their uncleanness," which therefore longs for a vomit to cast them out; there have they dealt treacherously, as the adulteress doth, who forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her God. The sins of such as break covenant with God are sins of a double dye; they are wickedness with a witness, because "they do wickedly against the covenant," **Daniel 11:32; Proverbs 2:17**; these treacherous dealers deal treacherously, yea, these treacherous dealers deal very treacherously, **Isaiah 24:16**. And this they have done against me, who have stooped so low as to strike a covenant with them, and such a covenant, **2 Samuel 23:5**, and have never failed or falsified. See **Deuteronomy 29:24, 25**. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 8. [[@Bible:Hosea 6:8]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Gilead is a city of them that work iniquity.** Another **πονηροπολις**; such a city there was in Greece, and so called by King Philip, for the naughtiness of the inhabitants. This Gilead was one of those ten cities of refuge beyond Jordan, given to the priests for a possession, **Joshua 21:38**, &c., and probably the chief city, which therefore bare the name of the whole country, as Athens was called the Greece of Greece (**Ἑλλάς Ἑλλάδος**). The inhabitants thereof (though Levites) were the worst of men, workers of iniquity, such as did wickedly with both hands, earnestly wearying themselves in the devil's drudgery; and then sitting down to rest them in the chair of pestilence. There is not a worse creature upon earth, or so fit for hell, as a profane priest, a debauched minister, **Matthew 5:13**. *Corruptio optimi pessima*, as the sweetest wine makes the sourest vinegar, as the finest flesh is resolved into the vilest earth, and as the whitest ivory burnt becomes the blackest coal. Who would have looked for so much wickedness at Gilead, at Shiloh, at Anathoth, at Jerusalem, where the priests and scribes bare sway, and did *dominari in suggestis*? And yet that once faithful city was "become a harlot; it was full of judgment, righteousness lodged in it, but now murderers," **Isaiah 1:21**. In our Saviour's time it was *prophetarum macellum*, the slaughter house of the saints, as now Rome is, and once London was in bloody Bonner's days: whom a certain good woman once told in a letter, that he was deservedly called the common cut-throat and general slaughter slave to all the bishops of England. At his death he boasted (as Stokesley had done before him) how many heretics he had burned: seven hundred saints in four or five years' time those bloody and deceitful men sent to heaven in fiery chariots. There are none so cruel to the lives of men as wicked clergy.

Gilead was polluted with blood. Not only with the blood of souls (by their default drowned in perdition and destruction, **Ezekiel 33:7; 3:18**), but of bodies too, destroyed by their hands or means. The priests of these times may seem, by what is said of them in the next verse, to have been men of their hands, the sworn swordmen of the devil, such as was Timotheus Herulus, Bishop of Alexandria, A.D. 467. Pope Innocent, who threw Peter's keys into the river Tiber, and took up Paul's sword, as he called it, and that Philip, Bishop of Beauvieu, in France, taken in a skirmish by our Richard I, who sent his armour to the pope with these words engraved on it, *Vide num filii tui tunica sit, vel non*, See whether this be the coat of thy son, or of a son of Mars. These, and their like in their several generations, were *non Pastores sed Impostores, non Doctores sed Seductores, non Episcopi sed Aposcopi*, not ministers but imposters, not teachers but seducers, not bishops but apostates, as an ancient hath it; and indeed, the Church hath ever been so pestered with lewd and lazy ministers (those *dehonestamenta Cleri*) that Chrysostom thought there were scarcely any of that order in his time that could be saved; Jerome saith that the paucity of such as were good had made them very precious; and Campian cries out, not altogether without cause (malice may be a good informer though an ill judge), *Ministris eorum nihil vilis*, There is nothing vile to their ministers. Now this is here instanced as an odious transgression of the covenant, when such as made such a show of sacrifice to God should exercise so little mercy to men; when such as should be teachers were turned tyrants and blood suckers. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 9. [[@Bible:Hosea 6:9]]{{field-on:Bible}} **And as troops of robbers wait for a man.**

This verse hath much of the former in it, saith an interpreter. The sum of it is, saith Wigandus, to show, that all the forementioned wickednesses were committed, *instinctu doctorum*, by the instinct of their priests, who were now turned tories or moss troopers. Jerome asked his Jewish doctor the meaning of this text, and received this answer: that at the time of the Passover and the Pentecost the people used to come to Jerusalem; and as they were going in their journey, these priests would stand in the way and slay them. Others think that these corrupt priests took into their city of refuge divers thieves and murderers; who not having whereupon otherwise to subsist, turned highwaymen (as they call them), and returning again into the city, divided the spoil with the priests, who had their share: and are therefore called companions of robbers, and are said to murder in the way by consent, or with one shoulder, or as Simeon and Levi did at Shechem, *q.d. Sichemice*, craftily and cruelly (for so many ways these words are rendered), and all this they did with malice forethought, of premeditated mischief (*ex destinata malitia et inito consilio*), called here committing lewdness. Even as they thought in their hearts so they acted, saith King David. They executed the counsel of the wicked, saith the Chaldee paraphrast. They machinated mischief, and then practised what they had plotted with a deliberate will, and as it were with a high hand. Look now upon the Popish monks, saith Tarnovius, and compare them with these priests whom Hosea reproveth, *non tam ovum ovo simile*. And Luther saith, that they had a proverb in Germany, that there was nothing so bad which the monks could think of but they would dare to do it. *Faciunt quicquid cogitant*. Ministers-Immoral

*"Non audet Stygius Pluto tentare quod audet
Effrenis Monachus,"—*{{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 10. [[@Bible:Hosea 6:10]]{{field-on:Bible}} **I have seen an horrible thing in the house of Israel.** Now a very den of thieves, as **Hosea 6:9**, a pantheon of all sorts of idols, a chamber of imagery, an Egyptian temple, gay and goodly without, but within an ox or calf, with "women weeping for Tammuz," **Ezekiel 8:12, 14**, that is, for Osiris, king of Egypt, whose image (under the shape of an ox) his wife, Isis, had advanced to be idolatrously there adored. This kind of abomination Jeroboam had learned in Egypt (whither he fled from Solomon, his master), and brought into the house of Israel. And whereas those idolaters said, "The Lord seeth us not, the Lord hath forsaken the earth," **Ezekiel 8:12**; "I have seen it," saith God, and been sore troubled at it, and even frightened; so as a man is *quando horripilatur*, when his hairs stand on end; as when the devil appeareth to him like a hairy satyr. See **Leviticus 17:7**. (**See Trapp on "Leviticus 17:7"**) Certain it is that God hateth sin (but especially idolatry, that abominable thing, as he calleth it, **Jeremiah 44:4**) worse than he hateth the devil himself; for he hateth the devil for sin's sake, and not sin for the devil's sake. Idolatry must needs be so much the more odious to him, because therein the devil sets up himself in the place of God; and requires men (as once he did Christ himself) to fall down and worship him. See **Deuteronomy 32:17; 1 Corinthians 10:20; Revelation 9:20**. So he dealeth by the poor Indians of this day, compelling them to worship him with bodily worship, and tormenting them, if they do not, worse (if worse may be) than the cruel Spaniards; who suppose they show the wretches favour, when they do not, for their pleasure, whip them with cords, and day by day drop their naked bodies with burning bacon. The Hebrew word here used hath some letters more than ordinary in it, to increase the signification, and to show what a very horrible thing idolatry is (**הירעש**). (*Hebrew Text Note*) It is *spurca pollutio*, as **Jeremiah 23:14**, and worse. See **Jeremiah 2:11, 12; 18:13**, and know that God doth not use to aggravate things beyond truth, as men do, witness Nebuchadnezzar, **Daniel 3:14**, "Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego?" Or is it of set purpose? *Num de industria?* so Buxtorf rendereth it. Is it for the nonce, to provoke me? Or *Nunquid desolatio?* so Arias Montanus; as if he should say, What! you to oppose the command of a king? If this be suffered, what desolation must needs follow! But this is not God's way; he lays no more words upon a thing than the matter amounteth to. If he call idolatry filth,

fornication, abomination, a horrible thing, such as a man would start or stand aghast at, we may be sure it is so. The Septuagint here render it φρικώδη, things to be trembled at, or shrieked at. In Barbary it is death for the Xeriff's wife, when she seeth a man, though but through a casement, not suddenly to shriek out. God is a jealous God, and allows not his to look toward an idol. If they do he will soon see it, and visit for it. "I have seen," &c.

There is the whoredom of Ephraim. Thus God looketh upon it as filthiness and nastiness which the people beheld as fineness and neatness. And the same do all (that have the mind of God, and senses exercised to discern between good and evil) judge of all the Popish pomp and palterment, wherewith they bewitch the deluded common people, as the serpent Scytale doth the fleeing passenger, whom when she cannot overtake, yet with her beautiful colours she doth so astonish and amaze him, that he hath no power to pass away till stung to death.

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Verse 11. [[@Bible:Hosea 6:11]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Also, O Judah, he hath set an harvest for thee.** This is a very difficult text, and much vexed by interpreters. *Et hic nisi Lyra lyrasset, nos omnes delirassemus.* Lyra sets this sense upon the text, and I accord him: Though thou, Judah, art also to be carried captive; yet God hath set, or provided for thee, a harvest in thine own land, when I shall have returned the captivity of my people, viz. under the conduct of Zorobabel, by the decree of Cyrus. Here, then, is a promise of a joyful harvest to Judah, who is not to be punished with like severity as Israel, **Hosea 1:7**, and for the change of person, when I returned, for he shall have returned. See **Isaiah 29:19; Jeremiah 31:23; Zephaniah 3:20; Psalm 14:7.** *Simul Iudae captivitas et reditus praedicitur significanter admodum*, saith Jerome here; both the captivity and return of Judah is here very significantly foretold. It is a very good note that one giveth here, sc. that God in his chastisement ever sheweth himself mindful of his covenant; after a long barrenness, he setteth for his people a plentiful harvest, and turneth again their captivity, after that for a time he hath tried them. His mercy also and faithfulness herein appeareth, that he mingleth promises with threatenings; and while he utterly destroyeth the kingdom of the ten tribes, he preserveth the commonwealth of Judah, wherein the Messiah was to come, and whereof there was not (by the ancient prophecies) to be a dissolution, till Shiloh came. Hence it is that promises of the restoration of Judah are ever intermingled, lest any should doubt the manifestation of the Messiah in the fulness of time.

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Chapter 7

Verse 1. [[@Bible:Hosea 7:1]]{{field-on:Bible}}**When I would have healed Israel, &c.** Whereas Israel, hearing of a happy harvest promised to Judah, **Hosea 6:11**, and themselves excluded, might complain of hard dealing; God shows them here, that *crudelem medicum intemperans aeger facit*, the fault was merely in themselves. God came with his healing medicines to have cured them, but they hated to be healed, and, like madmen, railed and raged against the physician, spilt the portions, would have none of those slobber-sauces, ⁽¹⁴⁾ as they accounted them; yea, as if on purpose to cross God,

then the iniquity of Ephraim was discovered, and the wickedness (*malitia multiplex*) **of Samaria.** Of so perverse a spirit were they; and therefore (in Solomen's judgment, **Proverbs 12:8**) worthy to have been despised and let alone to perish in their corruptions. In Hippocrates' time the physicians were bound by oath to leave such under their wounds to perish by them as were unruly, and would not be ordered. "We would have healed Babylon," (saith the Church), "but she would not be healed; forsake her therefore," saith God, **Jeremiah 51:9**. "Let them alone," saith Christ, **Matthew 15:14**. That which will die, let it die: a fearful sentence. Let them swelter and pine away in their iniquities, **Leviticus 26:39**. In their filthiness is lewdness, their disease is complicated, it is the leprosy in the head, it breaketh forth in their forehead, and my people love to have it so; but "what will they do in the end thereof?" **Jeremiah 5:31**. Ephraim here discovereth a headstrong wilfulness that was uncounsellable, incurable. He runs away after conviction, with a bit between his teeth, as it were; he runs, I say, upon the rock, **Amos 6:12**, where he first breaketh his hoofs, and then his neck. Some grow desperately sinful, like those Italian senators, that despairing of their lives (when upon submission they had been promised their lives, yet), being conscious of their villany, made a curious banquet; and at the end thereof every man drank up his glass of poison: and killed himself. So men, feeling such horrible hard hearts, and privy to such notorious sins they cast away souls and all for lust; and perish woefully, because they lived desperately, and so securely. It is a fearful sign of reprobation when God's means and medicines do men no good, but hurt rather; when medicine, which should remove the disease, doth co-operate with it, then death comes with the more pain and speed. The stronger the conviction of sin is the deeper will be the wrath against it, if it be not by repentance avoided.

For they commit falsehood. They do not the truth, **1 John 1:6**, but deal falsely, **Jeremiah 6:13**, every one of them, from the prophet even to the priest; they work a deceitful work, **Proverbs 11:18**, their bellies prepare deceit, **Job 15:35**, they have an art in lying, in stitching one lie to another, as the word signifieth, **Psalms 119:69**, *Assuunt mendacium mendacio*. Idolatry is a real lie, as she in the Book of Martyrs answered the doctor, that asked her, Dost thou believe that the body of Christ is in the sacrament of the altar really and substantially? I believe, said she, that so to hold is a real lie, and a substantial lie. These idolaters having played false with God, and treacherously dealt with him, what wonder though they lie, deceive, rob, spoil, both within doors and without, in private negotiations and public transactions? but especially forge lies against those that withstood their superstitious vanities, and prey upon their goods, as **Hebrews 10:34**. *Sublata pietate tollitur fides*, is a truth irrefutable. Take away piety, and fidelity is gone; as we see in that unrighteous judge, **Luke 18:2**, and as Abraham concluded of the men of Gerar, **Genesis 20:11**, and lastly, as Constantinus Chlorus, the father of Constantine the Great, experimented in his own councillors and courtiers; whence that famous maxim of his, recorded by Eusebius: He cannot be faithful to me who is unfaithful to God; religion being the ground of all true fidelity and loyalty.{{field-off:Bible}}

¹⁴ A compound or concoction of a messy, repulsive, or nauseous character, used esp. for medicinal purposes. (ED)

Verse 2. [[@Bible:Hosea 7:2]]{{field-on:Bible}}**And they consider not in their hearts.** Heb. They say not in their hearts; that is, they set not down themselves with this consideration, they commune not with their consciences upon this most needful, but much neglected matter. A good man's work lieth much within doors; he loves to be dealing with himself, and working good and wholesome considerations upon his own affections. He is never less alone than when he is alone; for still he hath God and himself to talk to.

That I remember all their wickedness. *i.e.* Record and register them, as in a book, with a pen of iron and point of a diamond, **Jeremiah 17:1**; that I seal them up in a bag, **Job 14:17**, as the clerk of assizes seals up indictments, and at the assizes brings his bag, and produceth them. "Is not this laid up in store with me, and sealed up among my treasures?" **Deuteronomy 32:34**. So little reason is there that wicked men should please themselves in hope of impunity. And yet they do, **Psalms 94:7**, they strive to persuade themselves that the Lord doth not see, neither doth the God of Jacob remember: they hide God from themselves, and then think they have hid themselves from him. Herein they are alike foolish as the ostrich, a bird as big as a camel, and taller than a man (Plin. lib. x., cap. 1). When this bustard ⁽¹⁵⁾ would hide herself she thrusts her head into a thicket, as conceiving that nobody seeth her because she seeth nobody, and so becomes a prey to the hunter. *Caveatur carnalis securitas*. Let us walk evermore in the sense of God's presence, unless we had rather be carnally secured than soundly comforted.

Now their own doings have beset them about. Their studied wickedness, *studia eorum* (Tigurin), their contrived iniquities, so Luther expounds the word doings; for wicked men are great students, and break many a night's sleep in pernicious ploddings, **Proverbs 4:16**. But as the blackbird is taken by birdlime made of his own excrements, so is the wicked beset by his own devices; as by so many sergents set on by God. Some think (and not without probable reason) that the prophet in this phrase of besetting them about alludeth to the future siege of Samaria; wherein these sinners against their own souls were so straitly beset by the enemy, that they could not flee or stir without danger. And this he saith shall befall them. Now, that is, shortly, and sooner than they think for. Indeed, how should it be otherwise, whereas their doings

are before my face. *E regione et velut adversa ac detestata*, Together and in full view, as a continual eye sore to me, **Psalms 59:5; 90:8**; so that though I could or would forget them, yet they will not suffer me to do so; such is their impudence, and importunace for vengeance. Lyra makes it a metaphor, from a thief taken in the act, with his back burden of stolen goods, and, as it were, beset with them, and so brought before the judge. "His own iniquities shall take the wicked," saith Solomon, **Proverbs 5:22**. For how can he escape the multitude of his sins within him, and the variety of God's heavy judgments without him? {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 3. [[@Bible:Hosea 7:3]]{{field-on:Bible}}**They make the king glad with their wickedness.** A sad commentary surely of king and people, exhilarating themselves and each other in wickedness. Their kings were well paid of their people's compliances with their unlawful edicts; and the people no less well pleased to gratify and flatter their kings, as the Romans did Tiberius and other tyrants, who therefore said of them, that they were *servum pecus*, servile souls, *et homines ad servitutem parati*, men-made slaves. Tyrants care not how wicked their subjects are; for then they know they will swallow down any command, though never so impious, without scrupling or conscience-making. They like to have such about them as will down with anything, digest iron for a need, with the ostrich; and say, as that wretched man said (when one complained he could not do such a thing for his conscience), "I am master

¹⁵ A genus of birds (*Otis*) presenting affinities both to the *Cursores* and the *Grallatores* or waders; remarkable for their great size and running powers. The great bustard (*Otis tarda*) is the largest European bird, and was formerly common in England, though now extinct, or found only as a rare visitant. ÆD

of my conscience, I can do anything for all that." Thus Balaam resolved to curse, whatever came of it; he went not aside as at other times, neither built he any more altars, but set his face towards the wilderness, as fully bent to do it, and nothing should hinder him now, **Numbers 24:1, 2 cf. Luke 9:51**. He also gave wicked counsel to King Balak (and so made him glad at parting, though before he had angered him) to lay a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, viz. to set fair women to tempt them to corporal and spiritual fornication, that God might see sin flagrant in Jacob, some transgression in Israel, and so fall foul upon them with his plagues, **Numbers 23:21**. Parasites propound to kings *suavia potius quam sana consilia*, pleasing, but pestilent counsel; they also act for them, and under them, as Doeg did for Saul, and so gratify them, letify them, as here, make them glad; but it proves to be no better than *risus Sardonius*, such a mirth as brings bitterness in the end. Woe to such mirthmongers and mirth makers, for if they shall do thus wickedly, they shall be consumed, both they and their king, **1 Samuel 12:25**.

And the princes with their lies. With calumnies and false accusations, wherewith they load God's innocent servants, and that against their own consciences. Thus Doeg dealt by David, the priests and prophets by Jeremiah, the Persian courtiers by Daniel and his companions, Amaziah by Amos, Haman by the whole nation of the Jews, Tertullus by Paul, the heathen idolaters by the primitive Christians, which caused those many apologies made for them by Tertullian, Athenagoras, and others. If a ruler hearken to lies (and that is a common fault among them, as David tells Saul, **1 Samuel 24:9**) all his servants will be wicked, **Proverbs 29:12**; he shall have his Aiones and Negones that will say as he says, and fit his humour to a hair; he shall have plenty of such as will slander the saints and cast an odium upon the conscientious. I once saw (saith Melancthon) an old coin, on the one side whereof was Zopyrus, on the other Zoilus; he adds, *fuit imago aulae, comitantur calumniae bene merentes*, It was a picture of princes' courts, where are store of such as, by flattery, daub white upon black, and, by calumny, sprinkle black upon white. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 4. [[@Bible:Hosea 7:4]]{{field-on:Bible}} **They are all adulterers.** εξεκαυσθησαν, *adulterio caleseunt*, so *Paguine*, scalded in their base lusts, as those in **Romans 1:27**, all (for the most part) were such; but especially the courtiers and clawback informers, as **Hosea 7:3**, God, in his just judgment, giving them up to those vile affections or passions of dishonour, and punishing their impieties with impurities, as he did also in those heathens, **Romans 1:23**.

As an oven heated by the baker. An apt similitude setting forth the intense heat of filthy lust (better marry than burn, **1 Corinthians 7:9**), and of long continuance as the heat of an oven; yea, of Nebuchadnezzar's oven, yea, of hell itself, whence it was enkindled, and where it shall be perpetually punished. The holy angels at the last day will be most active against such, to bring them to condign punishment: **2 Peter 2:10**, "But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness." Note the word chiefly, and consider the example of the Sodomites, and God most severe against them, **Hebrews 13:4**. How much they have lived deliciously, and drenched themselves in fleshly delights, so much torments and sorrow shall they have proportionably, **Revelation 18:7**. As their hearts have been as a hot oven or furnace, so they shall be bound up in bundles, and cast into a furnace of fire, where shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth, **Matthew 13:42**. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 5. [[@Bible:Hosea 7:5]]{{field-on:Bible}} **In the day of our king.** Our good king, on whom they so much doted, that they forgot God and his sincerer service. *Quaecunque a regibus dicuntur aut fiunt, Gallis mirifice solet placere*. It is reported of the French by their own chronicles, that they are wonderfully well pleased with whatsoever is said or done by their king (Epit. Hist. Gallor. 134); so that they affect to speak like him, to be arrayed like him, and to imitate him in everything. Their Song is, *Mihi placet quicquid Regi placet*. But is not this to idolize the creature? and have not many (otherwise well minded men) among us been by this

means miscarried to their cost in our late combustions? This day of their king was either his birthday (so Pagnine rendereth it here, *die natalis eius*), or his coronation day (so the Chaldee paraphrast carrieth it), which also is the birthday of a king as he is king, **1 Samuel 13:1**, unless haply he have the happiness to be crowned (not in his cradle only, as Europus, king of Macedon, and the late King James were, but) in his mother's womb, as Misdaetus, king of Persia, was, the crown being set upon his mother's great belly before he was born. Now in this solemn day of the king (when they should have been better busied), the princes have made him sick, or the princes were sick, they drank themselves sick, drowning their bodies and souls (as Richard III did his brother Clarence) in a butt of Malmsey. How many importunate and impudent drinkers are there, that by drinking other men's health destroy their own! See Master Prinne's Health's-sickness, and accord him that said,

*"Una salus sanis, nullam potare salutem,
Non est in pota vera salute salus."*

But what beastly bedlams, or rather incarnate devils, were those three drunkards mentioned by Jo. Manlius in his Common Places, who drank so long till one of them fell down stark dead; and yet the other two, nothing terrified with such a dreadful example of divine vengeance, went on to drink, and poured the dead man's part into him as he lay by them? Oh horrible! Drunkenness is a detestable vice in any, but especially in men of place and power, **Proverbs 31:4**. Woe be to those drunken vice-gods (as I may in the worst sense best call them), woe to the very crown of their pride, in drinking down many, **Isaiah 28:1**, as Mark Antony wrote, or rather spued out, a book concerning his own abilities to bear strong drink! Darius also boasted of the same faculty in his very epitaph: a poor praise. Drunkenness in a king is a capital sin, and makes the land reel; witness Belshazzar carousing in the bowels of the sanctuary to the honour of Shar, his drunken god; Alexander the Great drinking himself to death, and killing forty-one more with excessive drinking, to get that crown of one hundred and eighty pounds weight, which he had provided for him that drank most (hence those feast days were called *σακεαι ἡμέραι*, they were like the Roman Saturnalia); Bonosus the emperor, that beastly drunkard, called therefore a tankard, (*Hic pendet Amphora*); and Tiberius, surnamed Biberius, for his tippling; like as Erasmus, called Eccius Ieccius, for the same cause: and well he might; for as he lived a shameful drunkard, so being nonplust at Ratisbon by Melancthon in a public disputation, and drinking more than was fit that night at the Bishop of Mundina's lodgings (who had among the best Italian wines), he fell into a fever, whereof he died. Drunkenness is a flattering evil, a sweet poison, a cunning Circe, that besots the soul, destroys the body, dolores gignit in capite, in stomacho, in tote corpore acerrimos, grievous diseases and dolours in the head, stomach, whole man. At the last "it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder," **Proverbs 23:32**. The drunkard saith, as the vine in Jotham's parable, *Non possum relinquere vinum meum*, Take away my liquor, you take away my life. But it proves to him in the issue like that wine mentioned by Moses, **Deuteronomy 32:33**: their wine is the poison of dragons, and cruel venom of asps, which makes the spirits warm, and the body sick to death.

With bottles of wine. Or, with heat through wine, as **Isaiah 5:11**, and so Jarchi expoundeth it. The same word signifieth the poison of a serpent, **Psalms 58:4**, which inflameth and killeth: confer **Proverbs 23:32**, and think of that cup of fire and brimstone, **Psalms 11:6**, to be one day turned down the wide gullets of intemperate drinkers; which will be much worse to them than was that ladle full of boiling lead, which the Turkish bashaw caused to be poured down the throat of a drunken wretch, without giving him any respite for the recovery of his lost wits.

He stretched out his hand with scorers. He, that is, the king, forgetting his kingly dignity, authority, and gravity (for there is a decorum, *τὸ πρέπον*, to be observed in every calling, but by great ones especially), stretched out his hand, as a companion and comrade, as a

hail-fellow-well-met (as they say), prostituting his regal authority to every scoundrel that would pledge him; or at least, giving them his hand to kiss, which Job saith God will not do, **Job 8:20**.

With scorers. Those worst of men, **Psalm 1:1**, those pests, ἀκόλαστοι λοιμοί, as the Septuagint here render it, those incorrigible persons, as they translate the word, **Proverbs 20:1**, where also it is fitly said, that wine is a mocker, because it maketh men mockers. Hence that of David, "with hypocritical mockers at feasts they gnashed upon me with their teeth," **Psalm 35:16**. And that holy jealousy of Job for his children, lest (while they were feasting and merry-making) they should curse God, or mock at men. *Tales enim evadunt qui strenue helluantur* (Tarnov.). It is ordinary with such as are full-gorged with good cheer, and throughly heated with wine, to set their mouths against heaven, and to license their tongues to walk through the earth, **Psalm 73:9**; they have a flout to fling, and a fool's bolt to shoot at their betters by many degrees; yea, though they be kings that do it (as here), they stretch out their hands with scorers, and jeer at the power and profession of godliness; they are no better than base fellows, as great Antiochus is called, **Daniel 11:21**, and as Kimchi upon this text noteth from his Father, that those that at the beginning of the feast or compotation were here called princes, are afterwards, when they fell to quaffing and flouting, called (in contempt) scoffers and scorers. Polanus and others, by stretching out the hand, understand, *ad aequales haustus potare, &c.*, a drinking share and share alike with every base companion, till drunk; they became despicable. *Nempe ubi, neque mens, neque pes suum facit officium*. The Greeks, when they meet at feasts or banquets, drink small draughts at first, which by degrees they increase, till they come to the height of intemperance. Hence Graecari, and as merry as a Greek. How much better those Spartans, of whom the poet,

*"Quinetiam Spartae mos est laudabilis ille,
Ut bibat arbitrio pocula quisque suo?"*

How much better the Persians in Esther's time, **Esther 1:8**, "the drinking was according to the law, none did compel," &c. And what a drunken beast was Domitius, the father of Nero, who slew Liberius, an honest Roman, because he refused to take up his cups, as he commanded him! (Sueton.). The Carthaginians made a law, that none of their magistrates during their office should drink any wine. Romulus being invited to a feast, would not drink much, quia postridie negotium haberet, because he had public business to despatch on the morrow. Ahasuerus, drinking more freely on the first day of the feast, became so frolic, that in his mirth he forgot what was convenient; and guided by his passions, sent for Vashti, **Esther 1:5, 10**.

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Verse 6. [[@Bible:Hosea 7:6]]{{field-on:Bible}}**For they have made ready their hearts like an oven.** As an oven red-hot is ready to bake whatsoever is cast into it, so are wicked men's hearts, heated from hell, prepared for any evil purpose or practice that the devil shall suggest (*ad male cogitandum, Pagnin., ad pessima facinora, Tigur.*); but especially to lie in wait for blood, and to hunt every man his brother with a net, **Micah 7:2**. David complains of some that lay in wait for his soul, **Psalm 59:8**, that Satanically hated him, **Psalm 38:20; 7:13; 109:4, 6, 20, 29**; that sought his soul to destroy it; not his life only, but his soul too; as that monster of Milan did, that made his adversary first forswear Christ in hope of life, and then, stabbing him to the heart, said, Now go thy ways soul and body to the devil; and as the Papists dealt by John Huss and Jerome of Prague, to whom they denied a confessor, which he required, after the manner of those times, to fit him for heaven; and for John Huss, after they had burnt him, how despitefully did they beat his heart (which was left untouched by the fire) with their staves! Besides that the bishops, when they put the triple crown of paper (painted with ugly devils on it) on his head, they said, Now we commit thy soul to the devil. Did not these men's hearts burn like an oven with hellish rage and cruelty?

Their baker sleepeth all the night. *Concoquens illa, scilicet corda*, so Vatabius. He that concocteth or worketh their hearts, that is, the devil, as some interpret it, or evil concupiscence, as others; *tota nocte protrahitur furor eorum*, so the Chaldee; their rage is deferred, or drawn out to the length all night long, till in the morning, *i.e.* at a convenient season, it break out and bestir itself. A metaphor from a baker, who casting fire into the oven with good store of lasting fuel, lets it burn all night and sleeps securely; as knowing that he shall find it thoroughly hot in the morning. Those scorers in the former verse, by being overly familiar with their drunken king, came not only to fight him for his base behaviours, but also to conspire against him, and to plot his death; wherein their heart is the oven, ambition the fire, treason the flame of that fire, Satan, that old manslayer, the baker; who, though he make as if he slept all night, yet by the morning he hath set his agents, the traitors, to work (either by secret treacheries or open seditions) to do as in the next verse, and as is to be seen, **2 Kings 15:10, 14, 25, 30.** {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 7. [[@Bible:Hosea 7:7]]{{field-on:Bible}} **They are all hot as an oven.** That none might post it off to others, all are accused of this mad desire to do mischief; as all the Sodomites, full and whole, young and old, came clattering about Lot's house, **Genesis 19:4.** (*Dedit haec contagio labem, Et dabit in plures.* Juven. Sat. 2.)

And have devoured their judges; all their kings are fallen, &c. *sc.* being slain with the sword of those that succeeded them in the throne, as may be read, **2 Kings 15:8, 9,** &c., and as it was in the Roman state, where all or most of the Caesars, till Constantine, died unnatural deaths. Neither was it much better here in England during the difference between the two houses of York and Lancaster; wherein were slain fourscore princes of royal blood, and twice as many natives of England as were lost in the two conquests of France. This is the fruit of sin: **Proverbs 28:2,** "For the transgression of a land many are the princes thereof"; either many at once (as once here in the heptarchy), or many ejecting and succeeding one another, to the great calamity and utter undoing of the people by their new lords, new laws.

There is none among them that calleth unto me. Though in so great a confusion, and under so heavy calamities: a strange stupor, that there should be none to set to his shoulder to shore up the falling state. None there were (to speak of) in a considerable number of praying people to stand in the gap, and to divert the Divine displeasure. Their sins cried loud for vengeance, their blood guiltiness especially. But had there been but a few voices more of praying saints, their prayers had haply out cried them. A few birds of Song are shriller than many crocitating birds of prey; stir up yourselves, therefore, ye that are God's remembrancers, to take hold of him, and give him no rest. Lie night and day at the gate of his grace, knocking thereat by the hand of faith, and praying for the peace of our Jerusalem. If England's fears were greater, thy prayers might preserve it, **Jeremiah 5:1;** as, if our hopes were greater, thy sin and security aright undo it, **Ecclesiastes 9:18.** {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 8. [[@Bible:Hosea 7:8]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Ephraim, he hath mixed himself among the people.** viz. in confederacies, marriages, manners, superstitions. They were conformed to those nations from whom God had separated them with a wonderful separation, **Exodus 33:16,** and put them up by themselves from all the world in the promised land, as it were in an island, **Isaiah 20:6.** And this they had done not once, but often, as the conjugation importeth; and that wilfully, without any necessity; yea and that constantly and of custom, or desperate obstinace (Heb. ללבתּ he will mingle himself). so that there was little difference to be discerned between Ephraim, the professed people of God: and profane heathens. Hence that, **Amos 9:7.** "Are ye not as children of the Ethiopians unto me, O children of Israel? saith the Lord." Hence Saul is called Cush, or an Ethiopian, for his black and ill conditions, Psal. vii., title, as the Chaldee interpreteth it. Cast we may be upon bad company, but we must not mingle with them. The rivers of Peru, after they have run into the main sea, yea, some write twenty or

thirty miles, they keep themselves unmixed with the salt water; so that a very great way within the sea men may take up as fresh water as if they were near the land. At Belgrad, in Hungary, where the Danube and Sava (two great rivers) meet, their waters mingle no more than water and oil (Abbat's Geog.); not that either float above other: but join unmixed: so that near the middle of the river I have gone in a boat (saith mine author, Sir Henry Blount), and tasted of the Danube as clear and pure as a well; then putting mine hand not an inch farther, I have taken of the Sava as troubled as a street-channel, tasting the gravel in my teeth. Thus they run 60; miles together, and for a day's journey I have been an eyewitness of it. To come nearer home, the river Dee, in Merionethshire, running through Pemblemere, remains entire, and minglenth not her streams with the water of the lake. Let not Ephraim mix himself among the people, but cry with David, "Gather not my soul with sinners," **Psalm 26:9**, and **Hosea 7:5**, "I have hated the congregation of evildoers, and will not sit with the wicked,"

Ephraim is a cake not turned. And so but half-baked, or dough-baked; *neque crudus, neque coctus*, neither hot nor cold, as Laodicea, **Revelation 3:15**, halting between two, as **1 Kings 18:21**. Mongrels, as those **2 Kings 17:33**; **Zephaniah 1:5**. Barnacles, that are neither fish nor flesh; Amphibians, that will conform to the world, and yet seem to be for the Lord. But he likes no such retainers, no such holy day servants; he requireth to be served truly, that there be no halting; and totally, that there be no halving; he cannot away with dough baked duties. Men must be "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord," they must be "zealous of good works," if they look to be accepted, **Romans 12:11**; **Titus 2:14**. The "effectual fervent prayer," or the thorough wrought prayer, "of a righteous man availeth much," **James 5:16**, *ἐνεργουμένη*. A cake that is half baked, half burnt pleaseth not the palate; no more do customary, formal, bedulling performances please the Lord. It is Gualther's note upon this text; As a cake, saith he, that is raw on the one side and scorched on the other is cast away; so hypocrites that are hot in their superstitions, but cold in their devotions, are rejected of God;

"Introrsum turpes, speciosi pelle decora."

I know the words are otherwise interpreted by Luther, Mercer, Polanus, and others, with reference to the following words, thus: that Ephraim's adversaries, even those strangers with whom he hath mixed himself, shall be so greedy to devour him, that they shall not stay till he be baked on both sides, but shall eat him raw. But I like the former better. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 9. [[@Bible:Hosea 7:9]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knoweth it not.** Strange stupidity, such as was that of Samson, who had lost his hair, and therewith his strength, and wist not at it. These strangers were the kings of Syria, but especially of Assyria. See **2 Kings 13:7**; **14:25-27**; **15:19, 20, 29, 30**; **17:6**. Salmanasar, as a deep gulf, swallowed them up whole. Now that they should not know how these strangers had devoured their strength, that is, their wealth and warlike power, this was very strange. The Chaldee paraphrast helps us to the meaning of it; *Non novit formidare a facie mea*. He knew it not, that is, he knew not how to fear before me, to tremble at my judgments, and to flee to my mercies; this he knew not, that is, he cared not to do, as the old world "knew not till the flood came," though fairly forewarned, **Matthew 24:39**, and as the Greeks would not know that the Turks had invaded their empire till they were got into the very bowels of it. So was it with Ephraim. A spirit of pride and of slumber had so surprised and seized him, that he took no knowledge of the enemies and evils that were upon him. Thus the spiritual sleeper stirs not, with Saul, though the waterpot and spear be taken from his bolster. Like the foolish hen, which loseth her chickens one by one by the devouring kite; when one, or two, or three, are snatched away, she still continues to pick up what lies before her. It is our wisest way to observe and improve God's dealings with us, to be sensible of his strokes, and to return to him that smote us, and can as soon heal us, if we come to him for cure, **Leviticus 26:40**.

Yea, gray hairs are here and there upon him. Heb. sprinkled, *sparci, non spissi*. He began but to decline and decay, as a man doth when he grows toward fifty. And as gray hairs come the sooner through cares and grief (histories tell us of a young man, who being for some capital offence condemned to die, grew gray in one night's space, and was therefore pitied and spared), and are forerunners and forewarners of death. So the many and grievous miseries inflicted upon this people foreshowed their utter destruction to be even at next door by. And this the rather, because they knew it not (as before), but (as it is said of the Flemings) that the older they grow the foolisher they are, *Quo magis senescunt eo magis stultescunt* (Erasm. Apoph.). Cleanthes was wont sometimes to chide himself; Ariston wondering thereat, asked him, whom chidest thou? Cleanthes laughed and answered, I chide an old fellow, *qui canos quidem habet, sed mentem non habet*, who hath gray hairs indeed, but lacks understanding and prudence worthy of them. It was Chrysippus (I think) that offered to the world that sore distribution and choice, *Aut mentem, nut restim comparandam*, Either get wit worthy of your years, or go out of the world by a halter. That of Eleazer is very remarkable, who would not do anything which might seem to be evil, because he would not spot his white head. Gray hairs should be a strong argument to move men to live blamelessly (because "old age is a crown, when found in the way of righteousness," as it is said of Abraham, that he went to his grave with a "good gray head," **Proverbs 16:31; Genesis 25:8**); and gray hairs in a state, that is, lesser and lighter judgments, should make men prepare to meet and prevent God; because, as in a house, *stillicidia praecedunt ruinam*, and as in a man gray hairs foreshow death, so do these desolation, if course be not timely taken. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 10. [[@Bible:Hosea 7:10]]{{field-on:Bible}} **And the pride of Israel testifieth to his face.** Sept. the ignominy, or impudence of Israel: *q.d.* They think to brave it out in a stout and stomachful way. Low they are, but not lowly; humbled, but not humble. God thrust him downward, as it were with a thump on the back; but he stood stouting it out with him; and so discovered a great deal of arrogance and folly. *Plectimur*, may such say, *nec tamen flectimur; Corripimur sed non corrigimur* (Salvian.). We have been stricken, but not sick; beaten, but not sensible, &c.; the drunkards' ditty, **Proverbs 23:35**. When for all this, for all that God can do to tame them, and turn them again, they will on in their wicked ways, and not "accept the punishment of their iniquities"; not confess and forsake their sins, that they have mercy; not seek him, that is, come unto him by faith, **Hebrews 11:6**, and subject themselves unto him by true obedience, **2 Chronicles 7:14**, this is such a piece of pride as testifieth to men's faces, that they deserve to be destroyed; this is wickedness with a witness; this is *fastus adeo enormis atque notorius*, saith Pareus, such horrible and notorious insolence, as is not to be endured. God complains of Israel for this with a sigh, Ah sinful nation, &c., and resolves upon revenge, **Hosea 7:12**. (See Trapp on "**Hosea 5:5**") of turning to God. See **Zechariah 1:3**, and of seeking God, see **Hosea 5:15**. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 11. [[@Bible:Hosea 7:11]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Ephraim also is like a silly dove.** That may be drawn any way for want of wit (so the word **התפ** signifieth), easily persuaded, enticed, deceived. The Septuagint render it **ἄνοος**, *insensata*, witless, or wanting a heart, as the next words explain it; the heart being put for the understanding, as **Jeremiah 5:21**, and often in the Proverbs, **Proverbs 6:32; 11:12; 10:13**. Lo, such a thing is Ephraim; and yet he holds himself wondrous wise, in calling to Egypt, and going to Assyria for help. Which was as wisely done as if sheep should commit themselves to the wolf for safeguard. The Egyptians were their ancient oppressors; the Assyrians should be shortly their executioners. Between these two, as between two millstones, they had been, and were to be ground to powder, as it were; and yet to these they were ready to run for refuge. This was indeed to be like a silly dove, which flies from the claws of the hawk into the net of the fowler, who will soon make a breakfast of them; or that waits till the fowler be gone, that she may fall upon the bait, never fearing the snare that is laid for her. See **2 Kings 17:4**. A serpent's eye in a dove's head is a singular ornament.

"Be ye wise as serpents, innocent as doves," **Matthew 10:16**. The serpent, when charmed, stoppeth his ears, by applying one to the earth, and covering the other with his tail. The dove is too credulous and persuasible, *dulce canente fistula*. She is also dull, and defends not her young ones, as other creatures do. She will sit quiet in her columbarry, and see her nest destroyed, her young ones taken away and killed before her eyes, and never offer to rescue or revenge; which the hen and other fowls seem in some sort to do. Lo, such was Ephraim's stupidity. The Philistines were upon him, the enemies spoiled and made a prey of him, yet he knew it not, as it is **Hosea 7:9**; he was not affected with it, nor driven to God by it; but either sat still, as the spoiled dove doth in her nest, or upon her dove cot, delighted in the beauty of her feathers, priding herself in the clapping of her wings; or else ran a wrong way for refuge; flew to king Jareb, to human helps, to carnal confederates, which never were true to those that trusted them. See **Hosea 5:13**. (See Trapp on "**Hosea 5:13**") where you shall see that from the Assyrian they had *pro praesidio ludibrium* as likewise those Christians had that called in the Turk or the like to help them. True it is that religion without policy is too simple to be safe; but it is no less true that policy without religion is too subtle to be good. As the dove without the serpent is easily caught; so the serpent without the dove stings deadly. Let that be held and remembered, that there is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord, **Proverbs 21:30**, and that he takes it very ill when we decline him, and knock at the creature's door for help, **Jeremiah 2:13**, shifting and sharking in every bycorner for comfort. This is the devil's policy, to draw men from God, the Rock of ages (as **Joshua** did the men of Ai out of their city, **Joshua 8:5**, and as Bristow counselleth his fellows, the pope's janissaries, to draw the Lutherans out of their stronghold of the Scriptures, into the open field of councils and fathers), that he may do what he will with them, and destroy them. For he knows, that be our hopes never so high, our helps from the creature never so likely, yet if God deny his concurrence and influence, the arm of flesh (as Jeroboam's) shrinks up presently; and the strongest sinew of it cracks, and becomes useless. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 12. [[@Bible:Hosea 7:12]]{{field-on:Bible}}**When they go.** Yea, flee (as the dove doth very swiftly, pleasing herself in the clapping of her wings and cutting of the air); they cannot flee so high but I shall easily reach them, **Obadiah 3, 4**, for in the thing wherein they deal proudly I am above them, **Exodus 18:11**. I can overtop them, melt their waxen wings, and bring them down with a vengeance. "He taketh the wise in their own craftiness." And again, "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise that they are vain," **1 Corinthians 3:19, 20**. So saith the apostle out of the Psalmist; but with this difference: the Psalmist saith, the "thoughts of men," **Psalms 94:11**; the apostle, the "thoughts of the wise," meaning the world's wizards, the choicest and most picked men, the greatest politicians, the most nimble and Mercurial wits: *quorum praecordia ex meliore luto finxit Titan*. These God will take, saith Paul; he will "lay hold upon them, as they are running away" (so the word signifieth), "as brute beasts made to be taken and destroyed," **2 Peter 2:12**; or as "fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in a snare; so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them," **Ecclesiastes 9:12**, *δρασσόμενος*, *Fugientes in cursu deprehendit manuque iniecta captat* (Eras. Annot.).

I will spread my net upon them. As a skilful fowler. By net understand captivity, and other miseries, compared to a net, **Ezekiel 12:13; 17:20; 19:8; Lamentations 1:13; Psalm 9:16**; wherein being once caught, the more they struggle the faster they stick; the more they seek to extricate themselves, the more they are entangled; snares are round about them, and sudden fear surpriseth them, **Job 22:10**; the steps of their strength shall be straitened, and their own counsels shall bring them down, **Job 18:7**.

I will bring them down as the fowls of the heaven. Though they may think themselves *extra iactum*, out of gunshot, I will cause them to descend, as the Hebrew word signifieth; and though lifted up to heaven, as Capernaum, and nested in the clouds; yea, among the stars, as

Edom, **Obadiah 4**, yet shall they be brought down to the nethermost hell. God will meet with them in their strays, casting his net over them; or bring them down with his bow, while (with the foolish bird) they are gazing at the bolt: he hath ways enough to hamper such as go out of his way; to be for a trap and for a snare unto them, **Isaiah 8:14**, to shoot at them with an arrow, suddenly shall they be wounded, **Psalms 64:7**. "How are they brought into desolation in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terror," **Psalms 73:19**.

I will chastise them as their congregation hath heard. Or, I will bind them (as a bird is bound in a net that she cannot stir forth), and, by binding, nurture them; as Gideon taught the men of Succoth, by tawing and tearing them with thorns and briars of the wilderness; **παιδεύσω αὐτοὺς**, Sept.; *ligabo eos*, Kimchi. **Judges 8:16**. "The hypocrites in heart heap up wrath: they cry not when God bindeth them," **Job 36:13**. God expects men should cry *peccavi*, I have sinned, when they are bound as Paul was, to be beaten with rods; and not be silent in darkness, **1 Samuel 2:9**, or, not make moan when he hath them under hand. "Hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it." Ye must now do so, that would not hear the word sounding in your congregations.

I will chastise them as their congregation hath heard. *Crebro et clare*, I have plainly and plentifully told them my mind, and foretold them by my prophets what would be the issue of their evil practices. *Sed surdo fabulam*, They would not hear Moses and the prophets. See **2 Kings 17:13**; **2 Chronicles 24:18, 19**. They thought that my words were but wind, and that all my threats were but *in terrorem*, to frighten them a little, and not in good earnest, **Jeremiah 5:13**. Therefore they shall find that "the just Lord is in the midst of them, he will not do iniquity: every morning doth he bring his judgment to light, he faileth not; but the unjust knoweth no shame," **Zephaniah 3:5**, feareth no colours, trembleth not at God's word, though it come never so close to his conscience, though it even dash him in the mouth as it were, and make him spit blood. See **Jeremiah 7:13**. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 13. [[@Bible:Hosea 7:13]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Woe unto them! for they have fled from me.** As Cain (the devil's patriarch) did when he went out from the presence of the Lord, in his father's family, into the land of Nod, **Genesis 4:16**, being himself a "have not," that is, a runaway, **Hosea 7:12**, of the same root that is here made use of in the text (Nadedu). Now as that land took name of Cain, and his woeful state therein, so is every land and place a Nod to apostates; and St Jude throws a woe after them, "Woe unto them, for they have gone in the way of Cain," **Jude 1:11**, that is, they have wickedly departed from God and his blessing, and gotten into the world's warm sun; yea, they not only go from God, but flee from him in hurried haste, as from an enemy; a metaphor from birds flying amain: **Proverbs 27:8**, "As a bird that wandereth from her nest" (where God took order for her security, **Deuteronomy 22:6, 7**), "so is a man that wandereth from his place" (how much more from his God, that infinite good!), exposed to misery and mischief, to ruth and ruin. Woe to such, yea, double woe: Woe and alas: destruction to such, and devastation, as the word signifieth, **רש**. Perdition and destruction, as the apostle phraseth it, **1 Timothy 6:9**, whereby is meant torments without end, and past imagination; remediless misery, mischief without measure. This truth must be told, however it be taken, that wicked men may not perish without warning. Toothless truths and silken words would better please people, who are most of them sick of a *Noli me tangere*, and cry out against these fierce preachers, that come with their Woe unto them, Destruction unto them, &c. This is the way, say they, to drive men into utter despair. We answer, first, if it should be so, yet that is not the proper effect of the word so dispensed; but to abate the pleasure that reprobates take in sin, and to restrain them from outrage; that they despair, it proceeds merely from their own corruption and guiltiness. They reply, that it comes rather from the severity of the teachers, who set themselves to preach damnation, and utter terrible things. Secondly, therefore, we answer, that the mad world (ever beside itself in point of salvation) is herein very much mistaken. Let them give us an instance of any one that was ever driven to despair

by the sincere preaching of the word: and yet for one bitter word given by us, the prophets gave ten. This whole Prophecy of Hosea is much more comminatory then consolatory. God himself comes here with Woe unto them, Destruction to them. Indeed by this pathetic exclamation he declareth his affection toward them whom he threateneth; and how little delight he takes either in their destruction or in such denunciation thereof; and so must God's ministers, &c.

Because they have transgressed against me. This is a new degree of their apostasy from God. Wicked men and deceivers grow worse and worse, and add rebellion to sin. As a stone will fall down to come to its centre, though it break itself in twenty pieces; so will apostates, till they come to their own place with Judas; they cease not till they become altogether filthy, *Psalm 53:3*, as the dog at his vomit, or the sow in her slough, *2 Peter 2:22*. It fareth with such as in that case, *Leviticus 13:18-20*; if a man had a boil healed, and it afterwards broke out, it proved the plague of leprosy.

Though I have redeemed them, yet they have spoken lies against me. All was done against God, whence the word "me" is so often inculcated in this and the next verse. God is, as it were, a sufferer in all the sins of the sons of men; and this is no small aggravation of the evil of sin, that it strikes at God's face, lifts at his throne, makes to his dishonour. "Thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, and wearied me with thine iniquities," *Isaiah 43:23*. And to show this to be so, it was, that the offender was confined to the city of refuge during the high priest's life, as being the chief god on earth. Good David was very sensible of this, and much humbled, when he said, "Against thee, thee only have I sinned," *Psalm 51:4*. The trespass was against Uriah, but the transgression against God, so gracious a God; and there lay the pinch of his grief; viz. the unkindness that was in his sin. Therefore also Moses, in his swan Song, sets on this humbling consideration, *Deuteronomy 32:6*, "Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise? is not he thy father?" and wilt thou kick against his naked bowels? hast nowhere else to hit him but there? Again, "Is not he thy Redeemer," that hath bought thee, and brought thee out of the iron furnace, where thou labouredst in the very fire, and wast wearied out with unsufferable servitude? More, "hath he not made thee," and dost thou rebel against thy Maker, thy Master? Or, "hath he not made thee," that is, exalted thee? in which sense he is said to have made Moses and Aaron, *1 Samuel 12:6*, that is, to have advanced them to that honour in his Church; and so we say, such a one is made for ever. Lastly, "hath he not established thee," that thou mightest abide in his grace, and remain unmoveable? and dost thou yet "evil requite him?" &c. To render good for evil is divine; good for good is human; evil for evil is brutish; but evil for good is devilish. See how grievously God taketh it here. "Though I have redeemed them," viz. out of the hands of their enemies in general (see an ample proof hereof, *Nehemiah 9:1:5*; and the whole Book of Judges throughout), and in special, as a late particular mercy to Ephraim; I have delivered and prospered them in their wars, under Jeroboam, the son of Joash, *2 Kings 14:27*, and therefore they should have given me their good word at least, and spoken good of my name; yet "they have spoken lies against me," ascribing the glory of their deliverances to their idols, or arrogating it to themselves, or fathering their false worship upon me as the author, or at least, abettor thereof, by my present prospering of them. See *Jeremiah 7:10*. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 14. [[@Bible:Hosea 7:14]]{{field-on:Bible}}**And they have not cried unto me with their heart.** Hitherto hath been said what they had done; now what they had not done. Omissions are sins as well as commissions. Not serving of God, not sacrificing, is condemned, *Malachi 3:18*; *Ecclesiastes 9:2*. Not robbing only, but the not relieving of the poor, was the rich man's ruin, *Luke 16:19*. Omission of diet breeds diseases, and makes work for hell, or for the physician of our souls. It is the character of a graceless man, that he calleth not upon God; and we have too many of that profane Earl of Westmoreland's mind, who said, that he needed not to pray at all, for he had tenants enough to pray for him. Some wicked pray (so as it is;

indeed they cant, or charm, rather than pray; **Isaiah 26:16**, they poured forth a charm, שחל when thy chastening was upon them), but they pray not with their heart. Their hearts are exercised with covetousness, **2 Peter 2:14**, and inhabited by the devil, **Acts 5:3**. Simon Magus' heart was not right with the Lord, **Acts 8:21**. How could it be, when it was "in the gall of bitterness, and bond of perdition," **Acts 8:23**, as every unregenerate heart is? Hence though God be near in their mouths, yet he is far from their reins, **Jeremiah 12:2**; and though they honour him a little with their lips, yet their heart is far from him, **Matthew 15:8**. A little artificial breath they can give God; and that is all. The breath that comes from life is warm (as that from the body), whereas artificial breath is cold, as that from bellows. The deeper and hollower the belly of the lute or viol the more pleasant is the sound; the fleeter, the more grating and harsh in our ears. The voice which is made in the mouth is nothing so sweet as that which comes from the depth of the breast. **Ephesians 6:6**, Do the will of God "from the heart": serve God "in the spirit," **Romans 1:9**. Lift up hands and hearts to God in the heavens, **Lamentations 3:41**. Lip labour is but lost labour, yea, it is sin, **Proverbs 15:8**. Displeasing service is double dishonour; as dissembled sanctity is double iniquity. These men cried *vociferabantur, voce stentorea sonum edebant*. They did set up their note, yea, they howled upon their beds, whereupon they had cast themselves, being sick, not of wantonness, as once Ahab was, but of want: which made them howl as dogs do when tied up from their meat and hunger bitten; but were no more regarded than a dog that howleth, or than the cuckoo in June. For what reason? They howled indeed to some tune (as they say), the Hebrew word hath a letter more than ordinary, to note as much (Jejelilu). (*Hebrew Text Note*) It was the heathen fashion to cry hideously to their gods; as also the Indians do to this day. So did these, because kept short, and held to strait allowance. It is said of the ravens of Arabia, that when they are hungry they screech horribly. And a parrot, when he is beaten, utters a hoarse and harsh voice. "The Song s of the temple shall be howlings in that day," **Amos 8:3**; their sacrifices as the cutting off a dog's neck, which is not done without much howling and yelling, **Isaiah 66:3**.

They assemble themselves. sc. to make public supplication in their idol temples; called beds before (as some conceive), because as corporal fornication is committed in beds, so is spiritual in those places of superstition. Here therefore they met; not *ad ruminandum* (as the Vulgate Latin), to feed as beasts, nor to cut and lance themselves as Baal's priests did (as the Septuagint, κατετέμνοντο), and the heathens in great afflictions, **Deuteronomy 14:1**. But to howl for wheat, for provender, for daily allowance of food, as now the Papists do in their *sacra Ambarvalia*; and as of old the Pagans did in extreme famine, or other public calamity: *Inops Senatus auxilii humani ad Deos populum et vota convertit: omnia delubra implent* (Liv. lib. 3). But as the grasshopper hops not much above the earth, and as vapours exhaled and drawn up by the sun do soon fall down again; so do drossy and earthy hearts in prayers, they seldom rise above grain and wine in their desires. *Si ventri bene, si lateri*, as Epicurus in Horace. If the belly may be filled, the back fitted, their own turns served, it is enough to them, whose belly is their god, and who mind earthly things only. Which when they have once got, then they rebel against me, they consume it upon their lust, **James 4:2**, and so fight against God with his own weapons, as Jehu did against Jehoram with his own men; they abuse their store to his dishonour; like grain fed cattle, they kick against their master; or as the young mule, that when she hath sucked her fill, kicks her dam; or as the wild ass, that snuffs up the wind, and cannot be taken. Or, secondly, they rebel after they have assembled themselves, and made a show of no small devotion; when once the duty is over they go to their old courses again, and undo all their prayers, as **Jeremiah 5:3**, as if, now they had prayed, they had purchased a license to live as they wish. Whereas duties should mightily engage us against sin, and deliverances command obedience. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 15. [[@Bible:Hosea 7:15]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Though I have bound and strengthened their arms.** *Quum ego erudivi*, so Pagnine, Polanus, and others; when I taught them, or

chastened them, as **Hosea 7:12**, "and strengthened their arms"; there is no *and* in the original; it is an asyndeton; to show that God had done both for them, together and at once: he had acted the part both of an instructor and of a surgeon (like as, **Revelation 3:18**, he takes upon him the person both of a rich merchant and a skilful physician); he had done all that could be done to do them good; teaching their hands to war and their fingers to fight, **Psalms 144:1**, binding up their broken arms, (see **Ezekiel 30:24**) and strengthening their feeble sinews, their hands that hung down, **Hebrews 12:12**. After I have scourged them I have re-established them; but what thanks for my labour? what Minerval or pay for my pains? The world's wages; such as Hercules paid the schoolmaster Linus, whom he knocked on the head, *Hoc ictu ceu didactro accepto Linus mortuus est* (Buchol.); or as Agricola's scholars in Germany killed their master with their penknives; or as physicians and surgeons are many times paid by their penurious patients, of whom the poet wittily,

*"Tres medicus facies habet, unam, quando rogatur;
Angelicam, mox est cum iuvat, ipse Deus.
Ast ubi curato poscit sun munera morbo,
Horridus apparet terribisque Satan."*

Yet do they imagine mischief against me. *All goes against God. (See Trapp on "Hosea 7:13")* Here they "imagine mischief" against him, as before they "spake lies against him," **Hosea 7:13**, and acted rebellion against him, **Hosea 7:14**. Thus they spake and did evil things as they could, **Jeremiah 3:5**; and the reason of all was, they imagined mischief, *cogitabant quasi coagitabant*, they were men of wicked devices, **Proverbs 12:2**, wholly made up of sinful projects and purposes; they plotted and ploughed mischief, and that against God himself (which is horrible); David thought much that his enemies should machinate mischief against him, though but dust and ashes; and threateneth them sore for so doing, **Psalms 62:3**, "How long will ye imagine mischief against a man? ye shall be slain all of you: as a bowing wall shall ye be, and as a tottering fence": he meaneth, ye shall be surely and suddenly ruined. What then will become of those Zamzummims that imagine mischief against the Lord? and such a Lord as hath bound and strengthened their arms, that had been broken by the enemies, and sought their good every way, *puniendo, muniendo, malis et bonis afficiendo*, &c. If they had slipped into some small offence against him, of infirmity and at unawares, it had been nothing so grievous; but to busy their brains, and bend their wits and studies *scientes, volentes, et deliberate consilio*, to plot and practise mischief, or (as the Septuagint render it) τὰ πονηρὰ, mischiefs against God, (for every transgression and disobedience is contrary to his most pure nature and sacred law, and shall therefore "receive a just recompense of reward," **Hebrews 2:2**), so gracious a God, this is detestable ingratitude. This is as if those in the Gospel should have railed against Christ for raising them from the dead; it is like the matchless mischievousness of that monster Michael Balbus, who that night that his prince pardoned and released him got out and slew him (Zonaras in Annul.). *Omne peccatum est deicidium*, for although wicked men cannot reach God, yet they reach at him; shooting up their darts against heaven (as the Thracians did once in a storm), and saying in effect as Caligula did to his Jupiter, ἢ μὲν ἀνάνειρ' ἢ ἐγὼ σε! either kill me or I will kill thee (Herodot. Homer). {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 16. [[@Bible:Hosea 7:16]]{{field-on:Bible}} **They return, but not to the most High.** *Gnal* for *Gnelion* by contraction; as *Jah* for *Jehovah*; so afterwards, **Hosea 11:7**; **2 Samuel 23:1**. Return they do, or seem to do at least (for it is their hypocrisy that is here described), but not to the most High: to whom then? to idols, or human helps, or anything rather, and sooner, than to God. Jehu went far in the work of reformation, and made a great flaunt at first, as if he would have done as much that way as ever Josiah did; but he and his people came not up to the height, turned not to the most High God, honoured him not as a just and jealous God, that can endure no corrivals. They gave the half turn, but "returned not with all their hearts," **Joel 2:12**; they turned from west to north, but not from west to east, to the full counterpoint,

setting their faces toward God, and having their backs towards their sins. They had haply a kind of velleity, some short winded wishes and wamblings, as I may so say, but it boiled not up to the full height of a resolution for God; they made believe they would cast away their transgressions, but it was as the mother makes her child believe that she will cast him to the puttock or into the water; when she holds him fast enough, and means him no hurt at all. These faint essays of returning are not worthy of the most High; he delighteth not to be dallied with, but requireth the best of the best; and that we serve him like himself, that is, after a godly sort, or worthy of God, ἀξίως τοῦ Θεοῦ, as St John phraseth it, **3 John 6**. Thus if we do, we shall be drawn up to him, and have cause to rejoice in our sublimity, ἐν τῷ ὕψει, or in that we are exalted, **James 1:9**. For indeed the most High stoopeth to the true convert (who considering his distance, repents and abhors himself in dust and ashes, **Job 42:6**), he dwelleth in the highest heavens and lowest hearts, **Isaiah 57:17**.

They are like a deceitful bow. A rotten bow (though otherwise fair) when an arrow is drawn to the head breaks and deceives the archer. Or thus, when a man shoots with a deceitful bow, though he level his eye and his arrow directly to the mark, and thinks with himself to hit it; yet indeed the arrow, by reason of his deceitful bow, goes the exact opposite way; yea, and sometimes comes upon the archer himself: likewise these false Israelites dealt with God. Their hearts were as the bow, their purposes and promises to return as arrows; the mark they aimed at, conversion; to the which they, in their afflictions, looked with so accurate and intent an eye, as though they would repent indeed; but their hearts deceived them as being unsound; hence they started aside like a deceitful bow, **Psalms 78:57**, and the arrows of their fair promises and pretences vanished in the air as smoke. Some take the words in another sense, as if punishment and disappointment were here threatened; but I best like the former. Let us look to the secret warpings of our hearts, and, seeing we are God's bow, **Zechariah 9:13**, let us not be deceitful.

Their princes shall fall by the sword for the rage of their tongue. And the people with them; for princes fall not alone, as we have seen in our late wars, wherein lords and losels fell together, not a few at Newbury fight especially. κοινὸς ἔνυάλιος, "the sword devoureth one as well as the other;" **2 Samuel 11:25**. God hangs up the heads of the people as it were in gibbets, **Numbers 25:4**, their greatness cannot bear them out, nor their lifeguards defend them, for the detestation of their tongue (so some read this text), for the hatred that God beareth to them for their blasphemies and great swelling words of vanity, uttered against him, his people, and his ordinances. "With our tongue, say they, we will prevail, our lips are our own; who is Lord over us?" Lo, this and worse is the rage of their tongue; as his that said he would not leave one Lutheran in his dominions; another, that he would ride his horse up to the saddle in the blood of the Lutherans; a third, that he would send them all to dine with the devil. God will cut off the spirit of such outrageous princes. "They shall fall by the sword, they shall be a portion for foxes," **Psalms 63:10**, and a derision to the Egyptians.

This shall be their derision in the land of Egypt. Their confederates in whom they trusted, and upon whose help bearing themselves overly bold, they had spoken loftily, setting their mouths against heaven, and their tongues walked through the earth, **Psalms 73:9**; lo, these should not only fail them, but jeer them; not only not succour them, but scorn them; as the monarch of Morocco did our King John, that sent to him for help in the Barons' wars. He grew into such dislike of our king (saith the story) that ever after he abhorred the mention of him. Neither met he with better entertainment from the pope, to whom he basely submitted and surrendered his kingdom. It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes; for, *Deo confisi nunquam confusi*, they that trust in the Lord shall never be ashamed.

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Chapter 8

Verse 1. [[@Bible:Hosea 8:1]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Set the trumpet to thy mouth.** Heb. The trumpet to thy palate. A hasty expression, an abrupt and imperfect speech, common with such as are moved with passions, of anger, grief, or fear, as **Hosea 5:8**, "after thee, O Benjamin." God, though not subject to such perturbations, **James 1:17**, yet here and elsewhere utters himself in this sort; to set forth the nearness of the people's danger by the enemies' approach; and the necessity of their return to him by true repentance, for the diversion of his displeasure. "Break off thy sins by righteousness," saith the prophet to Nebuchadnezzar; be abrupt in the work, cut the cart ropes of vanity, if "it may be a lengthening of the tranquillity," **Daniel 4:27**. Take the bark from the tree, and the sap can never find the way to the boughs; get sin remitted, and punishment shall be removed. In this sermon of the prophet (which is much sharper than the former, and may seem to be one of the last, because God is so absolute in threatening, as if he meant to be resolute in punishing) there is (as one saith) *peccatorum et poenarum συναθροισμός*, a heaping together of sins and of punishments of many sorts; and the prophet commanded to give sudden warning of the enemy at hand, which is elegantly set forth by a military hypotyposis, or lively representation; as if it were now doing. "The trumpet to thy mouth," that is, set up thy note, and proclaim with a loud and clear voice, as **Isaiah 58:1**, cry in the throat (so the Chaldee hath it here), spare not, that none may say he was not warned; "lift up thy voice like a trumpet," that all may hear and fear, **Amos 3:6**, as people use to do when an alarm is sounded, or the bells are rung backward. See **Hosea 5:8**. There they had been before alarmed, here reminded in brief; for the prophet is, as it were, *monosyllabus*, as one in haste; he uttereth *amputatas sententias et verba ante expectatum cadentia*, as Seneca somewhere hath it, broken sentences, concise but pithy periods.

He shall come as an eagle against the house of the Lord. He, that is, the Assyrian; not Nebuchadnezzar, though the like is said of him, **Ezekiel 17:3, 7**; much less the Romans (as Lyra interpreteth this text of the last destruction of Jerusalem, because the eagle was their ensign); but Pul, Tiglathpileser, and Shalmaneser, who came against the ten tribes as an eagle, to waste, spoil, and carry captive speedily, impetuously, irresistibly; as **2 Kings 15:19, 29; 17:3; 18:19; Lamentations 4:19**. The eagle is the strongest and swiftest of birds, and feareth no obstacle, either from other fowl, or wind, or thunderbolt, as Pliny affirmeth (Plin. lib. x. 3). Nebuchadnezzar is not only compared to an eagle (as before is noted), but to a lion with eagle's wings, **Daniel 7:4**, that is, with invincible armies, that march with incredible swiftness. And all this was long since forethreatened, **Deuteronomy 28:49**, "The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth"; to which text the prophet here seemeth to allude; as indeed all the prophets do but comment upon Moses, and draw out that arras, which was folded together by him before.

Against the house of the Lord. That is, the house of Israel, called God's house, **Numbers 12:7; Hebrews 3:5**, and God's land, **Hosea 9:3, 15**, and their commonwealth is by Josephus called a theocracy. And although they were now become apostates, yet they gloried no less than before to be of the stock of Abraham, and of the family of faith; like as the Turks call themselves at this day Mussulmans, that is, the true and right believers; especially after they are circumcised, which is not done till they be past ten years of age; following the example of Ishmael, whom they imitate and honour as their progenitor; alleging that Abraham loved him, and not Isaac, and that it was Ishmael whom Abraham would have sacrificed.

Because they have transgressed my covenant, and trespassed. Sin is the mother of misery; and the great makebate between God and his creature. It moves him when we ask bread and fish to feed us, (as **Hosea 8:2**) to answer us with a stone to bruise us, or a serpent to bite us. The sin of this people was the more heinous, because they were covenanters, and confederate

with God. It was his covenant that was in their flesh, **Genesis 17:13**, and he had betrothed them to himself, and trusted them with his oracles, "but they like men transgressed the covenant, and dealt treacherously against him," **Hosea 6:7**, (*See Trapp on "Hosea 6:7"*) they performed not the "stipulation of a good conscience toward God," **1 Peter 3:21**.

They trespassed against his law. As if it had not been holy, and just, and good, precious, perfect, and profitable; grounded upon so much good reason, that if God had not commanded it, yet it had been best for us to have practised it. **Isaiah 48:17**, "I am the Lord that teacheth thee to profit, &c. O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments!" &c. *q.d.* It is for thy profit, and not for mine own, that I have given thee a law to live by. But they have trespassed, or prevaricated; and this out of pride and malice, as the word signifieth; and as before he had oft convinced them of many particulars, and more will do, therefore are they justly punished.

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Verse 2. [[@Bible:Hosea 8:2]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Israel shall cry unto me.** It is their course and custom to do so; they will needs do it, though I take no delight in it. Hypocrisy is impudent, as **Hosea 5:6; Jeremiah 3:4, 5**. No, nay, but it will despise God with seeming honour; and present him with a ludicrous devotion. Israel, though revolted and degenerated into Jezreel, **Hosea 1:4**, shall cry, yea, cry aloud, *vociferabuntur*, cry till they are hoarse, as criers do; and unto me, but not with their heart, **Hosea 7:14**. It is but clamor *sine fide fatuus*, an empty ring, that God regards not. For, "not every one that saith unto him, Lord, Lord," &c., **Matthew 7:21**. Many lean upon the Lord and say, "Is not the Lord among us? none evil can come unto us," **Micah 3:11**, who yet shall hear, *Discedite, Avaunt*, ye workers of iniquity; I know you not. Woe then to all profligate professors, carnal gospellers; their prayers shall not profit them, neither shall they be a button the better for their loud cries to the most High, **Proverbs 1:28**, and odious fawnings.

My God, we know thee. When their hearts are far from him. Of such pretenders to him and his truth it is that the apostle speaketh, **Titus 1:16**, "They profess that they know God" (which yet God denies, **Hosea 4:1; 5:4**), "but in works they deny him; being abominable, and disobedient, and to every good work reprobate." To come and call God Father, the guide of our youth, and then to fall to sin, this is to do as evil as we can; we cannot easily do worse, **Jeremiah 3:4, 5**. To cry, "The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord," and then to "steal, murder, and commit adultery," &c., this is painted hypocrisy, **Jeremiah 7:4, 9**. When men shall take sanctuary, and think to save themselves from danger by a form of godliness (as the Jews fable that Og, king of Bashan, escaped in the flood by riding astride upon the Ark) when they are perfect strangers to the power of it, this is to hasten and heap up wrath, **Job 36:13**. Religion, as it is the best armour, so the worst cloak; and will serve hypocrites as the disguise Ahab put on, and perished. Castalio maketh this last clause to be the speech of the blessed Trinity, We know thee, O Israel: *q.d.* Though thou colloque and cry, My God; yet we know thine hypocrisy and the naughtiness of thy heart. But the former sense is better, though the placing of the word Israel in the end of the verse seem to favour this; for thus it runs in the Hebrew, "To me they shall cry, My God, we know thee, Israel." {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 3. [[@Bible:Hosea 8:3]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Israel hath cast off the thing that is good.** Heb. the good: as, first, the good God, who is good, original, universal, all-sufficient, and satisfactory, proportionable and fitting to our soul. He both is good and doeth good, **Psalms 119:68**, and that both naturally, abundantly, freely, and constantly. "Good thou art, O Lord, and ready to forgive," saith David, **Psalms 86:5**. And, the good Lord be merciful, saith Hezekiah in his prayer for the people, **2 Chronicles 30:9, 18**. To speak properly, there is none good but God, saith our Saviour, **Matthew 19:17**, but Israel cast him, or rather kicked him, off (*procul a se reiecit*), as the word signifieth. So do all gross hypocrites; they are rank atheists, practical atheists, though professional Christians. Secondly, they reject Christ as a sovereign, though

they could be content to have him as a Saviour; they send messages after him, saying, We will not have this man to rule ever us; they will not submit to the laws of his kingdom, nor receive him in all his offices and efficacies; they are Christless creatures, as without God, so without Christ in the world. Thirdly, hypocrites reject the good Spirit of God (as David calleth him, **Psalm 143:10**), the fruit whereof is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth, **Ephesians 5:9**. When God striveth with them by his good Spirit, (as **Nehemiah 9:20**) they, by yielding to Satan's suggestions, grieve that Holy Spirit, and by grieving resist him, and by resisting quench him, and by quenching maliciously oppose him, and offer despite unto him; and so cast themselves into the punishing hands of the living God, **Hebrews 10:29, 31**. Lastly, they cast off the good word and true worship of God; those "right judgments, true laws, good statutes and commandments," **Nehemiah 9:13**; they put the promises from them, and judge themselves unworthy of everlasting life, **Acts 13:46**; they hate instruction, and cast God's words behind them, **Psalm 50:17**. In a word, "he hath left off to be wise, and to do good: he setteth himself in a way that is not good; he abhorreth not evil," **Psalm 36:3, 4**. The words may be read thus, The good (God) hath rejected Israel; the enemy, shall pursue him according to that in the Psalm, "God hath forsaken him: persecute and take him; for there is none to deliver him," **Psalm 71:11**. Sure it is that the Lord is with us while we are with him; and if we seek him he will be found of us. But if we forsake him he will forsake us. And if he forsake us woe be to us, **Hosea 9:12**, we are in danger to be caught up by every paltry enemy, as young lapwings are to be snatched up by every buzzard. If Israel cast away the thing that is good, **2 Chronicles 15:2**, what marvel if evil hunt him to overthrow him, **Psalm 140:11**, and if he find himself in all evil in the midst of the congregation and the assembly, **Proverbs 5:14**. Hence Cain's fear, when cast out by God; and Saul's complaint, that the Philistines were upon him, and God had forsaken him. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 4. [[@Bible:Hosea 8:4]]{{field-on:Bible}} **They have set up kings, but not by me,** &c. The Septuagint and Vulgate Latin render it, "They have reigned themselves"; like as St Paul telleth the haughty Corinthians, who, carried aloft by their waxen wings, domineered and despised others, "ye have reigned as kings without us," &c., **1 Corinthians 4:8**. But our reading is according to the original; and so they are charged with a double defection; the one civil, from the house of David, "they have set up kings," &c.; the other ecclesiastical, from the sincere service of God, "they had made them idols." For the first, it was not their fault to set up kings; but to do it without God, without his license and approbation. They took counsel, but not of God; they covered with a covering, but not of his spirit, that they might add sin to sin, **Isaiah 30:1**. They went headlong to work, in setting up Jeroboam, the son of Nebat. For although the things were done by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, as was likewise Christ's crucifixion, **Acts 2:23**, (see **1 Kings 11:31; 12:15, 24**) yet because the people were led by their own pride and ambition to choose a new king, without either asking God's consent or eyeing his decree, they did it rashly and seditiously; neither aimed they at anything else, but at the easing of their burdens, and drawing to themselves the wealth of the kingdom. As for Jeroboam, it is before noted, that although he had it cleared to him, that God's will was he should be king over the ten tribes, yet because it was a will of God's decree, not of his command, as of a duty to be done by him; and because he did not as David, who when he had the promise of the kingdom (yea, was anointed king) yet invaded not the kingdom, but waited till he was lawfully exalted thereunto by God; therefore passeth he for a usurper. And the people are here worthily reprehended, since whatsoever is not of faith is sin; and it is obedience when men obey a divine precept; but not ever when they follow a divine instinct.

They have made princes, &c. Some render it, They have removed princes (as if in the word *Hasiru Sin* were put for *Samech*, R. Sal. Jerki.), they have taken liberty to make and unmake princes at their pleasure; as the Roman army did emperors; and as that potent Earl of Warwick, in Henry VI's time, who is said to have carried a king in his pocket. But because the

former reading is confirmed by the Chaldee paraphrase, and the sense is agreeable to what went before, neither read we of any kings of Israel deposed by the people, we retain it as the better.

Of their silver and their gold have they made them idols. Of the guts and garbage of the earth had they made them *terricula*, fray-bugs (or spectres), or molestations (*Gnatsabim*): *terrorem enim et tristiciam duntaxat afferunt suis cultoribus*, for they cause terror and heaviness only to those that worship them (Polan.). "Their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another god," **Psalm 16:4**. The Greek Churches, for instance, so set upon image worship, and therefore now subjected to the Turkish tyranny; a type whereof were these ten tribes carried captive by the Assyrian, without any return. Idols are called griefs, or sorrows, saith Peter Martyr, because they torment the mind and trouble the conscience; neither can they quiet or pacify it; so that idolaters must needs be always in doubt and despair, as Papists are, whose whole religion is a doctrine of desperation. Their penances and pilgrimages to such or such an idol might still their consciences for a while; but this was a truce rather than a peace; a palliate cure, which would not hold long; a corrupting of the sergeant, but not compounding with the creditor.

That they may be cut off. Not their silver and gold, the matter of their idols, as some sense it; but the whole nation, princes and people together. Idolatry is a God-provoking and a land-desolating sin, as in this prophecy. Often it is not so much the enemies' sword as the sin of idolatry that destroyeth cities and kingdoms, through the justice and jealousy of Almighty God. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 5. [[@Bible:Hosea 8:5]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Thy calf, O Samaria, hath cast thee off.** That is, it can do thee no stead, nor deliver thee from the destroyer. "Be not afraid of such idols" (saith Jeremiah), "for they cannot do evil, neither also is it in them to do good," **Jeremiah 10:5**, they can neither hurt nor help; for an idol is nothing in the world, **1 Corinthians 8:4**, nothing but a mere fiction; it hath no godhead or power divine in itself, as the following words show, "that there is none other God but one." How then can help be reasonably expected from it? Israel had cast off the thing that is good for calf worship, **Hosea 8:3**, therefore is he worthily cast off by his calf, called here Samaria's calf, or calves, because that was the chief city, the palace of the king, and is therefore put for the whole province; and their idols called a calf, by way of contempt, as the brazen serpent is called Nehushtan, or a piece of brass, when once it was idolized. See how Rabshakeh insults over those heathen deities, **2 Kings 18:33-35**, and blasphemously applieth it to the God of Israel, who never casteth off his faithful servants; but is with them in trouble, to deliver them, and honour them, **Psalm 91:15**. Surely "the Lord will not cast off his faithful people, neither will he forsake his inheritance," **Psalm 94:14**. "Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man," **Job 8:20**. "But though he cause grief, yet he will have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies," **Lamentations 3:32**. Some read it thus, "Thy calf, O Samaria, hath been carried away into a far country," namely, into Assyria; as the idols of the nations which were overcome were carried away captive in triumph by the conquerors. See **Hosea 10:6**.

Mine anger is kindled against them. God is said to be angry against idolaters, because he doth that which an angry man useth to do, viz. 1. chide, 2. fight: see the second commandment in the sanction of it, and tremble at God's displeasure, which when once kindled, and comes into his face, or nostrils (as here), it burneth to the lowest hell, consumeth the earth with her increase, and sets on fire the foundations of the mountains, **Deuteronomy 32:22**. It is ill angering him that is the Ancient of days, and a consuming fire. The Jews use to say to this day, that there is no punishment befalleth them in which there is not an ounce of Aaron's golden calf.

How long will it be ere they attain to innocency? *Quousque non poterunt innocentiam?* a forcible ellipsis; as if God were so vexed, that he could not fully utter himself, nor at all speak to Samaria as he had begun, but turns his discourse to others, saying, How long will they not be cleansed? or, not abide innocence? By which powerful expression three things are intimated. First, that these Israelites were refractory and desperate; not only unclean, but enemies to innocence, such as could not abide it: they were inveterate and incurable, their diseases ingrained, and not easily stirred by any potion. Secondly, that God is most patient, who though he thinks over a long period of time that men continue in their evil courses, and therefore cries, *Quousque*, How long? &c., and, when will it once be? yet bears with their evil manners, and inviteth them to better. Thirdly, that he will at length break off his patience, and proceed to punishment, since there is no other remedy, **2 Chronicles 34:16; Proverbs 29:1.**

"Compenset longas ut gravitate moras." {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 6. [[@Bible:Hosea 8:6]]{{field-on:Bible}} **For from Israel was it also.** There is an emphasis in "also," and it is as if the prophet should say, This calf of Samaria is no less from Israel, and came out of his shop or device, than that of old set up by them in the wilderness. Israel then brought a calf out of Egypt, Jeroboam brought two; and Israel hath received them, and are much taken with them; so that they cannot attain to innocence (as it is in the former verse), so far they are engaged and so fast joined to idols, that they cannot get off; there is so much of self in it; it was the bairn of their own brain; and hence so overly admired, so clasped and hugged, with the ape, &c.; or rather, as Cleopatra hugged her vipers that sucked her blood, and took away her life, so did they their own inventions, though fairly warned of the danger, **Hosea 8:3-5.** Lo, this was Israel that acted thus madly. Israel that was wont to laugh at or pity other nations for their idolomany, for worshipping the works of their own hands, for going a whoring after their own inventions, for changing the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things, **Romans 1:23;** as in Lapland, the people worship that all day for a god whatsoever they see first in the morning, Now that a calf worship should be found in Israel, and not only so, but found out by Israel; who was herein worse than Egypt; for that the Egyptians worshipped a living ox of God's making; but Israel, a dead calf of their own making; such sots they were grown, and so thwart to the very principles of reason.

The workman made it. Who confessedly is no God:

therefore it is not God. for no man can give that divinity to another which himself hath not. Nay, it is certain that God himself by his infinite power cannot make anything to be a God to us. He cannot do this, I say; like as he cannot lie, he cannot die, he cannot deny himself, &c., so he cannot raise a created excellence to that height as to be a God to us. How vile, then, is the voluptuary, that maketh his belly his god! the mammonist, that maketh his gold his god! the ambitionist, that maketh his honour his god! How abominable the mass monger, that maketh his god and eateth him when he hath done! This made Averroes, the Mahometan, cry out; *Quoniam Christiani Deum suum mauducant, sit anima mea cum Philosophis*, that is, Forasmuch as Christians do eat their God, let my soul be rather with the souls of the philosophers. Those Pseudo Christians, the Papists, stick not to call the consecrated host their God and Lord; and Harding (that sottish apostate, for he was once a zealous preacher against Popery, and wished that he had a voice as loud as the bells of Oseney, to cry it down, Artic. 21), in his disputation against Jewel, is not ashamed to defend it. And yet we all know that that host or sacrament, as they call it, of the altar is the work of the baker, therefore it is no God, neither Lord nor God (whatsoever our Lord God the pope say to the contrary). Which yet further appeareth, in that (as the calf of Samaria here) it may be broken in pieces, or to shivers (which word of ours seemeth to come from the Hebrew *shebharim* here used), yea, ground to powder, as was the molten calf in the wilderness, whereto the prophet may well here allude. Is not their broaden

god broken by the priest into three bits? Is it not chewed with his teeth? May it not be gnawed by mice, become meat for worms, &c.? *Murescit, putrescit, et corrumpitur*; all which things the Papists themselves confess may befall their god, which is therefore no god, or *nomine tantum et non numine deus*, a nominal god only (*in cautelis Missae*) in the sureties of the Mass. And the like we may say of images and relics (such as is at Genoa, the tail of that ass whereon Christ rode into Jerusalem); these and other monuments of idolatry may, nay, they ought to be broken, burnt, and utterly abolished, **Exodus 34:13; Deuteronomy 7:5; Ezekiel 20:7**; as (blessed be God) they are lately among us, by our worthies in parliament; to whom, perhaps, for that and the like good services, we attributed but too much, we even idolized them; and the king of Sweden (that bright northern star) a little before his decease, being in discourse with Dr Fabricius, his chaplain, he told him that he thought God would ere long take him away, because the people did so overvalue and deify him (Mr Clark in his Life). {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 7. [[@Bible:Hosea 8:7]]{{field-on:Bible}} **For they have sown the wind, and shall reap the whirlwind.** To sow the wind is to labour in vain, as **Ecclesiastes 5:16**, to labour for the wind, and **Proverbs 11:29**, to possess the wind, to feed on the wind, **Hosea 12:1**, and to be eaten up of the wind, **Jeremiah 22:22**. The Greeks express the same by hunting after and husbanding the wind, ἀνέμους γεωργεῖν. The wind, we know, maketh a mighty bustle, as if it were some great business, solid and stable; but presently it blows over, and comes to nothing. Or if it get, as seed, into the bosom of the earth, either it breeds an earthquake, or at least ariseth in a whirlwind, which blows dust into the eyes, and once at least buried a considerable army in the Libyan sands. Solomon saith, "He that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity," **Proverbs 22:8**. But our prophet here saith more. He that soweth the wind of iniquity shall reap the terrible tempest of inconceivable misery. By the "blast of God he shall perish, and by the breath of his nostrils he shall be consumed," **Job 4:8, 9**. As the beginnings of idolatry, hypocrisy, vain glory, carnal policy, &c., are empty and unhappy (it is but the sowing of blasted grain, as the Septuagint here hath it, seed corrupted by the wind, ἀνεμόφθορα), so the end thereof is very sad and dismal. The word here rendered the whirlwind hath a syllable in it more than ordinary (Suphathah), to note (saith Tremellius) the fearfulness of the divine vengeance that will befall the forementioned; and especially at death, when they are entering upon eternity. Oh what a dreadful shriek gives the guilty soul at death, to see itself launching into an infinite ocean of scalding lead, and must swim naked in it for ever; not having the least cold blast of that wind it sowed all its life long to cool it; but rather to add to its torment! Then will God speak to such, as once he did to Job out of a whirlwind, but after another manner; Go to now, ye formalists, false worshippers, triflers, troublers of Israel; ye that have been mere mutes and ciphers, nullities in the world, superfluities in the earth, or worse than all this; go to now, I say, weep and howl for the miseries that are come upon you. "Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter," **James 5:5**. But now an end is come, is come; an evil, an only evil, without mixture of mercy, sorrow without succour (help), mischief without measure, torments without hope of ever either mending or ending, are the portion of your cup; the dregs of that cup of mine must you now drink off, that hath eternity to the bottom. Oh lamentable! Oh did but men forethink what would be the end of sin, they dare not but be innocent. Oh let that terrible tempest at death be timely thought on and prevented: **Job 27:20, 21**, &c., "Terrors take hold of him as waters, a tempest stealeth him away in the night. The east wind carrieth him away, and he departeth: and as a storm hurleth him out of his place. For God shall cast upon him, and not spare: he would fain flee out of his hand," &c.

It hath no stalk: the bud shall yield no meal. *Nihil habet fertilitatis firmitatisque*, as Ruffinus expoundeth it. It hath no firmness or fruitfulness; the wind of wickedness that thou hast sown, the blasted grain that thou hast committed to the earth, will yield thee nothing but loss and disappointment. A blade there may be, but not a stalk; or if a stalk, yet not a bud; or if a bud,

yet it shall be nipped in the bud, it shall yield no meal, but only dust and chaff; or if it come to the meal, yet strangers shall swallow it up, so that you shall be never the better for it; but after that ye have sown the wind of iniquity, ye shall reap the whirlwind of misery, *maledictionem omnimodam*, curses of all kinds, which God hath hanged at the heels of your idolatry, a pernicious evil (whatever those superstitious she-sinners bragged to the contrary, **Jeremiah 44:17**). Or if they flourish for a season, and have hopes of a large crop; yet God will curse their blessings, and frustrate their fair hopes, **Psalms 37:2**, as he dealt by that rich wretch mentioned by Mr Burroughes in his comment on the second Chapter of this prophecy. I had certain information, said he, from a reverend minister, that in his own town there was a worldling who had a large crop of grain. A good honest neighbour of his walking by his grain said, Neighbour, you have a very fine crop of grain, if God bless it. Yes, said he, I will have a good grain, speaking contemptuously. And before he could come to get it into the barn, it was blasted, that the grain of the whole crop was not worth sixpence. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 8. [[@Bible:Hosea 8:8]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Israel is swallowed up.** Not their meal only, as **Hosea 8:7**, but themselves also are devoured by those workers of iniquity, that eat up God's people as they eat bread, **Psalms 14:4**. Persecutors are men-eaters, more cruel than those American cannibals, that devour men piecemeal; they make but a breakfast of God's people, as Sennacherib meant to do of Jerusalem, and the powder-papists of England. "If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us; then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us. But blessed be God, who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth," **Psalms 124:2, 3, 6**. Let us keep us out of the claws and clutches of that old manslayer, who night and day walketh about (in a circular motion) that he may take us at advantage, seeking whom he may swallow down his wide gullet, **1 Peter 5:8**, κατατῖν, which he hath even made red with the blood of souls; and is therefore happily called the great red dragon, **Revelation 12:3**, that hath seven heads to plot, and ten horns to push men into the sin of idolatry, and thereby into hell. So long as Israel was holiness to the Lord, and the firstfruits of his increase, all that devoured him found that they offended; for evil came upon them, **Jeremiah 2:3**, they could no more digest him than the whale did Jonah; a cup of trembling or of poison he was to all the people round about, **Zechariah 12:2**: see the note there. But "when he offended in Baal he died"; when he "chose new gods, then was war in the gates," **Judges 5:8**; when they made leagues with idolaters, then were they even swallowed up by them; as were likewise the Greek and Latin Churches by the Eastern and Western Antichrist, those crooked Leviathans, those dragons in the sea, as the Egyptian and Assyrian are called, **Isaiah 27:1**.

Now shall they be among the Gentiles. Whose favour and friendship they have basely sought, and dearly bought. It was threatened in the former chapter, **Hosea 7:16**, that "they should be a derision in the land of Egypt." (*See Trapp on "Hosea 7:16"*) To have Egyptians deride us, and that for sin, is a heavy judgment. So here, to be disdained and vilified by such, as an old broken vessel, fit for none but unclean uses.

As a vessel wherein is no pleasure. No delight or complacency; *vas despectum, reieculum, abiectum*, a vessel that is for the carrying up and down of excrements: so shall Israel be employed by Gentiles in base and contemptible offices, as they were by the Babylonians, **Jeremiah 51:34**; yea, Jehoiakim himself (though a king) was no better used, **Jeremiah 22:18**, and Moab, that haughty nation, **Jeremiah 48:38**. In which sense, "Moab shall be my washpot," saith David, **Psalms 60:8**, that is, brought into most abject slavery, as your scullions or scavengers; they shall "lie among the pots," **Psalms 68:13**, not only to make pots for the king of Babylon's use (as those servile souls, the base brood of their degenerated forefathers, **1 Chronicles 4:23**), but also to hold pots, or empty pots and vessels of dishonour, *matulam praeberere*, that they might know a difference between God's service (which is all clean and fair work, fit for a vessel of honour, an elect vessel, elect and precious, sanctified and fit for the

master's use, **2 Timothy 2:21**) and the service of their enemies, base and beastly; such as is beneath the excellence of an ingenuous man, such as the Turks at this day put the Jews to, and the Spaniards the poor Indians. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 9. [[@Bible:Hosea 8:9]]{{field-on:Bible}} **For they are gone up to Assyria, a wild ass alone by himself.** This was that that most moved the Lord to denounce and determine hard and heavy things against Israel, they had suspicious thoughts of God, as if he either could not or would not do for them, and help them out, as the Assyrian (though an enemy) would. This prank of theirs God uttereth here with as great indignation and dislike as old Jacob did his son Reuben's incest, when he said, "He went up to my couch." The Lord is as jealous of his glory as any man can be of his wife; neither will he give it to another, **Isaiah 42:8**; he admits not of any co-rival in heaven or earth, as Potiphar's wife was his own peculiar. Now God is no way more glorified by us than when we put our trust in his love and faithfulness, and expect from him safety here, and salvation hereafter. For in so doing, we set him up for our king, **Judges 9:15**, and put the royal crown upon his head, **Solomon's Song 3:11**. As in doing otherwise we turn his glory into shame, "loving vanity, seeking after leasing," **Psalms 4:2**. Hence that angry expostulation, **Jeremiah 2:36**, "Why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way?" How dost thou think to mend thyself by running to the creature, as if there were no God in Israel? "thou also shall be ashamed of Egypt, as thou wast ashamed of Assyria: yea, thou shalt go forth from him, and thine hands upon thine head" (after the manner of mourners, **2 Samuel 13:19**), "for the Lord hath rejected thy confidences, and thou shalt not prosper in them."

A wild ass alone by himself. Foolish and fierce above measure, untameable and untractable; loving to be alone, and so becomes a prey to the lion, as saith Siracides, chap. 13. ver. 21. Pliny speaketh much of the wild ass and his properties; and interpreters on this text bring many reasons why Israel is compared to him. Israel is as stupid and as mad as the wild ass, saith Lyra. He is all for himself, saith Junius; he casteth off God's yoke, saith Tremellius; he is a contemptible creature, saith Kimchi; he walks where he lists, as masterless, saith the Chaldee; he seeketh water in the wilderness, but hardly findeth it, so doth Israel help of the cruel enemies, and hath it not, saith Oecolampadius; he taketh a great deal of pains for his belly, saith Mercer; he cannot be tamed and made serviceable, saith Gesner; he is left alone by God to be carried captive by the Assyrian, saith Ribera. The Scripture describeth the nature of this creature in many places, **Genesis 16:12; Job 6:5; 11:12; 24:5; 39:5, 8; Psalm 104:11; Isaiah 32:14; Jeremiah 2:24; 14:6; Daniel 5:21**.

Ephraim hath hired lovers. This is the second similitude, taken from a most libidinous harlot. See the like baseness in Judah, **Ezekiel 16:33**. They were so mad upon their idols and creature confidences, that they were at no small charge for them; they lavished money out of the bag, **Isaiah 6:6**, and laid on, as if they should never see an end of their wealth. They sent great gifts and sums of money to the Assyrians and Egyptians, and leaned upon them as their champions; they hired loves, as the Hebrew here hath it. But love, as it cannot well be counterfeited (a man may paint fire, but he cannot paint heat), so it cannot at all be hired or purchased. Those that go about it shall find loathing for love, and be scorned of those mercenaries which are seldom either satisfied, or sure. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 10. [[@Bible:Hosea 8:10]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Yea, though they have hired among the nations.** The uncircumcised; strangers to the promises, and aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, that they should so far distrust God and debase themselves as to seek help of such; this went near to the heart of God, and was very grievous. They brought up an evil report upon God's housekeeping, charged him with unfaithfulness to his people, whom he now seemed to leave in the lurch, to shift for themselves in their straits; and hardened his enemies in their wicked but yet more prosperous condition. *Felix scelus virtus vocatur* Pleasant wickedness is called virtue. (Cic. de Divin., lib. ii.). How would these heathens hug themselves in the conceit

that Israel should do thus, who was God's portion, **Deuteronomy 32:9**, the dearly beloved of his soul, **Jeremiah 12:7**, of whom it was anciently sung, and commonly said among the heathen, "The Lord hath done great things for them," **Psalms 126:2**. "Happy art thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help; and who is the sword of thine excellence! and thine enemies shall he found liars unto thee, and thou shalt tread upon their high places," **Deuteronomy 33:29**. Whosoever was free of the city of Rome might not accept any freedom in another city; for they were counted a dishonour to Rome. And will not God take it in ill part from his covenanters, to seek or make after correspondence with his enemies, and safety by them? The help of the wicked are at the best perfidious, and at length pernicious to the Church: *Ecclesiae sunt tandem perniciose et semper perfidiosae*.

Now will I gather them. This the Chaldee and the Vulgate make to be a promise of bringing back their captivity; when indeed it is a commination of carrying them into captivity.

I will gather them. That is, either the enemies against Israel or else Israel for the enemies; *ut eos acervatim perdam*, that I may lay them heaps upon heaps, and gather them, as dead corpses slain in battle are gathered together for burial. Or, I will gather them, to the end that I may disperse them.

And they shall sorrow a little. And but a little now,

for the burden of the king of princes. For the taxes and tributes exacted from them by the king of Assyria (whose nobles were princes, **2 Kings 18:24; Isaiah 10:5-7; 2 Kings 15:19, 29**). But all this is but a little; it is but the beginning of sorrows; it is but small drops forerunning the great storm; or as a crack forerunning the fall of the house. They shall sorrow much more hereafter, when carried captive, and made a scorn to the scum of the people: see **Deuteronomy 32:42**. Some read the whole verse, "Yea, because they have hired among the nations, now will I gather them together (for they have begun a little): because of the burden of the king of princes." And they thus paraphrase it: Well may they bribe and hire, but this will be the end: the Israelites themselves shall fall by heaps; the nations whom they hire shall come so tumbling in upon them (as Isaiah told Ahaz, **Isaiah 8:9**). Do you not see it prettily well begun already? Look upon the late example that is yet now fresh and bleeding before your eyes; so you will the better believe my threatening in that which is to come; I mean, the sacking and carrying away of the tribes beyond Jordan, by Pul and Tiglathpileser. If you ask me the reason why God should be so angry with you? it is because you are so foolish, or so wicked rather, to send presents and tributes to the king of Ashur (who in the pride and vanity of his heart nameth himself the king of princes, the mighty and most potent king) with the pilling, polling, and burdening of your subjects. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 11. [[@Bible:Hosea 8:11]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Because Ephraim hath made many altars to sin.** Because he hath multiplied altars against God's express command, **Leviticus 17:3-9; Deuteronomy 12:5-7; Joshua 22:22, 23; Jeremiah 11:13**; and that, to sin; as if it were on purpose to cross and provoke the Lord to anger by their superstitions and will worship, and to despise him with seeming honours (for displeasing service is double dishonour), therefore he shall have enough of it ere I have done with it. He shall be given up to a reprobate sense; that going on from one sin to another, he may fill up his measure, till wrath come upon him to the utmost.

"Per quod quis peccat, per idem punitur et ipse."

Idolatry is sin with an accent, wickedness with a witness, **1 Kings 15:30, 34; 16:2; 12:30; 13:34**, and shall be punished accordingly; for so the Chaldee paraphraseth here; Because they have multiplied their altars for sin, the altars of their idols shall be their ruin. There is one Hebrew word for sin and punishment: sin hails hell at the very heels of it, as one saith wittily.

Polanus upon this text hath these three profitable observations. First, that as in the Old Testament one only altar was set up by God's command in the tabernacle and temple, so also in the New Testament we have no other altar but Christ, **Hebrews 13:10**. (Iren. lib. 4, contra Haeres, cap. 34.) Secondly, as the Israelites sinned in multiplying altars, so do the Papists most grievously, in that, not content with Christ and his satisfactory sacrifice alone, they set up other altars, and bring in other expiatory sacrifices. Thirdly, as the Israelites made many altars to sin, though they pretended good intention and devotion, so the Papists at this day multiply altars (even hundreds in some one church in Rome). to sin, though they falsely pretend their good retention therein, and the preservation and augmentation of God's service.

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Verse 12. [[@Bible:Hosea 8:12]]{{field-on:Bible}}**I have written to him the great things of my law.** *magnalia legis*; great things of the law, there are also *minutula legis*, small things of the law, **Matthew 5:22**; both must be looked to: for though the civilian say of his law, *De minutis non curat lex*, The law takes no notice of small faults; yet it holds not true of the law of God, which is spiritual, and must be kept as the apple of the eye, **Proverbs 7:2**, and observed in every point and part, nay, in every punctilio and particle thereof. But to come to the words; Ephraim could not plead ignorance of God's mind, for their many altars and superstitions, *Deus enim iure quaerat et queratur*, for God might very well say and complain, as **Proverbs 22:20**, "Have not I written for thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge?" and in the verse next before, "I have made known (my mind) this day to thee, even to thee." So here, "I have written," sc. by my penmen and secretaries, "to him" chiefly, and for his better direction in my service, that he might walk therein by rule, and not at random, (see **Deuteronomy 4:8**; **Psalms 147:19**) "the great things," or excellent documents (the multiplicity or multiformity, saith the Chaldee) "of my law," or of my wise doctrine; **Proverbs 13:14**, which taketh in the gospel too, that law of Christ, **Galations 6:2**.

But they were counted as a strange thing. As not pertaining to them, as that wherein they were little or nothing concerned, as the narration of foreign affairs. Whereas men should read and regard the Holy Scriptures as they do the statutes of the land; holding themselves as much concerned and intended as any other; threatening themselves in every threat, binding themselves in every precept, blessing themselves in every promise, mingling the whole word with faith in their hearts, and resolving upon the obedience of faith; as knowing that these are *verba vivenda non legenda*, words to be lived, not read only; and that they should indwell in us familiarly, and yet richly, **Colossians 3:16**, and we should be as inwardly acquainted with them as any man is with his sister, or nearest allies, **Proverbs 7:4**. All this the rather; First, because God is the author of the Holy Scriptures, both matter and words are his, **2 Peter 1:21**; "he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began," **Luke 1:70**; and he guided their hands in writing the Bible. How dare Papists then say that they wrote it *iniussi* without command from God. Secondly, because God hath written his law for us, for our behoof and benefit, **Romans 4:23; 15:4**. The Scripture is God's Epistle to us, saith Gregory. It "is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my paths," saith David, **Psalms 119:105**. Not a light that I see at a distance, a great way off; but a light held to my feet, that I may see my way in this land of Chabul, this dirty and dark world; and not lift up one foot, till I discover and find sure footing for another, as those, **Psalms 34:6**. Thirdly, because he hath written for us the *honorabilia legis*, honourable and precious things, such as a man would fetch from China or the uttermost part of the habitable world upon his bare feet, rather than be without. David prefers it before gold and silver, **Psalms 19:11**; Solomon, before pearls and rubies, **Proverbs 3:15**; Moses, before all the learning of other nations, **Deuteronomy 4:6**. The Scripture is the soul's food, saith Athanasius; the soul's medicine, saith Chrysostom; the invariable rule of truth, saith Irenaeus. It is, saith another, the aphorisms (*short pithy statements or maxims*) of Christ, the library of the Holy Ghost, the divine pandects, (*compendium in fifty books of Roman*

civil law made by the order of Justinian in the 6th century, complete body of laws) the wisdom of the cross, the cubit of the sanctuary, the firmament of faith, the touchstone of error, &c. What reason then had Darbishire (Bishop Bonner's kinsman and chaplain) to say to Mr Hawkes the martyr, that he was too curious; for he would have nothing but his little pretty God's book? And is it not sufficient for my salvation? said Hawkes. Yes, said he, but not for your instruction. God send me the salvation (said Hawkes) and you the instruction. That the Scripture is full and sufficient for both instruction and salvation, see **2 Timothy 3:16, 17**, and my treatise called the True Treasure. *Has igitur nocturna versato manu, versate diurna, Psalm 1:2*. Let there not, by infrequency or disuse, grow an alienation or strangeness between us and the Holy Scriptures; but be ready in them, and have them, as Saul had his pitcher and spear at his bolster; as David had his chosen stones at hand in his scrip. Luther wishes all his own books burnt; because I fear, saith he, they hinder men from reading the Bible, that book of books; in comparison whereof all the books in the world are but waste paper. After which, I tremble, saith he, to think of the former age, wherein many divines spent so much time in reading Aristotle and Averroes, and so little in reading the Book of God. Melancthon saith that he heard some preach upon texts taken out of Aristotle's Ethics. Carolostadius was eight years doctor when he began to read the Scriptures; and yet at the taking of his degree had been pronounced *sufficientissimus* most adequate (Joh. Manlius). Another doctor of divinity, being asked whether he had read the decalogue, *negitabat se huiusmodi librum in Bibliotheca sua habuisse unquam*; he denied that he had ever had, or heard of any book so called (Amama in Antibar. praef.); such a perfect stranger was he to the great things of God's law. And if the learned doctors be thus bare and ignorant, what may we think of the poor misled and muzzled multitude, that lie fast locked up in the pope's dark dungeon, and are flatly forbidden to meddle with the Scriptures, lest they should be infected with heresy, or possessed with a devil, as some (say they) have been by that means? {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 13. [[@Bible:Hosea 8:13]]{{field-on:Bible}} **They sacrifice flesh in the sacrifices of mine offerings, and eat it.** *q.d.* They would seem not to have rejected the great things of my law, not to be such strangers thereunto; since they were much in sacrificing according to the law. But their hypocrisy is most hateful: in that first, they offer (with Cain) *non personam, sed opus personae*, as Luther saith; not themselves, but their bare sacrifices, **Isaiah 66:3**, which is but as a brainless head and soulless body; it is but flesh, as it is here called in contempt and scorn. See the like, **Jeremiah 7:21; Hosea 9:4**. And think the same of all external services, *si careant anima sua, id est recta in Deum fide, et erecta in illum mente*, if not performed in faith and obedience. Secondly, they pretended to serve God, when indeed they only served their own bellies, as those, **Romans 16:18**, sought their own ends, **Philippians 2:21**, catered for the flesh, **Romans 13:14**, *insigne donum quo afficior* (as Luther paraphraseth the text) *carnem offertis quam vos ipsi voratis, i.e.* A goodly gift it is that you give me, viz. the flesh of your peace offerings which yourselves may feast with; and you therefore multiply sacrifices, that you may gorge yourselves with good cheer. Now one egg is not more like to another than these old fleshmongers were to the Popish flesh flies at this day. It was an honest complaint of one of them: We, saith he, handle the Scripture, *tantum ut nos pascat et vestiatur*, only that it may feed us and clothe us. And it is evident to all the world that their masses, pilgrimages, festivals, vowed presents and memorials, &c., are only to pamper their paunches; which made them so angry with Erasmus and Luther for meddling.

But the Lord accepteth them not. How should he, pray, when there was nothing but flesh, nothing but self in them. See the like, **Jeremiah 4:10; Amos 5:22; Isaiah 1:10**, where God telleth them that their sacrifices were grievous and offensive to all his several senses, nay, to his very soul too. "The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination to the Lord," **Proverbs 15:8**, yea, though he bring it with never so good an intent, **Proverbs 21:27**; how much more if he bring *ex rapina holocaustum*, a sacrifice of what he hath got by rapine and robbery! and so the

Chaldee carrieth the sense of the former words; the sacrifices of mine offerings, *quae collecta sunt ex iniuria*, saith he, which were gathered and gotten by wrong dealing: how then should the Lord accept them?

Now will he remember their iniquity. Even while they are sacrificing, let them not think to blind his eyes with the smoke of their offerings, to stop his mouth with their rich gifts and donaries; to bribe him into a connivance; to expiate and set off their sins with their sacrifices; for God will remember them, and punish them. Yea, now will he do it, in the time of their holy duties; he will come upon them then in his wrath, as Pilate came upon the Galileans, and mingled their blood with their sacrifices, **Luke 13:2**. Sure it is that sin (brought into God's holy presence) petitions against the sinner, as Esther did against Haman at the banquet of wine, **Esther 7:6**; picks out the time of prayer and other duties to accuse and call for vengeance. Take we heed, lest while we are confessing our sins (which yet we close with, and will not forsake) and judging ourselves worthy to be destroyed, God say not, Out of thine own mouth will I condemn thee, thou graceless person, that hast so much impudence as to bring thy Cozbi into my presence, (**Numbers 25:18**) then, when all the people (as on a fastday) are weeping before the door of the tabernacle. God will be sanctified of all that draw nigh unto him; one way or other he will be sanctified, either in them, or on them, **Leviticus 10:3**. Of such he saith, as Solomon once did of Adonijah, "If he show himself a worthy man, there shall not a hair of his head fall to the earth: but if wickedness shall be found in him, he shall die," **1 Kings 1:52**. If any defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy, **1 Corinthians 3:17**.

They shall return to Egypt. They had a mind to run thither for refuge; they sent also to So, king of Egypt, for that purpose, **2 Kings 17:4**. Instead of making their peace with God, they betook themselves to base shifts, and sought help of the creature. This is the guise of graceless men when distressed. But they shall soon have enough of Egypt, **Hosea 9:8, 6**. Their strength (or their Egypt) had been to have sat still, in expectation of help from heaven, **Isaiah 30:7**, and to have considered that the last and greatest curse denounced against their disobedience was, "And the Lord shall bring thee into Egypt," &c., **Deuteronomy 28:68**. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 14. [[@Bible:Hosea 8:14]]{{field-on:Bible}} **For Israel hath forgotten his maker.** Not more his factor than his benefactor, as, **1 Samuel 12:6**, the Lord made Moses and Aaron, *i.e.* he advanced them to that honour in his Church. So our Saviour is said to have made twelve, when he ordained them to the apostleship, **Mark 3:14**. And the apostle saith of Israel, that God exalted the people, when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, **Acts 13:17**, *sc.* to the privilege of his peculiar people, the possession of the promised land, the custody of his oracles and services, &c., besides the many benefits and deliverances wrought for them. All which they are said to have forgotten: 1. Because they laid them not to heart, see **Isaiah 57:11**, they saw not God in them; 2. Because their lives were not answerable; they walked not worthy of such a God; but said (in effect), "We are delivered to do all these abominations," **Jeremiah 7:10**. God challengeth remembrance, and well he may, **Ecclesiastes 12:1**, for he hath created us for his glory, **Isaiah 43:7**, he hath formed us, yea, he hath made us (as it followeth there, and all that we might remember him): the word (made) is used for a degree of grace after creation. Those that are his workmanship, his artificial facture (ποίημα), created in Christ Jesus (who is the beginning of this creation of God, **Revelation 3:14**) unto good works, **Ephesians 2:10**, if ever they should forget God (which is the character of a wicked man, **Psalms 50:22**); if they should forsake God that made them, and lightly esteem the Rock of their salvation, **Deuteronomy 32:15**, as Solomon did the Lord that had appeared unto him twice; if they should not prefer him above their chief joy, or make him ascend above the head of their joy (as the Hebrew hath it, **Psalms 137:6**), and set him over all, as Pharaoh did Joseph (causing sun, moon, and stars to do obeisance to him), I mean, all their natural, moral, temporal, and spiritual abilities to be subject and serviceable to him; he would have an unanswerable action against them, and both heaven and earth would have cause to blush at their disingenuity and unthankfulness. Let it

ever be remembered, that of all things God cannot abide to be forgotten.

And buildeth temples. To God, no doubt; and yet, because they worshipped him not in his own way they are said to have forgotten him: so do Papists in all their structures, vowed presents, and memories (as they call them). In King Stephen's time here, notwithstanding all the miseries of war, there were more Abbeyes built than in a hundred years before. But who required those things at their hands? *Christus opera nostra non tam actibus quam finibus pensat* (Zanchius). Now the end why those temples and monasteries were built appears in stories to be *pro remissione et redemptione peccatorum, pro remedio et liberatione animae: pro amore coelestis patriae: in honorem gloriosae Virginis, in eleemosynam animae, &c.*, for remission of sins, redemption of souls, honour of the Virgin Mary, and other superstitious ends and uses.

And Judah hath multiplied fenced cities. As thinking thereby to fence themselves against God's wrath, to mott themselves up against his fire that had burnt up the ten tribes, and threatened them. Strong cities and munitions may be lawfully built; but then their foundations must not be laid upon fireworks. If sin be at the bottom (as the voice from heaven is said to have told Phocas), though they build as high as heaven it will not do. Babylon's thick walls and large provisions could not secure her from the enemy; Samaria held out for two or three years, but was surprised at last by the Assyrian; so was Jerusalem by the Babylonians, and then by the Romans, **Isaiah 22:8-10**. Great fault is found with this people, for their warlike preparations with neglects of God, **Hosea 8:11**, and of deep and downright humiliation, **Hosea 8:12-14**. The name of the Lord is the strongest tower, **Proverbs 18:10**. But cursed is he that maketh flesh his arm, that trusteth in men, though never so great; or means, though never so likely, **Jeremiah 17:5**, those were never true to those that trusted them. The Jebusites were beaten out of their fort, though they presumed it impregnable. The men of Shechem were burned out, **Judges 9:49**: so shall Judah be; for,

I will send a fire upon his cities, and it shall devour the palaces thereof. The enemy did this, but not without the Lord; who cannot brook it that men should trust in palaces and strongholds; and as Luther well observeth, in this whole Chapter is fully set forth whence it is that strong palaces and flourishing kingdoms come to nought; it is because men believe not in God, but trust to their own strength, **Deuteronomy 28:52**; they fortify themselves against an enemy, but do not pacify God's displeasure; who is himself a devouring fire, and can quickly quash all our forces, and confute our confidences. {{field-off:Bible}}

Chapter 9

Verse 1. [[@Bible:Hosea 9:1]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Rejoice not, O Israel, for joy, as other people.** Not as good people, for they have reason to rejoice, and are called to it in both Testaments; joy is the just man's portion, but thou art naught all over, thou hast gone a whoring from thy God, who will shortly meet thee as a bear robbed of her whelps, or as the jealous husband doth his adulteress. Again, not as other bad people, for they may revel (rejoice indeed they cannot) and be merry, after a sort; rejoice they may in the face, as the apostle phraseth it, and from the teeth outward; some kind of frothy and flashy mirth they may have (and let them make them merry with it, it is all they are like to have), but so mayest not thou; because thou hast had warning sufficient, and hast known thy Master's will, but not done it; yea, thou hast done that abominable thing that other nations never yet did, **Jeremiah 2:11, 12**, thou hast changed thy God for those that are no gods; thou hast forsaken the fountain, and run to the cistern, &c.; which is such a prodigious wickedness, as the very heavens are astonished at, and are horribly afraid, yea, desolate; mourning, and, as it were, melting at this horrid act. Shall the heavens mourn, and wilt thou rejoice? yea, fetch a frisk, or dance a galliard for joy, as the word signifies (ג'ל, in Graec. ἀγαλλιᾶν, to dance a galliard): what if other nations do so, when they have got the better of their enemies, or gathered in their harvest, **Isaiah 9:4**, or otherwise have all things go well with them? yet revolted Israel had no such cause, unless they were upon better terms with God. Say that this were the time when Joash beat Benhadad thrice over, and recovered the cities of Israel, **2 Kings 13:15-19**; or say it was at the time when he took Amaziah, and brought all the spoil of Jerusalem to Samaria, **2 Kings 14:13**; or else when Pekah slew in Judah a hundred and twenty thousand in one day, and carried captive two hundred thousand, with much spoil: these were times of great mirth and jollity, it is confessed, **2 Chronicles 28:6-8**. "But are there not with you, even with you, sins against the Lord your God" (as the prophet Oded there bespeaks them), and should not those sins be bewailed? Besides, are they not your brethren whom you have slaughtered and captivated? and can you have any joy of such a conquest, of civil wars that are—*nullos habitura triumphos*, about to have no victory, that are such a misery as all words (however wide) want compass to express? Hear what the prophet Amos (who was Hosea's contemporary) saith to this, "Ye which rejoice in a thing of nought" (so he calleth their victories, present prosperity, pomp, and pride), "which say, have we not taken to us horns by our own strength? Behold, I will raise up against you a nation, O house of Israel," that shall tame you, and take you a link lower (as they say), so that "your laughter shall be turned into mourning, and your joy into heaviness," **James 4:9**. There is ever a snare (or a cord) in the sin of the wicked, viz. to strangle their joy with; "but the righteous sing and rejoice," **Proverbs 29:6**.

For thou hast gone a whoring from thy God. That is a foul business, and may well dampen thy joy. Sins are the snuffs that dim our candlestick, the leaven that soureth our passovers, the sanies of a plague sore that threateneth our very life. And whereas the sins of others are but rebellions against God, the sins of his professed people are treacheries; they go a whoring from their God, *desuper Deo suo, vel omissio Deo suo*, from under their God, or laying aside their God; casting him, as it were, into a bycorner. Hence those pathetic complaints in Jeremiah, **Jeremiah 18:13**, "Ask ye now among the heathen, who hath heard such things: the virgin of Israel hath done a very horrible thing": filthiness in a stew is nothing so odious as filthiness in a virgin. And again, **Jeremiah 32:30**, "The children of Israel and the children of Judah have only done evil from their youth." God takes evil so heinously from them, as if they had never done him any good service all their days; or as if they were the only sinners upon earth; they were so much worse, because they ought to have been better than other nations. Now God expects our sorrows should be proportionable to our sins; Rejoice not, therefore, but (by a liptote) weep and howl for the miseries that shall come upon you.

Thou hast loved a reward (or a harlot's hire, *mercedem meretriciam*) upon every threshingfloor. *i.e.* Thou hast prostituted thyself to a loose idolatry; like to a common whore that goeth a whoring up and down the threshingfloors. Hence Boaz' fear lest it should be rumoured that Ruth had lain at his feet, and that a woman came into the floor, **Ruth 3:14**. Or else he meaneth (saith Diodati) some particular kind of idolatry used in the time of harvest and threshing; as if they would have acknowledged their increase to come by their idols' goodness. Such was that of the Metapontines, of whom Strabo tells the story, that when they had had a good harvest, and were grown rich thereby, they dedicated to Apollo at Delphi χρυσοῦν θέρος, a harvest of gold. See Trapp on "**Hosea 2:1**" &c {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 2. [[@Bible:Hosea 9:2]]{{field-on:Bible}} **The floor and the winepress shall not feed them.** *Culpam poena premit comes*, Punishment attendeth sin at the heels. They had abused their plenty, and ascribed it to their idols; therefore shall they be cut short either in their store, as **Habakkuk 3:6, 10; 2:16**, or in their strength, as **Hosea 4:10; 8:7**. (see **Hosea 2:8, 9**, with the notes) One way or other their hopes shall be frustrated, the creature shall lie to them, and not answer their expectation.

The new wine shall fail in her. *Mustum mentietur ei*: see the like phrase, **Habakkuk 3:17; Isaiah 58:11; Job 41:6**: they shall come to the grain floors and winepresses, as men come to a lottery with heads full of hopes; but depart disappointed, with their hearts full of blanks. As they have lied to God (idolatry is nothing else but a large lie), and dealt deceitfully with him in the covenant, so shall all things lie to them, and not answer their hopes. Look how a certain prince paid a false traitor, who for a sum of money had betrayed his country to him, in false coin; so shall it fare with such as falsify with God; he will blast their hopes, and curse their blessings, cut them short in the height of their expectancies, strike them in the things that their hearts are most set upon, the new wine shall lie to them, and so set them a howling, **Joel 1:5**. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 3. [[@Bible:Hosea 9:3]]{{field-on:Bible}} **They shall not dwell in the Lord's land.** Because they would not live by the Lord's laws, they shall therefore be turned out of his house (so this land was called, **Hosea 9:8**) as rebellious children, that are a disturbance and a disgrace to their father's family; they shall hold no longer as tenants of him, the chief landlord, because so backward to send a lamb (as rent or a homage penny) to the ruler of the land, **Isaiah 16:1**; they were tenants at will, and held upon condition of obedience, **Leviticus 18:28**, it was divided among them by lot; **Joshua** divided it among them, and left none to himself. The people gave him a portion, and he was content with it; though it were but a mean one in the barren mountains, as Jerome noteth. He had the promise that God would never leave him nor forsake him; and he well knew that if he trusted in the Lord, and did good, he should "dwell in the land and be verily fed," **Psalms 37:3**. He and Caleb were of another spirit, and fulfilled after God; therefore they only of all that generation entered the promised land, the Lord's land; which because Moses might not do, it was a great grief to him. These idolaters here are threatened to be cashiered and cast out of this good land, and to have their pleasant land laid desolate, to be spewed out, as the Canaanites had been before them, **Leviticus 18:28**, and so consequently to be deprived of God's favour, help, and protection; and altogether disprivileged, yea, disinherited. This was a heavy judgment to them, and must be a warning to us, that yet live in the bosom of the Church, and under the joyful sound; that we forfeit not our present enjoyments, that we sin not away our precious privileges, as the seven Churches and others have done. *Alterius perditio tua sit cautio*. We stand upon our good behaviour, as they did; see **Deuteronomy 30:19, 20**.

But Ephraim shall return to Egypt. Which they ought to have been sensible of as a punishment long since threatened, **Deuteronomy 28:68**, (see **Hosea 8:13**, See Trapp on "**Hosea 8:13**") though now, of their own accord, they returned to it, for fear of the Assyrian

(whom by their false dealing they had justly incensed), yet that should not shelter them, but God's hand would find them out, and fetch them thence into captivity. Often they had been warned not to go down to Egypt for help; and they must needs be hard bestead that fled thither. True it is, that the Egyptians are renowned in histories for a thankful people (Diod. Sic. l. 2), and the Israelites are charged not to abhor an Egyptian, because they were once strangers in his land, and had tasted of his courtesies, **Deuteronomy 23:7**. But in addition, they could not but know how hardly the Egyptians had dealt with their forefathers, and bow treacherously also with them; and that they ought not, *de iure*, concerning the law, to have returned thither upon any terms. *Sed Deus quem destruit dementat*, Bug God, who he destroyed, makes mad, and although here they were resolved for Egypt, yet, **Hosea 11:5**, God resolveth otherwise; and *voluntas Dei necessitas rei*, his will shall stand when all is done.

And they shall eat unclean things in Assyria. Things forbidden by the law, as swine's flesh, &c.; they shall be forced to eat or starve; they must not look for liberty of conscience in Assyria, nor have that favour to make a difference of meat as Daniel had, **Daniel 1:8**, but as Ezekiel baked his barley cakes with man's dung, even so, said the Lord, shall the children of Israel eat their defiled bread among the heathen whither I will drive them. So haughty they were grown, that their father's house could not hold them; therefore they shall be glad of husks with hogs (as that prodigal), they shall eat as the heathens, since they would needs act as the heathens. They thought it was hard with them in their own land, when the floors and the winepress would not feed them, **Hosea 9:2**; but now it is far worse, when, forced by hard hunger, they are glad of any meat, be it clean or unclean; neither have they any more mind to be so merry with other nations, as **Hosea 9:1**, or cause so to be; their stomachs craving, and themselves (with Drusus in Tacitus) ready to eat the stuffings of their bed; or (with the Jews in the last siege of Jerusalem) not only to feed upon dogs, rats, cats, &c., but the leather of their shoes, belts, shields, bridles, yea, ox dung was a precious dish unto them, and the shreds of pot herbs cast out and trodden underfoot (Pontanus. Hegesippus). {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 4. [[@Bible:Hosea 9:4]]{{field-on:Bible}} **They shall not offer wine offerings unto the Lord.** *Non libabunt, multo minus litabunt*, they shall not have wherewith to offer sacrifice, when they are in their banishment, **Hosea 3:4**, much less to serve God with cheerfulness, to exhilarate his heart with their wine offerings, **Judges 9:13**, to cheer up themselves with the wine and olive offerings, **Numbers 15:5**, which were symbols and signs of the merit and spirit of Christ (for the ceremonial law was their gospel, it was Christ in figure), and the deprivation of them threatened the deprivation of grace and glory. Now, therefore, since such a sad condition and such sinking of spirits abode upon this people, what reason had they to rejoice with joy as others.

Neither shall they be pleasing, to him. Heb. they shall not be sweet or mingled; for as sweet and sour maketh the best sauce, so the mixture of things of divers qualities maketh the sweetest confections, and most pleasing to the palate; but so shall not be these men's wine offerings to God, if any they should present; but sour and savourless. He is now resolved to take another course with them, to glorify himself in their calamity, and to give unto them another while the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath, **Revelation 16:19**, that is, to delight as much in their misery as a man would do in drinking of a bowl of generous wine.

Their sacrifices shall be unto them as the bread of mourners. *i.e.* as funeral feasts (whereof read **Jeremiah 16:7, 8; Ezekiel 24:17**), made *ad levandum luctum* (ἄρτος πένθους νεκροδειπνον), eaten in heaviness by those that were polluted by the dead, and therefore altogether unfit for sacrifice; since God loveth a cheerful service, and will not have any of his come off heavily. See **Leviticus 10:19; Deuteronomy 13:7; 26:14; Malachi 2:13**, where those unkind husbands are blamed for causing their wives, when they should have been cheerful in God's service, to cover the Lord's altar with tears, with weeping and with crying out, so that he

regarded not the offering any more. So Ezra, **Ezra 9:5**, that holy man, though till then he sat astonished at the sins of the people, yet he arose from his heaviness at the evening sacrifice; for he knew that even sorrow for sin might be a sinful sorrow, if unseasonable and sullen; for it sours a man's spirit, and makes his services unacceptable to God.

For their bread for their soul shall not come into the house of the Lord. Their bread, that is, their meat offering or other sacrifices (**Malachi 1:7**) (*See Trapp on "Malachi 1:7"*) for their soul, that is, for themselves (soul is oft put for the whole person), shall not come, rightly and in due manner, unto divine acceptation, "into the house of the Lord": it should not have come into the temple while it stood, and the Levitical service was performed in an orderly way; how much less shall it be accepted now in a strange land, being the bread of mourners. Others by the "bread for their souls" understand their natural and necessary sustenance. He speaks, say they, of that meatoffering, **Leviticus 2:5**, appointed for a spiritual use, yet called here the bread for their life or livelihood, because God esteemed it none other than common meat. Tarnovius by the house of the Lord here understandeth the Church, as **Hosea 8:1; 9:5; 2 Timothy 2:20**. The door of this house, saith he, is Christ, **John 10:9**, the doorkeeper the Holy Spirit, *ibid.* **John 10:3**, the foundation and corner stone Christ, **Ephesians 2:20**, the wall is God, **Zechariah 2:5**, the stewards the ministers, those of the household the saints, **1 Corinthians 4:1; Ephesians 2:19**. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 5. [[@Bible:Hosea 9:5]]{{field-on:Bible}} **What will ye do in the solemn day,** &c. *q.d.* How will ye do to laugh and leap then, as ye do now? **Hosea 9:1**. How will you be able to support yourselves, to keep your hearts from dying within you, when you call to mind and consider your former solemnities and festivities, which now (alas!) in your captivity you are utterly deprived of? There was a time when you went with the multitude to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holy day, **Psalms 42:4**, with dancing, eating, drinking, and joy, **Deuteronomy 16:14, 15; Judges 21:19, 20**. But now the scene is altered; your singing is turned into sighing, your mirth into mourning, your joy into heaviness; and you must needs hold yourselves so much the more miserable, that you have been happy. The epicures indeed held that a man might be cheerful against the most exquisite torments: 1. In consideration of his honesty and integrity; 2. In consideration of those pleasures and delights that formerly he had enjoyed; and now cheered himself up with the remembrance of them (*Ex praeteritarum voluptatum recordatione*. Cic. de Finib. 1. 2. Senec. de Benef. 1. 4, c. 22.). This last is a very slight and sorry comfort indeed. The former hath much in it; for a good man keeps every day holy day, said Diogenes; and can be merry without music, saith another philosopher. He hath a merry heart, or good conscience, which is a continual feast; and is bound to "rejoice evermore," **1 Thessalonians 5:16**, and to keep the feast in all countries, **1 Corinthians 5:8**, the calendar of his whole life is crowned with continual festivals (**ἑορτάζωμεν**); and he is the happiest man, and may be the merriest, if he but understand his own happiness. But this, alas! was not the case of these woeful caitiffs and captives. They had sinned away all their comforts; and with the sad remembrance of their former enjoyments, and with the sense of their present servitude, they had little mind to keep holy day. Hence this passionate exclamation, "What will ye do," &c.? God had threatened before, **Hosea 2:11**, to take away their feast days, new moons, sabbaths, and solemnities; but they heeded him not, *tanquam monstra marina Dei verba surda aura praeterierunt*; therefore now God fulfilleth what he had forethreatened, and calleth, as in a solemn day, his terrors round about them, **Lamentations 2:22**. What they were wont to do in their solemn days and festivals may be seen, **Numbers 10:10**; what we do, or should do, at least, upon our Lord's Day sabbaths (the delight of every good soul) we need not be told. Let us take heed, lest by profane violation or careless observing that holy rest, with all its solemnities, we deprive not ourselves (as these Israelites did) of such a precious privilege. God gave us a good warning, in that the first blow given the German Churches was upon the sabbath day; which is there so ill sanctified, that if it

should be named according to their deserving of it, *Daemoniacus potius quam Dominicus*, the Devil is greater than God, saith Alsted, it should be called not the Lord's day, but the priest's day rather. It is very remarkable, that upon that day was Prague lost, and with it all opportunity of hearing, singing, public praying, communicating, on that high and honourable day, **Isaiah 58:13.** {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 6. [[@Bible:Hosea 9:6]]{{field-on:Bible}} **For, lo, they are gone because of destruction.** They are gone either into Egypt for refuge, or into the state of the dead, they are gone out of the world (*abierunt, i.e. obierunt*). They shall perish by destruction, so some render it. When God had said in the former verse, "What will ye do," they should have fallen down before him and said, "What wilt thou have us to do, Lord?" we know not what at all to do, but our eyes are toward thee. This had been right, and thus they might have disarmed God's indignation; but they had other carnal shifts, and thought they could tell well enough what to do, and whither to go; whereupon they were so fully bent, that the prophet here reports them gone already. "For, lo, they are gone," and got to Egypt; as various of them did doubtless during the siege, and after the sack of Samaria, when they were forced to shift for themselves as they could: but did they so "escape by iniquity. In thine anger cast down the people, O God," saith David; and it is not more a prayer than a prophecy, **Psalms 56:7**, and this people had the proof of it.

Egypt shall gather them. Either for punishment or for burial, as **Ezekiel 29:5; Jeremiah 8:2**, so that they fled but out of the smoke into the fire; and in running from death they ran to it; as the historian saith of those poor Scots at Musselborough Field, who, running for their lives, so strained themselves in their race, that they fell down breathless and dead.

Memphis shall bury them. Lest they should please themselves with vain hopes of return to their country, he shows that that shall never be; but they shall lay their bones in a strange land. Memphis (anciently called Noph, **Isaiah 19:13**, or (as some will), No, **Nahum 3:8**, at this day Grand Cairo, famous for the pyramids and the kings' sepulchres), Memphis, I say, a principal city of Egypt, shall be a Kibrothhattaavah to you, a place of sepulchres; especially then when Nebuchadnezzar, sent by God (who giveth him Egypt as his pay for his pains at Tyre), shall come and smite that land, and deliver such as are for death to death, and such as are for the sword to the sword, **Jeremiah 43:11**.

The pleasant places for themselves, nettles shall possess them. Heb. shall possess them as their inheritance; so that the Israelites nor their heirs shall ever repossess these pleasant places for their silver, *i.e.* where they either laid up their silver (their repositories or countinghouses), or where they laid out their silver, either in costly buildings and sumptuous furniture, or else in idols and statues placed therein, to their no small charge and delight. These shall be ruined and overrun with nettles, thorns, and thistles, a token of horrible desolation, **Isaiah 32:13; 34:13**. Note hence, that as God spareth a place for a few good men found therein (as he would have done Sodom, which is now a place of nettles and salt pits, **Zephaniah 2:9**), so a fruitful land bringeth he into barrenness (or saltiness), for the wickedness of them that dwell therein, **Psalms 106:34, 35**; witness Judaea, that land of desire, **Jeremiah 22:27**, that garden of Eden, **Joel 2:3**, that glorious land, **Daniel 11:16**, yea, glory of all lands, **Ezekiel 20:15**, now woefully waste and desolate; so is Grecia, formerly so famous for arms and arts; so are some parts of Germany, and so may England soon be (without the greater mercy of God, by a miracle of whose mercy, and by a prop of whose extraordinary patience, we have hitherto subsisted), I say, England, whose valleys now are like Eden, whose hills are as Lebanon, whose springs are as Pisgah, whose rivers are as Jordan, whose walls is the ocean, and whose defence is the Lord Jehovah. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 7. [[@Bible:Hosea 9:7]]{{field-on:Bible}} **The days of visitation are come.** A visitation

that is like to prove a vexation; for every transgression and disobedience, that is, omission and commission, shall receive a just recompense of reward from the God of recompenses (so he is called, **Jeremiah 51:56**), whose eyes behold, his eyelids try the children of men, **Psalms 11:4**; the former points out his knowledge, the latter his judgment, or his critical descant in his visitation or inquisition, the days whereof are set, *Stat sua cuique dies*, and Israel's days are come, are come, it is repeated for more assurance, as "Babylon is fallen, is fallen," *certo, cito, penitus*; and as **Ezekiel 7:5-7**, the prophet tells them, "The end is come, is come, is come"; and so some ten or twelve times, that he might beat it into them, and awaken them out of the snare of the devil. The wicked's happiness will take its end surely and swiftly; but it is hard persuading them so; and the Jews, as they were ever noted for obstinate and overweening, so to this day they are light, aerial, and Satanical, apt to work themselves into the fool's paradise of a sublime dotage. But they shall know it to be so as I have said, by woeful experience, that mistress of fools.

Israel shall know it. *sc.* To his sorrow, he shall pay for his learning, buy his wit, open his eyes (as the mole doth) when death is upon him, *oculos incipit aperire moriendo* (Plin.); roar and look upward, **Isaiah 8:21**, as the hog doth when the knife is at his throat. O Lord (saith the same prophet, **Isaiah 26:11**), "when thy hand is lifted up" (and thy hand is a mighty hand, **James 4:10**, it falls heavy), "they will not see," they wink wilfully, or seek straws to put out their eyes with, as Bernard hath it, *Festucam quaerunt unde oculos sibi eruant*;" but they shall see," will they nill they, "and be ashamed" of their former oscitancy, or rather obstinacy, when that hand of God, which was lifted up in threatening, shall fall down in punishing, and the "fire of thine enemies shall devour them"; how much more at that last and great visitation, that terrible day of retribution, when they shall answer for all, with the flames about their ears. *Tunc sentient magno suo malo*, then shall they feel, to their eternal woe, the truth of all the threatenings, which till then they heard, and read, as a man doth an almanac prognostications of wind or foul weather, which he thinks may come to pass, and it may be not; and give nothing so much credit to them as the prior of St Bartholomew's, in London, did to an idle and addle-headed ^[16] astrologer, when he went and built him a house at Harrowon-the-hill to secure himself from a supposed flood that that astrologer foretold.

The prophet is a fool, &c. **φανλος**, a naughty man: the Hebrew word here is evil, and signifieth a rash and unadvised fellow, that is headstrong and headlong; such were their false prophets that promised peace when war was at their gates, and made all fair weather before them when the tempest of God's wrath was even bursting out upon them; such a tempest as should never be blown over. These should now appear to be fools, or rather impostors, that had brought the credulous people into a fool's paradise.

The spiritual man is mad. Heb. the man of the spirit, or *ventosus*, the windy man, that uttereth vain and empty conceits, *humani cerebelli Minervas*, the brats of his own brain, light, airy nothings, the disease of this age, full of flashes and figments, idle speculations of "men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth." These pretend altogether to the spirit, and would be thought the only spiritual men; as the Swenkfeldians (whom, for their ill favour, Luther called Stenckfeldians), who bewitched many with those glorious words (which were ever in their mouths) of illumination, revelation, the inward and spiritual man, &c., and entitled themselves the confessors of the glory of Christ. So the enthusiasts and Anabaptists, what boast make they of the spirit; professing that they will deliver nothing but what they have immediately revealed to them from heaven. Munzer (their ringleader) wrote a base book against Luther (which he dedicateth to King Jesus), wherein *Lutherum flagellat quod euthusiasorum spiritu careat et nil nisi carnalia sapiat*, he falls foul upon Luther, as wanting the spirit of revelation, and one that savoureth nothing but carnal things. All his followers look upon Luther as more

¹⁶ Applied contemptuously to one whose intellect seems muddled. ⒺD

pestiferous than the pope; and for Calvin they say (and I have heard it), that it had been happy for the Church if he had never been born. It was their practice of old (as Leo Judae observed in his epistle before Bullinger's book against the Catabaptists), and is still, to discourage and disparage Christ's faithful ministers all they can, as carnal, and not relishing the things of the spirit; the right offspring they are of those ancient heretics called Messalanii (the same with the Euchites and Enthusiasts), who, in A.D. 371, professed to be wholly made up of the spirit, gave themselves much to sleep, and called their dreams and wild phantasies prophecies and revelations.

For the multitude of thine iniquity, and the great hatred. Heb. the great Satanic hatred that thou hast borne against God and thy neighbour, but especially God's faithful prophets, whom thou heartily hatedst for their plain dealing; as Ahab did Micaiah, because he never spoke good to him. It is very probable that Micaiah was that disguised prophet who brought Ahab the fearful message of displeasure and death, for dismissing Benhadad; for the which he was ever since fasted in prison, deep in disgrace. Lo, this is the world's wages. Truth breeds hatred, great hatred, as the text hath it, devilish hatred, and this is through the multitude of men's iniquities, the overflow of sins, which wretched men hold so dear to themselves, that they cannot but rage against those that disclaim against them, and proclaim hell fire against their hateful practices; they cannot stand still to have their eyes picked out, how should they? say. Now, for such, what wonder is it if God in justice give them up to the efficacy of error that they may believe a lie, since they would not receive the love of the truth? **2 Thessalonians 2:11**, *ut infatuati seducantur, et seducti iudicentur* (Augustin in loc.), that being infatuated they may be seduced, and being seduced, perish? what wonder also if he deliver them up, as to "strong delusions," so to "vile affections," and abominable actions, that they may receive in themselves that recompense of their error that is meet, **Romans 1:27**. What marvel, if men that will not endure sound doctrine be left to seducers? if those that have itching ears meet with clawing preachers? if such as turn away their ears from the truth, be turned to fables and fopperies? **2 Timothy 4:3, 4**. It is for the multitude of men's iniquities, and especially for their great hatred to the truth, that the Church is so pestered with impostors, (**2 Peter 2:1, 2**) who bring in "damnable heresies," even denying the Lord that bought them. Do not our modern seducers so among us, when (among other portentous opinions held by them) they stick not to affirm, that Christ is a carnal or fleshly thing; that those that are grown Christians may go to God immediately without a Christ; that Christ did not rise again, &c. Others condemn him by the notion of the man dying at Jerusalem—Oh horrible! (Dr Homes' Character of the Present Times, 200.) There was a time when the popes were so notoriously naughty as to speak thus basely of Christ; to deny, or at least to doubt the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body, &c.; and then a poor popeling cried out, that the sins of that synagogue were so great, as that it deserved not to be ruled by any other than reprobates. Certain it is, that God plagues contempt of the truth (that great gospel sin) with an inundation of errors and enormities. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 8. [[@Bible:Hosea 9:8]]{{field-on:Bible}} **The watchman of Ephraim was with my God.** *i.e.* The false prophets above mentioned pretend themselves to be with God, and for him speak, look, and act as if they came out of God's bosom, or were so many angels newly dropped from heaven; take upon them glorious titles to that purpose, as watchmen, prophets, spiritual men, he. These titles proved snares to many that inquired not narrowly into them; and especially because they preached *placencia*, pleasing things, soothed men up in their sins, sewed pillows under their elbows, daubed with untempered mortar, &c. Hence silly people lent both their ears to them (as birds do to the lure or whistle of the fowler), and were soon insnared.

The prophet is as a snare of a fowler, &c. Seducers have their pithanology, their art to persuade before they teach, as the Valentinians had; they are cunning, and insinuate, as

Zanchy testifieth of Laelius Socinus, that by propounding questions he sought to insnare him, *semper interrogans quasi cuperet doceri*, labouring to drop into him certain dangerous principles of the Samosatenian heresy. This sly trick they have learned of that old manslayer, the devil, who by these emissaries of his catcheth simple people, as the fowler doth the bird, by casting baits; or as the fisher, by one fish catcheth another, that he may feed upon both.

And hatred in the house of his God. Satanic hatred (as in the former verse), which these wicked watchmen do stir up against the true prophets, and faithful servants of God. Diodati carrieth it thus, These wicked watchmen are the chief occasion of God's hatred, and of the rejection of his people, who are as it were his family. Luther, Wigandus, and others set this sense upon the whole verse (taking the former part to be spoken of the good watchmen). These ancient watchmen of Ephraim were joined with my God, and wholly for him; but those to this day are a snare, &c., and if there be any yet left of the former stock, they have left off to do good, and are become hateful, as **Psalm 36:2, 3**, their iniquity is found to be hateful. There are that render the words by way of exclamation thus, *O rem odiosam et abominandam in domo Dei!* Oh, hideous and hateful! oh, how hath the devil bestirred him, to stir up such seducers, to do so much mischief among God's people! There are those who interpret these two verses, not of false prophets, but of the true, who were looked upon as fools and madmen by the mad world; ever beside itself in point of salvation, &c. It is not for nought that Rivet saith, *Hi duo versus saris sunt iutricati*, These two verses are very intricate. And of this eighth verse Luther saith, that the brevity thereof hath caused obscurity. Drusius also saith, *Locus iste difficilior est quam vulgus existimat*, This text is harder than most men imagine.

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Verse 9. [[@Bible:Hosea 9:9]]{{field-on:Bible}} **They have deeply corrupted themselves, as in the days of Gibeah.** The people are as bad as possible, shamelessly, lawlessly wicked; nothing better then those sons of Belial, the men of Gibeah, that were sunk to sin's bottom; totally transformed into sin's image, extremely flagitious, so that a worse people could hardly be found upon the face of the earth, **Judges 19:12-30**. As it was given in answer to a godly man who desired to know of God, why Phocas was set up for emperor? because there could not be a worse man found, and that the sins of Christians required it. Lipsius maketh mention of one Tubulus (about Cicero's time) who was so desperately wicked, *ut eius nomen non hominis sed vitii esse videretur*, that his name seemed to be the name not of a man, but of wickedness itself. Lo, such were these men of Gibeah, **Judges 19:22-25**, nothing behind Sodomites in sin; as Samaria now was nothing behind them, and is therefore fitly coupled with her sister Sodom, **Ezekiel 16:46**. The reason of all which is here given, their wicked watchmen; according to that, **Isaiah 3:12**, *qui te ducunt, seducunt*, "they which lead thee cause thee to err"; and again, **Isaiah 9:16**, "the leaders of this people cause them to err; and they that are led of them are destroyed." It is thought that the Gibeah here mentioned, and to which this verse relateth, was the same which, **Joshua 21:17**, is called Gebah; which was a city given to the priests, who being lords and owners of the town, were probably the ringleaders of the rest in that matchless villany; and so were of the number of those worst of sinners, "Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them," **Romans 1:32**.

Now will he remember their iniquities, and visit their sins. Now that they had filled up the measure of their fathers' sins, **Matthew 23:32**, nay, sought to out sin them, *et puduit non esse impudentes* it was not disgusting to be shameful, (as Austin saith somewhere), God would forbear them no longer. Let this be noted, by such as being told of their vile and vicious practices, plead that they do but as their forefathers did. Certainly if the times be as ill as they were heretofore, they are even for that cause much the worse; and God will the sooner remember and visit, pay wicked men for the new and the old. See **Hosea 8:13**.

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Verse 10. [[@Bible:Hosea 9:10]]{{field-on:Bible}}I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness. Where anything is good and sweet, because in a barren and solitary place. Hence they are said to have sucked honey out of the rock, **Deuteronomy 32:13**, that is, water as sweet as honey, because in such necessity. The vine and fig tree are of so great account, as that Jotham in his parable brings in the trees, offering the sovereign power to them, **Judges 9:10, 12**. To these two noble and useful trees, and to their most seasonable and comfortable fruit, doth the Lord here compare Israel; to grapes in the wilderness, and to the firstripe figs, *quae delicatis in summo sunt pretio*, which are counted great dainties. **Micah 7:1**. Our Saviour came with great desire to the fig tree, **Matthew 21:19**, his soul desired the firstripe fruits; and though they had not been full ripe, he could have been glad of them, even of the firstfruits of the fig tree, at her first time, as it is here, *in primordio eius*, of those untimely fruits which the fig tree casteth when shaken of a mighty wind, **Revelation 6:13**. By this expression, then, is set forth God's dear and free love to Israel, when he found him in a desert land, in the waste howling wilderness: he compassed him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye, **Deuteronomy 32:10**. All this and more he did for them, *ex mero motu*, out of pure and unexcited love, according to his own heart, according to the good pleasure of his will, he loved them because he loved them, **Deuteronomy 7:7, 8; 10:15**, in the wilderness especially, where they grieved him forty years together, and tempted him ten times, **Numbers 14:22**. But God had said of Israel, "He is my son, even my firstborn," **Exodus 4:22**, and so, "higher than the kings of the earth," **Psalms 89:27**. He had chosen him for his love, and now loved him for his choice. This son of his he called out of Egypt, to keep a feast to the Lord in the wilderness, **Exodus 5:1**, that is, to serve him, **Exodus 4:23**, to serve him acceptably, **Hebrews 12:28**, to set up his pure worship according to his own prescription in the mount, **Exodus 25:40**. This was altogether as delightful to God as grapes in the wilderness are to a wearied, parched traveller. And this the rather, because it was the kindness of their youth, the love of their espousals, which was as the firstripe of the figs, in the first time, at the first bearing; for the fig tree bears twice a year; and the Egyptian fig tree seven times a year, saith Solinus, *Uno anno septies fructus sufficit*. Now the firstripe fruits are ladies' food, we say, or longing meat. God's soul doth even long after the firstripe fruits, **Micah 7:1**, as we prize even nettle buds when they bud out first. If the vine do but flourish, the pomegranates bud, the tender grapes appear, **Solomon's Song 6:11; 7:12**; he will pour his spirit upon the seed, and his blessing upon the buds, **Isaiah 44:3**. He liketh not those *arbores autumnales*, **Jude 1:12**, autumn trees, that bud at latter end of harvest; he made choice of the almond tree, **Jeremiah 1:11**, because it blossometh first. So he calleth for firstfruits of the trees, and of the earth, in the sheaf, in the threshingfloor, in the dough, in the loaves; yea, for ears of corn dried by the fire, and wheat beaten out of the green ears, **Leviticus 2:14**, to signify how pleasant unto him is the primrose of our age.

But they went to Baalpeor. See **Numbers 25:3**. (See Trapp on "Numbers 25:3") Heb. they went in to him, which *obscenum quid et turpe denotat*, as **Genesis 16:2**; so **Psalms 106:28**, "They joined themselves also to Baalpeor, and ate the sacrifices of the dead," that is, sacrifices offered to the infernal gods, or to Pluto, the devil (whom the Phoenicians called Moth, or Death), in the behalf of the dead.

And separated themselves. Heb. Nazarited themselves, *ad religiose colendum*: they became votaries,

to that shame. *i.e.* to that shameful and abominable idol, that blushful Priapus, *qui referebat viri pudendi speciem* (Tarnov.): and whose worshippers are brought in, saying, *Nos, pudore pulse, stamus sub love, coleis apertis*. Βορβορουμεθα ταῦτα λέγοντες, we rake a dunghill (as Cyril speaks in like case) in discoursing of such dunghill deities. Isidore interpreteth Baalpeor *simulachrum ignominiae*, an image of ignominy: and most sure it is that idolaters, left off their idols in deepest dangers, shall be ashamed of their expectation of help from them, **Jeremiah**

3:19; 11:13.

And their abominations were according as they loved. Or, according as they listed, so some interpret it: or, according as they loved the Moabitish women more or less, so they worshipped their idols: Solomon did the same. Or, they became as detestable as their very idols, which they loved and worshipped. Or, I abominate them as much now as ever I loved them before; and how much that was he had showed in the beginning of the verse. Now there is nothing that goeth more to God's heart than the loss of his love upon an unthankful people. He had healed their backslidings in Egypt (where they had worshipped idols, *Ezekiel 16:26*), he had loved them freely and immensely. Now therefore that they should so slight such a love, to go after such a shame, and so to undo themselves for ever; this was monstrous ingratitude, this was an insufferable injury. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 11. [[@Bible:Hosea 9:11]]{{field-on:Bible}}**As for Ephraim, their glory shall flee away as a bird.** Heb. Ephraim, by a nominative absolute. Or, O Ephraim, as with a sigh, or a shriek, for grief and horror of their ensuing calamity, *exilium, excidium, et exitium*. "The Lord afflicts not willingly, nor grieves the children of men," *Lamentations 3:33*. It goes as much against the heart with him as against the hair with us; witness this pathetic expression. See also *Hosea 11:8*. Their glory, that is, their God, as in the next verse. Or, their children, as in the next words. They worshipped Baalpeor for fruitfulness; but it shall not do: for either they shall be punished with barrenness, or else with a *luctuosa foecunditas* (as Jerome saith of Loeta, who buried many children), a doleful fruitfulness.

Their glory shall flee away as a bird. Suddenly, swiftly, irrecoverably, shall their numerous posterity, which they looked upon as themselves multiplied and eternalized, be cut off, be snatched away by the hand of death; so that, Rachel-like, they shall refuse to be comforted, because her children were not: or as Cratisiclea, in Plutarch, who, seeing her dear children slain before her, and herself ready to be served in like sort, uttered only this word, *Quo pueri, estis profecti?* Poor children, what is become of you?

From the birth, and from the womb, and from the conception. In all these states shall the curse follow them close: either they shall not conceive, or die in the womb, or be stifled in the birth; they shall all prove Ichabods. It is God that gives strength to conceive, as he did to Sarah, Hannah, Elizabeth, &c. It is he that formeth us in the womb, and that by the book, *Psalms 139:15, 16*, and preserveth us there, *Job 10:8*, when neither we can shift for ourselves, nor our parents provide for us. It is he that taketh us thence, *Psalms 22:9, 10*, as a nurse or midwife doth the newborn babe. It is he that keepeth us in the cradle, and in childhood, when we are subject to a thousand deaths and dangers; for *puerilitas est periculorum pelagus*; it is a just wonder that any child attains to maturity. But if wicked men's children do so, a soft they do (for "they are full of children, and leave the rest of their substance to their babes," *Psalms 17:14*), yet it follows, {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 12. [[@Bible:Hosea 9:12]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Though they bring up children, yet will I bereave them.** "If his children be multiplied, it is for the sword; and his offspring shall not be satisfied with bread," *Job 27:14*. This was fulfilled in Ahab's seventy sons, beheaded together, *2 Kings 10:6, 7*, in whom he had vainly promised himself the establishment of his house, which God had threatened to root out: in Jehu and his posterity after the fourth generation: those Romans that went out against the enemy at the *Porta scelerata* wicked gate, (as it was thereupon called) and never returned again; and that Eckius Raschachius, a German captain, at the siege of Buda, A.D. 1541, whose son, a valiant young gentleman, being got out of the army without his father's knowledge, bare himself so gallantly in fight against the enemy, in the sight of his father and the army, that he was highly commended of all men, and especially of his father, that knew him not at all. Yet before he could clear himself he was compassed in

by the enemy, and valiantly fighting, slain. Raschachius, exceedingly moved with the death of so brave a man, ignorant how near he touched himself, turning about to the other captains said, This worthy gentleman, whatsoever he be, is worthy of eternal commendation, and to be most honourably buried by the whole army. As the rest of the captains were with like compassion approving his speech, the dead body of the unfortunate son rescued, was presented to the most miserable father; which caused all them that were there present to shed tears. But such a sudden and inward grief surprised the aged father, and struck so to his heart, that after he had stood a while speechless, with his eyes set in his head, he suddenly fell down dead.

Yea, woe also to them when I depart from them. This is indeed worse than all the rest; this is that only evil spoken of by Ezekiel: hell itself is nothing else but a separation from God's presence, with the ill consequents thereof; and the tears of hell are not sufficient to bewail the loss of that beautiful vision. How miserable was Cain when cast off by God! Saul, when forsaken of him! David, when deserted, though but for a few months! Job, for a few years, Suidas saith seven! While God was graciously with him, and prospered him, he was Jobab (that same mentioned **Genesis 36:34**, as some think), but when under sense of God's absence, contracted into Job. See the like, **Genesis 17:5; Ruth 1:20**. His desertion was far more comfortable than David's; it was probational only, but David's penal, for chastisement of some way of wickedness. O lay we hold upon God (as the spouse doth upon her Beloved), and cry, as the prophet did, "Lord, leave us not," **Jeremiah 14:9**. If he seem to be about, and his back be turned, cry aloud after him, as the blind man in the Gospel did, till Jesus stood: set up thy note, as Micah did after his lost idols, **Judges 18:24**. Ye have taken away my gods, saith he, and what have I more? as if he should have said, I esteem all that you have left me as nothing, now that my gods are gone. Jerusalem, the joy of the whole earth, pleased not Absalom, unless he might see David's face. God was no sooner gone from Miriam but the leprosy appeared in her face. But of this before. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 13. [[@Bible:Hosea 9:13]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Ephraim, as I saw Tyrus, is planted in a pleasant place.** And therefore pleaseth himself as not forsaken of God. But he may be angry enough with those that yet outwardly prosper; as he was with the old world buried in security; with Sodom, who had fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness; with the land of Shinar (where Babel was built, **Genesis 11:2-4**), fruitful beyond credulity, as Herodotus and Pliny testify; with Tyre, a maritime and magnificent city, planted in a pleasant place, in the very heart of the sea; as Venice is at this day, *media insuperabilis unda*, environed with her embracing Neptune, to whom (as the ceremony of her throwing a ring into the sea implies) she marrieth herself with yearly nuptials, and hath for her motto, *Nec fluctu nec flatu movetur*, Nor winds nor waves can stir her. Of the pomp, pride, and populousness of Tyre read **Ezekiel 26:1-28:19**. Lo, such a one was Ephraim, when ripe for ruin, near to an utter downfall. What can be more fair and flourishing than a grainfield or vineyard a little before the harvest, the vintage? Physicians say that the uttermost degree of bodily health is next unto sickness. Glass, or other metals, cast into the fire, shine most when ready to melt and run. This was Tyre's case, this was Ephraim's, pleasantly planted, but marked out for destruction; as a carpenter cometh to a wood, and with his axe marketh out the fairest trees for felling. Ephraim is the worse because he seeth Tyre yet prosper. But God will take that from heathen Tyre that he will not take from Ephraim; and the sunshine of prosperity doth but ripen the sins of them both for divine vengeance.

They shall bring forth children to the murderers. As to God's executioners; and so show themselves not parents, but parricides; because they betray their children (as Babel did by her idolatry, **Psalms 137:8; Isaiah 13:8**) into the hands of the enemy. Wherein they are more cruel than that false schoolmaster in Italy (mentioned by Livy and Florus), that brought forth his scholars, the flower of the nobility and gentry there, to Hannibal; who, if he had not been more

merciful than otherwise, they had all been murdered. But what shall we say of such wretched parents, as bring forth children to that old manslayer, the devil? and how shall such undone children curse their careless parents in hell, throughout all eternity! If the Lord also could say of those poor children that were sacrificed to Moloch (the Chaldee paraphrase understands this text of those children), "Thou hast slain my children, and delivered them to cause them to pass through the fire for them" (namely, for the images of the foresaid idols), **Ezekiel 16:21**, what will he say, or rather, what will he not say, to those bloody parents, that carry their children with them, to Satan's slaughter house? **{{field-off:Bible}}**

Verse 14. **[[@Bible:Hosea 9:14]]{{field-on:Bible}}****Give them, O Lord: what wilt thou give?** This question implieth abundance of affection in the prophet, praying for this forlorn people devoted to destruction. It is the property of gracious spirits to be more sensible of, and more deeply affected with, the calamities that are coming upon the wicked, than those wicked ones themselves are; as Daniel was for Nebuchadnezzar, whose dream he had interpreted, **Daniel 4:19**, and as Habakkuk was for the Chaldeans, whose destruction he had afore prophesied, **Habakkuk 3:16**. Hosea likewise (out of great commiseration of Ephraim's direful and dreadful condition) sets himself to pray for them; though himself seems set at a stand, and in a manner nonplussed, that he cannot well tell what to ask for them. God once made a fair offer to a foul sinner, even to Ahaz, that sturdy stigmatic, **Isaiah 7:11**, "Ask thee a sign of the Lord thy God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above. But Ahaz said" (churlishly enough), "I will not ask, neither will I try the Lord," **Hosea 9:12**, he would none of God's kindness, which yet the Lord there heapeth upon him, **Hosea 9:14**, that where sin abounded grace might superabound. Had our prophet had but half such an offer, or any the least such encouragement, oh how gladly would he have embraced it, how hastily would he have caught at it, as those Syrians did at Ahab's kind words, **1 Kings 20:33**? But he, considering the severity and certainty of God's judgments denounced against them, **Hosea 9:12, 13**, and being much amazed thereat, sets himself to intercede and make request for his deplored countrymen; as Samuel did for Saul, rejected by God, **1 Samuel 16:1**, as Paul did for the obdurate Jews, **Romans 11:3**. And because he saw that he could not obtain of the impartial judge of the world to let go such an impenitent people altogether unpunished, he begs for them, that of two evils they may suffer the least; and rather bring forth no children at all, or children that may die as soon as born (this had been threatened **Hosea 9:11, 12**), than "bring forth children to the murderer": it being the greatest misery that can befall a tender hearted parent, to see his dear children butchered before his eyes, as Zedekiah and Mauricius, the emperor, did; and before them both the king of Edom, whose eldest son was by the king of Moab sacrificed upon the wall, in his father's sight, **2 Kings 3:27; Amos 2:1**. Thus Rabbi Kimchi giveth the sense of this text: Give, Lord, what thou wilt give? viz. that they may suffer in the womb, or at least in their infancy, that which they should otherwise suffer by the enemies' sword. Confer **Jeremiah 20:18; Luke 23:28; Ecclesiastes 4:2; Job 3:10, 11**. The prophet knew well that God is never so bitterly bent against a people or person, but that something he will yield to faithful and fervent prayer, **Matthew 24:20**.

"Flectitur iratus voce rogante Deus." **{{field-off:Bible}}**

Verse 15. **[[@Bible:Hosea 9:15]]{{field-on:Bible}}****All their wickedness is in Gilgal.** We have had the prophet's prayer: follows now the Lord's answer in this and the following verse, where we have the former threats repeated, to show that God was unchangeably resolved upon their ruin; and that, first, for their idolatry, secondly, for their other vile practices, thirdly, for the apostasy of their princes: all this here. Their idolatry was the worse, because committed at Gilgal, where God had done much for their forefathers; (**See Trapp on "Hosea 4:15"**) The quality of the place adds much to the greatness of the sin, "In the land of uprightness they will deal unjustly," **Isaiah 26:10**, "the faithful city is become a harlot," **Isaiah 1:21; 5:7**, he looked for judgment, but behold a scab. The devil desireth to set himself up in such places as have

been formerly eminent for God's sincere service, as Gilgal once was, **1 Samuel 10:8; 11:15**; for the ark of the covenant was there, which these idolaters had not. So in the holy land (as they still call it), which is possessed by Mahometans and Papists: so Wittenberg, where Luther first began to reform, is now deformed by divers errors and heresies, as Polanus observeth. Wilkinson against the Familists reports the like of Colchester in Essex.

For there I hated them. Angry I was with them before, and grieved for their other misdoings; but their idolatry hath enraged me with a holy hatred of them, and that there, where I showed greatest love to their forefathers. God thinks the worse of such places wherein idolaters rest and roost; like as he thinks the better of the towns and houses where his faithful servants inhabit, as **Isaiah 49:16**, their walls are ever before him.

For the wickedness of their doings, I will drive them out. Revenge and expulsion is the next effect of hatred. There is a great deal of other wicked doings where idolatry (that wickedness with a witness, as it is herd styled) is set up. Surely of this abominable thing we may well say, as St James doth of discord, "Where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evll work," **James 3:16**. But God will not endure such doings in his house: David would not in his, **Psalms 101:7**. Solomon entertained Jeroboam into his house and service, because he saw the young man was suitable for the work, **1 Kings 11:28**, but he proved a mischief to and against his house. Many today scruple not to entertain and harbour such as are serviceable, though otherwise their religion be either a Popish puppet and calf worship, or a flat irreligion. These have little of God in them.

I will drive them out of mine house, saith he, I will love them no more. A fearful sentence, like that **Jeremiah 16:13**, I will show them no favour: this was worse to them than their captivity there threatened. Ephraim had a great deal of outward peace and prosperity, but love they had none; because none of those graces that flow from election and accompany salvation. These are God's love tokens, that all must court. But oh! take heed (saith one) if thou addest any more to thy wickednesses, lest that this dreadful sentence be pronounced in heaven against thee, I will love thee no more, Heb. I will add no more to love thee.

All their princes are revolvers. *Col sarehem sorerim*, an elegance past the capability of translation. The princes were all rebellious and refractory, uncounsellable, unpersuadable (**ἀπειθοῦντες**, as the Seventy render it), like that king of Scotland that would seldom ask counsel, but never follow any; so wedded he was to his own will. (Dan. Hist. of Eng. fol. 207). *Elati superbia volebant superiores esse verbo*, saith Luther upon this text. Jeroboam-like they would stretch out their hand against a prophet, **1 Kings 13:4**, that should cry against their altars, and deal plainly with them, as Hosea here doth; testifying to their faces that they were all apostates, and made Israel sin. Princes should be the lord keepers of both tables of the law; as it was written upon the sword of Charles the Great (*Decem praeceptorum custos Caxolus*); but when they are naught, as here, the people take after them. *Principis vita censura est et cynosura*. **{{field-off:Bible}}**

Verse 16. **[[@Bible:Hosea 9:16]]{{field-on:Bible}}****Ephraim is smitten.** As a tree that hath received a deadly wound, or that hath the bark pulled off it, so that the sap cannot find the way to the branches; or that is blasted, as the fig tree in the Gospel was by Christ's curse; and as a vine smitten by great hailstones, and beaten down to the ground. "The Lord shall smite Israel," saith another prophet, "as a reed is shaken in the water, and he shall root up Israel," &c., **1 Kings 14:15**, root and branch in one day.

The root is dried up, they shall bear no fruit. "The root of the righteous shall not be moved," **Proverbs 12:3**. "The root of the matter is found in me," saith Job, **Job 19:28**. "The holy seed shall be the substance thereof," **Isaiah 6:13**; "as a teil tree, and as an oak, whose substance is in them." The Duke of Florence gave for his ensign a great tree with many spreading boughs,

one of them being cut off with this posy, *Uno avulso non deficit alter Aureus* (Virg.). But it is otherwise with the ungodly; as it was with Nebuchadnezzar, **Daniel 4:14**, nay, worse; for not so much as a stump of their roots is left in the earth, but they are written in the earth, **Jeremiah 17:13**, written childless, **Jeremiah 22:30**, their root is dried up, the parents shall perish; they shall bear no fruit, beget no children, which are the fruit of the womb, **Deuteronomy 28:11, 18; Luke 1:42**. Doeg's doom shall befall them, **Psalms 52:5**, "God shall destroy thee for ever; he shall take thee away, and pluck thee out of thy dwelling place, and root thee out of the land of the living. Selah."

Yea, though they bring forth. As Ahab did seventy sons, after that God had threatened his utter extirpation, following the work of generation so much the rather; (*See Trapp on "Hosea 9:13"*)

Yet I will slay. For it is God that lets in and sets on the enemy; it is he that killeth and maketh alive, **1 Samuel 2:6**.

Even the beloved fruit of their womb. Heb. their desires, or their desirable ones, their dearest children, called by Cicero also his *desideria*, *Valete, mea desideria, valete* (Cic.). The Latins seem to have their *filius*, a son, from *φίλος*, beloved: there is an ocean of love in a father's heart; though the more he loveth the less he is loved sometimes (as David by Absalom), and is sure, if he belong to God, to be crossed in his earthly idol. Children are certain cares, but uncertain comforts; they may prove as Augustus' three children did, whom he called his three ulcers or cancers, *Tres vomicas tria carcinomata* (Sueton.). {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 17. [[@Bible:Hosea 9:17]]{{field-on:Bible}} **My God will cast them away.** My God, not their God, for they are castaways and apostates; see the like, **1 John 5:17**, and learn to stick to God the closer when others start from him; and to secure our own interest in a general defection, by siding with God, and subscribing, as here the prophet doth, to his perfect righteousness in the rejection and destruction of reprobates.

Will cast them away. With disdain and detestation, as vile and execrable. He will do it, saith the prophet here, not without a great deal of grief, as finding that God was fully resolved, and would not alter. The eternity of Israel will not lie, nor repent, **1 Samuel 15:29**; for he is not a man, that he should repent, saith Samuel to Saul, that castaway; and it is very dreadful; as indeed it is for any wicked men to have such as have interest in God to declare against them; since "the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him," **Psalms 25:14**, and their sentence is not to be slighted. God's messengers especially, out of their acquaintance with their Master's proceedings, can foresee and foretell a punishment.

Because they did not hearken unto him. *Haec notabilis est sententia*, This is a notable sentence, saith Luther upon the text; and worthy to be written upon all our walls and windows. Death came into the world by the ear, so must life; for it is, Hear, and your souls shall live; and they that will not hear the instruction of life are doomed to destruction, as were Eli's sons, **1 Samuel 2:25**, and Amaziab, **2 Chronicles 25:16**. A heavy ear is a singular judgment, **Isaiah 6:10**, an uncircumcised ear a forerunner of ruin, **Jeremiah 6:10, 11**. Oh pray God to pull off that filthy foreskin, and to give us a hearing ear (that way to wisdom), an understanding heart, such as Solomon begged, **1 Kings 3:9**. Pray that he would bore our ears, as **Psalms 40:6**, and make the bore big enough, that we may not only hear, but hearken; listen as for life. "Hear and give ear, be not proud, for the Lord hath spoken it," **Jeremiah 13:15**: when God hath spoken once let us hear it twice, as David did, **Psalms 62:11**; he preached over the sermon again to himself at home. We must do with the word's directions, as we do with oil to a stiff joint; rub and chafe them on our hearts by deep and frequent meditation and prayer; lest else we hear with these in the text,

Because they did not hearken unto him, they shall be wanderers among the nations.

Heb. *Nodedim*: Cain's curse shall befall them. "A fugitive and a vagabond shall I be upon the earth," **Genesis 4:12**; but could not wander so wide as to miss hell, nor flee so far as from his own evil conscience. Lo, this is the case of these wandering Jews, a dejected and despised nation, exiled out of the world by a common consent of all people, till God turn again their captivity as the streams in the south, till he gather the outcasts of Israel. {{field-off:Bible}}

Chapter 10

Verse 1. [[@Bible:Hosea 10:1]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Israel is an empty vine.** Heb. an emptying vine, **רִיקָה** losing her fruit, and so deceiving the owner. How can Israel but be empty of all good, of all fruits of the Spirit, when he will not hearken unto God, nor dwell under the droppings of a powerful ministry? when he is cast off by God, **Hosea 9:17**, who fills his people with the fruits of righteousness, **Philippians 1:11**: and is not a wilderness a land of darkness unto them? **Jeremiah 2:31**, when his root is dried up, and all his juice and strength runs out into leaves, so that is *frondosa vitis* (as the Vulgate renders it), a leafy vine; such as are our profligate professors, and carnal gospellers, and such as was St James's solifidian, that empty fellow, as he calleth him, **κενέ**, **James 2:20**, when, lastly, the Holy Spirit (those two golden pipes, **Zechariah 4:12**) empties not into his candlestick the golden oils of all precious graces, as from two blessed olive branches. The vine and the olive, two of the best fruit trees, grow best together, saith Melancthon. If Israel's heart be divided from God, as **Hosea 10:2**, and hath not his fruit found in him, as **Hosea 14:8**, what marvel if he prove (as **Nahum 2:10**) empty and void and waste; and though (as **Nahum 2:2**) the Lord turn away the excellency of Jacob, as the excellency of Israel; for the emptiers have emptied them out, and married their vine branches?

He beareth fruit to himself. As he beareth fruit in and from himself (like the ivy, which, though it clasp about the oak, and sometimes kills it, yet brings forth all its berries, by virtue of its own root) so he beareth fruit for himself, or to himself. Profit, pleasure, and preferment is his Trinity; and corrupt self is all these in unity. He fasteth to himself, as those hypocrites, **Zechariah 7:5**; he prays, hears, confers, giveth alms, &c., out of sinful self-love. In all that he doth, *sibi soli velificatur*, he seeks his own ends only; as the eagle, when he flieth highest, hath his eye on his prey. *In parabola ovis capras suas quaerit*; in the parabol of the sheep, he sought for his own sheep; like the fish in the Gospel, either he is dumb, or hath nothing but silver in his mouth, he is a notorious self-seeker; he bears fruit to himself, he sacrificeth to himself, as Sejanus did. As Prometheus is fabled to have stolen fire from Jupiter, so the false Israelite would defraud God of heaven, if he could tell how. Spira confessed that he used prayer only as a bridge to bring him to heaven; and therefore he despaired of acceptance, as well he might: for how should God relish such sorry hedge-fruits? how should he say of such clusters of Gomorrah, "Destroy it not, for there is a blessing in it?" **Isaiah 65:8**. The good soul, as she bears all her fruit in Christ, **John 15:2**, so she keeps all her fruit for him, **Solomon's Song 5:13**, and cries out, *Propter te, Domine, propter te*. On account of you, Lord, on account of you. As all his springs are in her, so all she has and is, is for him; and if she had more and better, she could think it worthy of him. Hence it is, that when he comes into his garden (upon her invitation), **Solomon's Song 4:16**, to eat his pleasant fruits, he gathereth his myrrh with his spice, he eateth his honey with his honeycomb, as it were, crust and crumb together, **Solomon's Song 5:1**. He takes in good part the better and worse performed services; he passeth by failings in the manner, where the heart is upright for the main: wicked men present also some kind of fruit (as the oak bears some kind of apples and acorns, but they are not man's meat; swine indeed will hunch them up; so the devil likes well enough of these self-fruits), but they make not to God's palate. *Delicata res est Spiritus Dei* The Spirit of God is a charming person. (Tertull.), our oaken apples will not down with him. Self must be strained out, and God set up, that ye may be called "Trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he alone may be glorified," **Isaiah 61:3**; "being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God," **Philippians 1:11**.

According to the multitude of his fruit, he hath increased the altars. *Iuxta ubertatem, exuberant simulachris*, saith the Vulgate elegantly; but yet short of the original, where there is a

dainty alliteration, and a double polyptoton. ⁽¹⁷⁾ For the sense: the prophet, as he had accused Israel of emptiness and selfishness, so he doth here of unthankfulness, in abusing God's plenty to the promoting of idolatry; as if God had hired them to be wicked. See the like before, **Hosea 2:8**. (See Trapp on "Hosea 2:8") and consider how far against the ingenuity of a Christian it is to be least for God when he hath most from him; when his own turn is served, then to turn his back from the author of all his good; to do as the moon, that getteth farthest off the sun when she is fullest of his light.

According to the goodness of his land. Idolaters desire to be in the place where there are good lands, fruitful fields; that they may lavish upon their images; that they may so beautify, or (as the Hebrew word here is) bonify their images, as Jezebel did her head with tires and brave dresses, **2 Kings 9:30**. "Their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another god," or that endow another god, and give gifts to him, as that text may be rendered, **Psalms 16:4**. What excessive cost the superstitious Papists bestow upon their idols, or images (which are one and the same, as we see here), and especially upon their Lady of Loretto, the Jesuit Tursellinus hath set forth to the world. And why they so much desire and endeavour to recover England (praying for it, as is to be seen written on the gates of their colleges, *Iesu, Iesu, converte Angliam: fiat, fiat* Jesus, Jesus, convert the English, let it happen, let it happen) the reason is evident; it is a good land, and would easily yield them good images, stately altars, &c. England was wont to be called the pope's ass, and his *puteus inexhaustus*, unexhausted well, his pit of treasure, that could never be drawn dry: he was wont to say, that he could never want money so long as he could hold a pen in his fingers to write to England. He received here hence yearly above nine tons of gold. Now, according to what they received they expended upon their images. What a shame it is, then, for true worshippers, that there is no proportion between their increases for God and their increases from God, that those that are rich in this world are not rich in good works; that they lay not by for pious and charitable uses, according as God hath blessed them, **1 Corinthians 16:2**, but that they should be the richer the harder; as children that have their mouths full, and both hands full, yet will part with none, but spill it rather. It is observed of men that grow very fat, that they have so much the less blood. And so the fatter many men are in their estates the less blood, life, and spirits they have for God. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 2. [[@Bible:Hosea 10:2]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Their heart is divided.** *sc.* from God; whose soul therefore is justly disjointed from them, **Jeremiah 6:8**. They professed to worship the true God, and yet they transferred the honour due to him alone upon dumb idols; they halted between two, and would needs serve two lords; but God would have none of that. "Be the gods of the heathen good fellows," saith one, "the true God is a jealous God, and will not part stakes with another." The double-minded man is not for his service; for he will be served truly, that there be no halting; and, totally, that there be no halving. Good therefore and worthy of all acceptation is the counsel of St James to such, **James 4:8**, "Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye doubleminded," or ye cloven-hearted, δίψυχοι. Out with the corruption that cleaveth to your hearts; and then there will be a constance and evenness in your minds, mouths, and manners; which is absolutely necessary to such as draw nigh to God in holy duties, and the contrary abominable, **Isaiah 29:13**.

Now shall they be found faulty. Sinners against their own souls, procurers of their own ruth and ruin. And this they shall so clearly be convinced of (as *afflictio dat intellectum*, smart makes wit), that they shall cry out, with Joseph's brethren, We are verily guilty, **Genesis 42:21**, and conscience awakened, shall answer as Reuben in the next verse, "Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin" (O do not this abominable thing): "and ye would not hear?" Did not the

¹⁷ A rhetorical figure consisting in the repetition of a word in different cases or inflexions in the same sentence. (ED)

prophets foretell you what would be the fruit of your idolatries? did they not even slit up your hearts with the sacrificing knife of God's word (sharper than any two-edged sword), and lay all your evil thoughts naked and open, or dissected, quartered, and cleft in the backbone (as the apostle's word, τετραχλισμένα, signifieth, **Hebrews 4:13**), but ye would not then be convinced of all, and falling down upon your face, worship God, as **1 Corinthians 14:24, 25**? Now you are found faulty, or guilty, and cry *peccavi*; I have sinned, or now you are, that is, shortly ye shall be, wasted and desolated, as some render it; or now shall they die (*interibunt*, so the Vulgate), shall they perish; how should they do otherwise whose heart, that seat of life, is cut in twain; and whom the jealous and just God will cut in twain (διχοτομήσει), tearing their souls from their bodies by death, Satan's slaughter man, and appointing them their portion with hypocrites, **Matthew 24:51**.

He shall break down their altars. He, that is, God, my God, **Hosea 9:17**, for this Chapter is a continuation of that (though Gualter makes it the beginning of Hosea's seventh sermon). He, that excelleth he, that Aph-hu, **2 Kings 2:14**. Even he, proved by five reasons to be one of God's attributes, by Mr Weemiss in his exposition of the moral law, Part I p. 162. *Vide sis*. Others render it thus: It shall break down their altars, *Ipsium cor*. It, that is, their heart (which indeed is the next antecedent), and happy had it been for them if their heart, divided from their wickedness, had been active in breakng down their altars in the prophet Isaiah's sense, **Isaiah 27:9**, as a fruit of their true repentance: "By this therefore," that is, by their affliction sanctified, "shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged; and this is all the fruit" (and good fruit too) "to take away his sin; when" (in testimony of his sound repentance and self-aborrancy for former idolatry) "he maketh all the stones of the altar as chalk-stones that are beaten in sunder, the groves and images shall not stand up." But it appears not anywhere that Israel was so well affected, though grievously afflicted; that his divided heart prompted him to any such holy practice. Rather it brought ruin upon him to the decolling of his altars and spoiling of his images (which he so doted on and delighted in), and so might well say to him, as Apollodorus the tyrant's heart did, who dreamed one night that he was flayed by the Scythians, and boiled in a caldron; and that his heart spake to him out of the kettle; It is I that have drawn thee to all this: thou mayest thank me for all, **ἐγὼ σοι τούτων αἰτία**. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 4. [[@Bible:Hosea 10:4]]{{field-on:Bible}} **They have spoken words.** Bubbles of words, great swelling words, (as **2 Peter 2:18**) thereby thinking to bear down and outface the prophets, and the godly party. They speak violent words (as the Chaldee hath it), robust words, as if they would yet carry it (though their king could not help them) by confederacies and covenants confirmed with oaths; holding that rule of the Priscillianists for gospel (as they say),

"Iura, periura: secretum prodere noli:"

and that maxim of Machiavel, that religion itself (in contracts and covenants) should not be cared for; but only the appearance, because the credit is a help, the use a cumber; but all these are but words, saith the prophet, and those but wind; they shall do them no good, because without God.

*"Quid nissus? risus; conamina? inania, vana:
Conventus? ventus; foedera? verba mera."*

Swearing falsely in making a covenant. A foul business, whether it be understood of covenant with God (whereof before) or with the Assyrian, with whom they broke, to ingratiate with "So, king of Egypt," **2 Kings 17:4**. How God plagueth perjurers, &c., covenant breakers, see **Zechariah 5:3; Malachi 3:5**. (See Trapp on "**Zechariah 5:3**") He will (See Trapp On "**mal 3:5**") appoint the sword to avenge the quarrel of his covenant, **Leviticus 26:25**, as he did upon Jerusalem, not leaving there one stone upon another; upon those seven golden candlesticks,

long since broken in pieces for their breach of covenant; upon Bohemia, that seat of the first open and authorized Reformation whatever will yet become of England.

Thus judgment springeth up as hemlock in the furrows of the field. Heb. of my field, where I have ploughed and made long furrows, fitted for good seed, wherein I "looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry," **Isaiah 5:7**. This root of bitterness, these stalks of hemlock (that venomous weed, full of deadly poison), is bad anywhere, but worst of all when found in God's field, noted for a habitation of justice and mountain of holiness, **Jeremiah 31:23**. Where should a man look for justice, but where holiness is professed? since *primo praecepto reliquorum omnium observantia praecipitur*, the second table of the law is included in the first; yea, the keeping of all the ten is enjoined in the first commandment? Of Rome it was anciently said, that all the neighbouring cities were the better for her example of singular care to do justice. It should be so said of the city of God; where when judgment is turned into wormwood, and the fruit of righteousness into hemlock, as **Amos 6:12**, well, it may grow till it be ripe in the field, but God will not suffer it to shed, to grow again, but cuts it up by a just and seasonable vengeance. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 5. [[@Bible:Hosea 10:5]]{{field-on:Bible}} **The inhabitants of Samaria shall fear.** *sc.* When God shall break the necks of their altars, and spoil their images, as **Hosea 10:2**. They feared not God, by their own confession, **Hosea 10:3**, therefore they are full of base fears, whereof the true fear of God would have freed them, **Matthew 10:28**. He that feareth God needeth not fear any other thing, or person, **Psalms 112:7**; but can say with David, "My feet," that is, mine affections, "stand in an even place," that is, in an equal tenor; *Impavidum ferient ruinae*. "I shall rest in the day of trouble, when he cometh up against the people" (saith holy Habakkuk, **Habakkuk 3:16**). I shall rejoice in the God of my salvation; when those that fear not God shall be at their wits' end; yea, they shall be mad for the sight of their eyes that they shall see, **Deuteronomy 28:34**.

Because of the calves of Bethaven. Calves in the feminine gender, she-calves, by way of contempt and derision, as Jerome noteth; as **Isaiah 3:12**, "women rule over them." The Jews at this day look upon women as a lower creation, and do not allow them to enter into the synagogue. As among the Turks they never go to church, neither is there any reckoning made of their religion. The heathens had the like conceits and expressions: *O Phrygiae, neque enim Phryges*—Ἀχιδὲς οὐκ ἔρ' Ἀχαιοί, &c. (Virg. Aeneid. 9. Hom. II 8). We cannot speak overbasely of idols; the Scripture calleth them excrements, nothings, &c. Luther wonders that Jeroboam, knowing how ill the people had sped with their golden calf in the wilderness, should yet dare to set up two at Dan and Bethel (both here called Bethaven, or houses of iniquity); and a man might as well wonder that, having as great a miracle wrought before him in the drying up of his hand, as St Paul at his conversion, yet was he no whit wrought upon. But if God strike not the stroke, if the Spirit set not in with the means, all is to no purpose. Who would think that men should ever be so void of reason as to trust in that which cannot save itself from the enemies' hands? as these calves of Bethaven, and as the Papists' breadden god, brought into the field by the rebels of Norfolk in King Edward VI's days; neither was there lacking masses, crosses, banners, candlesticks, with holy bread, and holy water plenty, to defend them from devils and all adversary power; which, in the end, neither could help their friends nor save themselves from the hands of their enemies; but again both the consecrated god, and all the trumpery about him, was taken in a cart, and there lay all in the dust; leaving to them a notable lesson of bitter experience, saith Mr Fox, who relateth it.

For the people thereof. *i.e.* of the calf, to whom they had dedicated themselves; as the Moabites are called the people of Chemosh, **Numbers 21:29**, and Turks Mahometans. "For all people will walk every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever," **Micah 4:5**.

Do mourn over it. As those women wept for Tammuz, **Ezekiel 8:14**, that is, for Osiris, king of Egypt, whose image they had adored, as those, **Revelation 18:15**, wailed over that old whore, when they saw her a broiling; as idolatrous Micah cried after his gods, **Judges 18:24**, and as the people of the East Indies, in the isle Ceylon, having an ape's tooth which they had consecrated gotten from them, mourned, and offered an incredible mass of treasure to recover it. Should not men then mourn after the sincere service of God, and hold it dear to their souls?

And the priests thereof that rejoiced in it. Heb. the Chemarims, or chimney chaplains, that were all black and sooty with the smoke of the sacrifices, and were therefore called Chemarim, or Camilli, as affecting a black habit, *sanctimoniae ergo*; therefore sacred, or having black brand marks upon their bodies, in honour of their idols, whereof these haply were the *Hierophantae*, or masters of the ceremonies, and made a great gain thereof the ground of their joy; for it is κέρδος because κέραι ἦδει, gain so called, because it delights the heart.

For the glory thereof. *i.e.* of the calf, the beauty and bravery of its worship, all is now utterly gone. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 6. [[@Bible:Hosea 10:6]]{{field-on:Bible}}**It shall be also carried unto Assyria, &c.** As no small part of the spoil, shall this Deafter be carried captive; being so far unable to save others, that he cannot save himself.

For a present to king Jareb. See **Hosea 3:1-3**, in *signum omnimodae victoriae*; so Aeneas (Aeneid. 1),

"Ilium in Italiam portat, victosque penates,"

though in another sense; yet they must needs be poor despicable deities that fall into the enemies' hands, see **Isaiah 46:2**. The ark indeed fell into the Philistines' hands; but the ark was not God's, but only a sign of his presence, which God suffered so to be taken for a punishment to his people, and for a plague to his enemies, whom he "smote in the hinder parts, and so put them to a perpetual reproach," **Psalms 78:66**.

Ephraim shall receive shame. Because they hoped and harped upon better things, **Job 6:20**. O pray, with David, that our hopes be not disappointed; that they make us not ashamed, as Paul speaketh, **Romans 5:5**; that they prove not as the spider's web, curiously framed, but to catch flies only; or as the child's hope, who catcheth at the shadow on the wall which he thinks he holds fast, or at the butterfly, which if he catch, he hath no such great catch of.

And Israel shall be ashamed of his own counsels. Of their impolitic plots and practices, in dividing themselves from David's house, and setting up unwarranted worships, calling in foreign helps, &c. Their own counsels have cast them down, **Job 18:7**, because they were acted by false principles, and aimed at their own corrupt ends. They took counsel, but not of God; and covered with a covering, but not of his Spirit, that they might add sin to sin, **Isaiah 30:1**. They made not the word the man of their counsel, as David did, **Psalms 119:24**, neither prayed they as he, **Psalms 73:24**, Guide me, Lord, with thy counsel, and so bring me to glory. In a word, they perished by their own counsels, **Hosea 11:6**, whereby they provoked God, and so were brought low by their iniquity, **Psalms 106:48**, and then they were ashamed of their own counsel, they saw themselves befooled by their carnal reason, and by that which they call reason of state, which indeed is treason, unless it be seasoned with justice and religion. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 7. [[@Bible:Hosea 10:7]]{{field-on:Bible}}**As for Samaria, her king is cut off, as the foam upon the waters.** An apt simile (whereof this prophet is full). Her king (not her idols, as some sense it), though gotten into Samaria, a strong city, so well victualled and fortified as to hold out a siege of three years' continuance, yet shall be cut off, or silenced, as **Hosea 4:7**, "as

the foam upon the waters," *bulla evanida*, more weak than water, whereof it ariseth, and whereby it is wherried away, and cannot resist; or, as a bubble blown up by every small wind, and as easily blown out again; it no sooner appears but it disappears. Lo, such are the greatest kings and kingdoms, when God taketh them in their wickedness. "He cuts off the spirit of princes," **Psalm 76:12**, he slips them off (so the Hebrew is) as one would slip off a flower between one's fingers; or as one would slip off a bunch of grapes. The kingdoms of the earth are like "foam upon the waters": 1. For their seeming brightness; 2. For their great eminence; 3. For their instability and inability to resist; 4. For their sudden fall and disappearance. The Turkish empire (which hath swallowed up so many glorious empires and renowned kingdoms) laboureth with nothing more than the weightiness of itself; and shall shortly be cut off as foam, and live no otherwise than by fame, as others now do; though for the present it be no whit inferior in greatness and strength to the greatest monarchies that ever yet were upon the face of the earth; the Roman empire only excepted. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 8. [[@Bible:Hosea 10:8]]{{field-on:Bible}} **The high places also of Aven**, &c. Sept. the altars, *ab Alto dicta* (תומב whence βωμοι). Of Aven, for Bethaven (whereof before), a place so hateful now, that God loathes at large to mention it; he even cuts off the head of it, as he had threatened to do by the altars, **Hosea 10:2**. So Jeconiah degenerating is Coniah, &c.

The sin of Israel. That damning sin of idolatry here committed, that wickedness with a witness, which makes God abhor places as well as persons, and turns them into sin as it were. "What is the transgression of Jacob? is it not Samaria? and what are the high places of Judah? are they not Jerusalem," **Micah 1:5**.

Shall be destroyed. Thus, man's sin brings destruction upon the creatures. It is as poison in a glass, that causeth the glass to be broken, and cast upon the dunghill. The vessels that held the sin offering, if made of earth, they were to be broken; if of brass, or other metals, to be purged with fire; as one day the earth and visible heavens also shall be for the defilement that man's sin hath set upon them.

The thorn and the thistle shall come upon their altars. There shall be *nil nisi solitudo in terris, aegritudo in animis*, &c. (**See Trapp on "Hosea 9:6"**)

They shall say to the mountains, Cover us. This they shall say out of the sense and terror of God's just judgments driving them to desperation.—*tellus prius ima dehiseat*, &c. Aristides commendeth Themistocles for this, that he never was so perplexed by any evil occurrence as to wish that the earth would swallow him up quick, or to pronounce the dead happy. Rivet well observeth here that Judea, as it was full of hills and rocks, so they were wont to dig themselves therein caves and dens, wherein to hide in time of danger. To these David often repaired, and so secured himself from Saul. And to these he alludeth when he calleth God his rock, **Psalm 18:2**, and the rock of his refuge, **Psalm 94:22**. And of these places of security Josephus writeth, describing the form of them (Antiq. 1. 14, cap. 26; B. J. i. 26). Now when they were in those holes of the hills, and were distressed by the enemy there, what wonder though they said to the mountains, Fall upon us, cover us, bury us alive, crush us to pieces, grind us to powder, rather than that we fall into the bloody fingers of these merciless monsters, who will put us haply to a lingering death, kill us piece meal, as Tiberius did those, he was angry with (Sueton.); and as the cannibals of America, when they take a prisoner, feed upon him alive, and by degrees, to the unutterable aggravation of his horror and torment. Our Saviour foretold his disciples, that at the last destruction of Jerusalem men should cry out to the mountains on this manner; and so shall the antichristian rout also do one day, **Revelation 6:16**. They that would not worship the Lamb shall find him a lion; those that would not cast away their transgressions, but faced the heavens, shall run into the rocks to hide them; those that would not aspire to eternity shall despair of mercy; those that would not lift up their eyes to the

everlasting mountains, from whence comes help, shall now in vain tire the deaf mountains, with Hide us, help us. Now what can the mountains do more than give an echo to such Help us; for they need help also; the wrath of God is upon the creature. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 9. [[@Bible:Hosea 10:9]]{{field-on:Bible}} **O Israel, thou hast sinned from the days of Gibeah.** Or, *prae diebus*, worse than in the days of Gibeah. What those days were, see **Hosea 9:9; Judges 19:15**: when they were is not so certain; but probably before the time of the Judges, and soon after Joshua's death; for Jebus, or Jerusalem, was not yet taken, **Judges 19:11, 12**; cf. **Hosea 1:1**, and Phineas was yet alive and ministered before the Lord, **Judges 20:28**, and was one of those elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord, which he did for Israel, **Judges 2:7**, so that these days of Gibeah were very ancient; and Israel's sin the worse, because from those days; and yet more, because above or beyond those days. God made use of your forefathers to punish that great sin; and yet you continue to be more vile and vicious than they were, that were so punished by your forefathers; neither are ye at all warned by their harms: which is just both presage and desert of your downfall. *Alterius perditio tua sit cautio. Exemplo alterius qui sapit, ille sapit.*

There they stood. Who stood? either the men of Gibeah stood stoutly to it, and slew in two battles 40, 000; or, "there stood the men of Israel, and their battle did not overtake the children of iniquity"; not so overtake them at first, but that they were twice beaten by them; all which, notwithstanding, they stood it out, and prevailed at last; but so shall not you, since it is in my desire and decree, **Hosea 10:10**, to order it otherwise, and utterly to destroy you at once. *Non surget hic afflictio.* This pain will not arise. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 10. [[@Bible:Hosea 10:10]]{{field-on:Bible}} **It is in my desire that I should chastise them.** That is, I am unchangeably resolved, and fully bent upon it, to carry them captive and enslave them to their enemies, **Nahum 1:9**, wherein they shall find that they have to do with God, and not with man; and that it is I that bind them, though I make use of the Assyrians to that purpose. Luther renders it, *Valde cupide eos castigabo*, exceeding desirously will I chastise them. O the venomous nature of sin, that maketh the merciful God to desire and to delight in men's miseries; to take comfort in their punishments, **Ezekiel 5:13, 15**, to laugh at their destruction, Prov. i. And although he bear long with men's evil manners, ἐτροποφόρησεν, **Acts 13:18**, yet he beareth them as a burden whereof he desireth to be eased, **Isaiah 1:24**, as a servitude whereof he desireth to be freed, **Isaiah 43:24**, as a pain not inferior to that of a travailing woman; and albeit he bite in his pains, as it were, for a time, yet hear him what he saith, **Isaiah 42:14**, "I have long time holden my peace; I have been still, and refrained myself; now will I cry like a travailing woman; I will destroy and devour at once."

And the people shall be gathered against them. God can bring in his armies at his pleasure; for all creatures are at his beck and check. If he do but look out at the windows of heaven, and cry, "Who is on my side? who?" all creatures in heaven and earth will presently present their service; he never need want a weapon to chastise his rebels. If he but stamp with his foot (as that proud Roman, Gnaeus Pompey, said) he can have men enough. How ready are the Assyrians here to be the rod in his hand!

When they shall bind themselves in their two furrows. *i.e.* I will bring their enemies upon them, and they shall yoke them like oxen that are yoked to plough; yea, they shall bring them into such servitude that they shall make them do double work, plough in their two furrows, be they never so weary of doing one. The enemies shall not be moved to pity the poor Israelites, when tired with hard labour; but shall make them plough like beasts, giving them no rest till they have even wearied and worn them out. This is Polanus's interpretation; who farther admonisheth us, as often as we behold or think upon the yoking of oxen for the plough, that we likewise think of the miserable condition of such poor Christians as are slaves to Turks,

and Tartars, and other enemies, who bind them indeed in their two furrows. It is not so long since here among us divers of God's dear servants were driven from Ciceter and other places (taken by the enemy) naked and barefoot, (as the Egyptians were by the Assyrians, **Isaiah 20:4**), through thick and thin, to Oxford jail, &c., where, by the cruelty of their keepers, many of them lost their precious lives, to the incredible grief of their dear relations. Neither can I here pass by Tilly's cruelty at Magdeburg, in Germany; where, after 20, 000; persons at least put to the sword, and the town burned down, his soldiers committed all manner of ravages, all the country over; ladies, gentlewomen, and others, like beasts, they yoked and coupled together, leading them into the woods to ravish them; and such as resisted they stripped naked, whipped them, cropped their ears, and so sent them home again (Mr Clark in the Life of the King of Sweden). The Irish cruelties unnameable might here be instanced. *O quam durum, O quam tristem serviunt illi servitutem!* Oh how harsh to serve sorrow to slaves. See Mr Clark's relation. The words may be read, "They shall bind them together." {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 11. [[@Bible:Hosea 10:11]]{{field-on:Bible}} **And Ephraim is as a heifer that is taught.** sc. With the ox goad, which hath its name from teaching (Malmad), **Judges 3:31**, because therewith oxen are taught to plough, saith R. David. Ephraim was a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke, **Jeremiah 31:18**, but God brought her to it and taught her, though at first a backsliding heifer, **Hosea 4:16**, (*See Trapp on "Hosea 4:16"*) taught her, as Gideon taught the men of Succoth, with briers and thorns of the wilderness, so that they paid dear for their learning, **Judges 8:16**. But Ephraim, though taught it, loveth not ploughing work, because hard and hungry. She loveth rather

to tread out the corn. where she may dance and frisk in the soft straw without either yoke or muzzle, **Deuteronomy 25:4**. As we thresh, so it was their manner to tread out their hard grain with the feet of beasts, or by them to draw wagons over it and so get it out of the husk. Now this was fair and free work, and Ephraim delighted in it; the rather, because she might feed all the while at pleasure; whereas those heifers that ploughed wrought hard all day, and in all weathers, without any refreshment. It is an ill sign, when men must pick and choose their work; this they will do for God, but not that. A dispensatory conscience is a naughty conscience; neither doth he God's will, but his own, that doth no more, or no other, than himself will. Such holy day servants, such retainers, God careth not for. Every one can swim in a warm bath; and every bird will sing in a summer's day. Judas will bear the cross, so he may bear the bag. And those carnal Capernaïtes follow Christ while he feeds them; as children will say their prayers so they may have their breakfast. But Abraham will forsake all to follow God, though he knew not whither; yea, though God seemed to go cross ways; as when he promised him a land flowing with milk and honey, and yet as soon as he came there he found famine. **Genesis 12:1, 10**; so when he promised him seed as the stars, yet kept him without child for twenty years after; and after that he must kill him too, **Genesis 22:2**. So Job will trust in a killing God; Jonah calls upon him out of the deep; David keeps his statutes, when God had in some degree forsaken him, **Psalms 119:8**, and "behaved himself wisely in a perfect way," though God was not yet come unto him, **Psalms 101:2**. This is the trial of a Christian, to do difficult duties upon little or no encouragement; to wrestle, as Jacob did, in the night, and alone, and when God was leaving him, and upon one leg. This is workman-like. The staff rings were to continue upon the ark; the Kohathite's shoulders felt wherefore; and so long God "helped them to carry it," **1 Chronicles 15:26**; but when they once fell to carting it for their own ease, as the Philistines had done, **1 Samuel 6:7, 8**, God made a dismal breach upon them, **2 Samuel 6:6-8**, and David was very sensible of it, when he came up the second time to fetch the ark, **1 Chronicles 15:12, 18**.

But I passed over upon her fair neck. God will make her both bear and draw, though she were grown delicate and tender, with long prosperity; her good and fair and fat neck, not galled or brawned with the yoke, which now she made dainty of; yet he would bring her to it;

though he were by her untractableness forced to sit upon her neck, and make her more towardly to the yoke, as the manner of ploughmen was in that case.

I will make Ephraim to ride. Or, as the Vulgate hath it, I will ride him and rule him, though he kick and lay about him never so much; though he champ upon the bridle and stamp with his feet, &c. I will master him, and make him more serviceable, or, at least, less insolent. See this fulfilled, **Jeremiah 31:18, 19**, where Ephraim is brought in, seeing his need of mercy in the sense of misery.

Judah shall plow, and Jacob shall break his clods. Judah doth the worst of the work, and suffers more hardship in the ways of my worship, and is held under by Israel, as appeareth in **2 Kings 10:16-21**. Jacob, that is, the ten tribes, did only break the clods, or harrow, which is the lighter work; and should therefore have been done with more delight; but they love to take their ease, and only follow after their pleasure and profit; and though taught to plough, yet like it not, because laborious; no, though they have Judah for an example of better.

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Verse 12. [[@Bible:Hosea 10:12]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy.** Righteousness is a sure seed, a precious grain, which those that sow (and every action of our life is a sowing) shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, and bring their sheaves with them, **Psalms 126:6**. Only they must not look to sow and reap all in one day; as one saith of the Hyperborean people far north, that they sow shortly after the sunrising with them, and reap before the sunset; that is, because the whole half year is one continual day with them. The Church is God's husbandry, Heresbach. *de re Rust.* **1 Corinthians 3:9**; the seed is the Word of God, **Luke 8:11**. Ministers are God's husbandmen, harvestmen, **Matthew 9:37, 38**; the plough, **Luke 9:62**, plough staff, **Luke 13:8**, axe, **Matthew 3:10**, are the law's threatenings; the fruit causing rain are the promises of the Gospel, **Isaiah 55:10, 11**; faith, that works by love, are the fruits; the last day, the harvest, **Matthew 13:39, 41**. Then at utmost, those that sow bountifully (or, in blessings, **ἐπ' εὐλογίας**, as the Greek hath it) shall reap bountifully, **2 Corinthians 9:6**. He that soweth seemeth to cast away his seed; but if he sow *in locis irriguis* (**Ecclesiastes 11:1; Ezekiel 34:26**) upon fat and fertile places, he knows he shall receive his own with usury. In some parts of Egypt, where the river Nile overfloweth, they do but throw in their seed, and they have four rich harvests in less than four months. Oh sow bountifully the seeds of piety and charity into God's blessed bosom; and then be sure to reap plentiful mercy, in thy greatest necessity; reap in the month of mercy. (as the original here hath it), that is, according to the measure of Divine mercy, (see **Leviticus 27:16; Exodus 16:16**) proportionably to the infiniteness of God's mercy. Now the Scripture hath three notable words to express the fulness of God's mercy in Christ to those that sow in righteousness: **Ephesians 2:7**, the abundant riches of his grace, that are cast in over and above; **Romans 5:20**, the grace of God hath been more than exceeding; there is a second **ὑπερ**: **1 Timothy 1:14**, the grace of God was exceeding abundant. It had an abundance before: yea, but here is a super abundance; here is good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over shall God give into men's bosoms: like as when a poor man asked Mr Fox for an alms, he (finding him religious) gave him his horse; or as Alexander gave one (that craved some small courtesy of him) a whole city. And when the poor man said, it was too much for him to receive; yea, but not for me to give, said he, *Non quaero quid te accipere deceat, sed quid me dare* (Sen. de Benef.). So God giveth liberally and like himself, **James 1:5**. He doth not shift off his suitors, as once a great prince did a bold begging philosopher. He asked a groat of him, and the king told him, it was too little for a king to give. He requested the king then to give him a talent; the king replied, it was too much for a beggar to crave, **οὐ βασιλικὸν δόμα οὐ Κυνικὸν λῆμμα**. Certain it is, that God in his spiritual blessings and mercies to us is wont to regard not so much what is fit for his to ask or expect, as what standeth with his goodness and greatness to bestow. If Israel had a hundredfold increase of his seed, **Genesis 26:12**, those that sow to themselves in

righteousness, by doing and suffering God's will, shall have much more; even a hundredfold here, and eternal life hereafter, **Matthew 19:29**; so great a gain is godliness; so sure a gain is righteousness: who would not then turn spiritual seedsman?

Break up your fallow ground. sc. of your hearts, that ye sow not among the thorns, **Jeremiah 4:3**. The breaking up of sinful hearts is a singular means to prevent the breaking down of a sinful nation. Hence the prophet, though almost out of hope of any good to be done upon his desperate countrymen, resolves to try one more exhortation to them; and as in the morning he had sown his seed, so in the evening he withholdeth not his hand, **Ecclesiastes 11:6**, for who can tell whether it may not prosper? and whether in the midst of threats they might not suffer a word of exhortation, and whether it might not leave some impression, being delivered in few words? **Hebrews 13:22**. Sow (therefore saith he) to yourselves in righteousness, &c., but first "break up your fallow ground." *Innovate vobis novale*. Repent, and be renewed in the spirit of your minds; in spirit and speech, in mind and manners, in constitution and conversation, in the purpose of your hearts, and practice of your lives. Old things are past, let all things become new; turn up the turf, stock up and stab up the roots and weeds; get into Christ, and become a new creature, **2 Corinthians 5:17**. Till this be done men are in an undone condition, though they should spend their whole time in gathering up pearls and jewels.

For it is time to seek the Lord. High time, since your souls lie upon it. Ploughmen, we know, are careful to take their time; so are all others, wise enough in their generation. The wayfaring man travelleth while it is light; the seafaring man takes his opportunity of wind and tide; the smith smites while the iron is hot; the lawyer takes his term-time ⁽¹⁸⁾ to entertain clients, despatch suits. The men of Issachar were in great account with David, because they had understanding of the time, to know what Israel ought to do, **1 Chronicles 12:32** so are they with God that regard and use the seasons of grace; that "seek the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near," **Isaiah 55:6**; that put in the plough, set upon the practice of repentance, after a shower, when the heart is best affected; after God by his Word and Spirit hath taught (so some render the text) or rained righteousness upon them. Rain comes from heaven; so doth every good and perfect giving. Rain pours down plentifully, **Psalms 68:9**, thou didst send a plentiful rain on thine inheritance; so do the showers of righteousness on good hearts. Not a drop of rain falls in vain, or in a wrong place, but by a Divine decree, **Job 28:26**; so here. Seek it in time, and we shall not fail of it. Only we must not set God a time when to come, but wait upon him, who waiteth to be gracious. Elijah sent seven times ere the rain came. Seek till God comes; limit not the Holy One of Israel. As he seldom comes at our time, so he never fails in his own. Hold out, therefore, faith and patience; for behold he cometh on the clouds, on the wings of the wind, and his reward is with him. "To him that soweth righteousness shall be a sure reward," **Proverbs 11:18**. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 13. [[@Bible:Hosea 10:13]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Ye have plowed wickedness.** The former exhortation was even spilt upon them; for they went on to plot and plough wickedness; they had their necks in the devil's yoke, and promoted his kingdom with sides and shoulders; they let out the strength of their spirits for the furtherance of sin, and were at no small pains to go to hell, as being the devil's hinds and horses to draw his plough, **Proverbs 21:4**. "Even as I have seen," saith Eliphaz, "they that plough iniquity and sow wickedness, reap the same," **Job 4:8**. Ye have reaped iniquity, saith our prophet, that is *dignum factis praemium*, the reward of your wickedness. And her iniquity is opposed to mercy in the former verse, as wickedness also is to righteousness; or wickedness may be taken for their apostasy, idolatry, and creature confidence; and iniquity for the rest of their enormities, proceeding from those former; for these wicked ones are never out of action. *Arant, serunt, errant, scelera*, they plough, sow, and harrow mischief (Plaut. Capt. Act. 3. sc. 5); so that would they but take the like pains for

¹⁸ The period during which the law courts are in session; CED

heaven that they do for hell, they could not lightly miss it.

Ye have eaten the fruit of lies. That is, ye have been deceived by your false prophets and state politicians; whose fetch it is to formalize and enervate the power of truth, till at length they have left you a heartless and sapless religion. Ye have fed hungerly upon the murdering morsels of sin; and that is the reason that there is so much ill blood among you. Your bread is that *panis mendacii* bread of falsehood, Solomon speaks of **Proverbs 20:17**, full of grit and gravel, made up with sawdust (as they served the martyrs) and mixed with lime, as the treacherous Greeks dealt by the Western Christians, marching towards the Holy Land.

Because thou didst trust in thy way. In thy calf worship. Way is often put for religion; and every action men do is a step either to heaven or to hell: he that walketh uprightly walketh safely. These idolaters were very confident of their way; so are our Papists, and other heretics; as David George, that pestilent Libertine, was fully persuaded that the whole world would submit to him. And Campian, Coster, and other zealous Papists tell us to our heads that our religion is error; ourselves heretics, our end destruction; that one heaven cannot hold us hereafter, one Church now, &c. Thus "the way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth to counsel" (as no confident fool will) "is wise," **Proverbs 12:15**.

And in the multitude of their mighty men. This made them ready to boast, as that young king of Hungary did, that though the sky should fall down upon them, yet they were men enough, and strong enough, with their pikes to bear it up. These Ephraimites liked their way of false worship the better because backed by a strong army. That way the mighty men go, that shall be trodden; this is a secret bias, a strong poise upon the spirits of most men. **Revelation 13:4**, when power and authority was put into Antichrist's hands, the whole world wondered after him. But cursed be that man that maketh flesh his arm, **Jeremiah 17:5**. I will not trust in my bow, my sword shall not save me, saith David. "There is no king saved by the multitude of a host: a mighty man is not delivered by much strength," **Psalms 33:16**. See **Psalms 146:3-5**.

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Verse 14. [[@Bible:Hosea 10:14]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Therefore shall a tumult arise among the people**, &c. Even among those mighty men, wherein ye trusted, shall there be seditious tumults, that shall soon bring all into a miserable confusion. Intestine commotions may undo a people, as a man may die of an inward bleeding. (Virg. Aeneid. lib. 1),

*"Ac veluti in magno populo cum saepe coorta est
Seditio, saevitque animis ignobile vulgus."*

When the multitude is in a rage they are like to a tiled house that is on fire (saith one), there is no coming near the house, the tiles do so fly about your face; so it is in tumults, there is no coming near to talk to them, to convince them; but they are ready to fly presently upon you. In Ket's sedition, Dr Parker, in his sermon before the rebels, near Norwich, touched them for their misliving so near that they went near to touch him for his life. The rude rage of the rebels was such, that some, being disabled almost to hold up their weapons, would strive what they could to strike their enemies; others being thrust through the body with a spear, would run themselves farther, to reach those that deadly wounded them. Yea, boys were observed to be so desperately resolved, as to pull arrows out of their own flesh, and deliver them to be shot again by the archers on their side. There are none so insolent and cruel as the vilest of the people, when they are got together in a head. What havoc made the seditious in Jerusalem a little before the last destruction of it! the Guelphs and Ghibellines in Italy! Wat Tyler and his accomplices here! That rebel, held up by the many headed multitude, dared to say, that all the laws of England should come out of his mouth. The Hebrew word (אוּמָן) here used signifieth an inundation, or multitude of waters, which overran their banks with violence and roaring. The people are a most dangerous and heady water, when once it is out; it is like a sweeping

rain which leaveth no food, **Proverbs 28:3**. The Septuagint render it, Destruction. Sal. Jarchi saith, it signifieth the voice of those that cry, Fugite, Fugite, Away, Away, the enemy is at hand, &c. Some say, to the same purpose, that it signifieth clamorem meticulosorum, the crying of those that are scared, as when there is luctus ubique paver, et plurima morti imago. See **Amos 2:2; Zephaniah 1:15**.

And all thy fortresses shall be spoiled. Yea, though they be munitions of rocks. "Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thine own heart, O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, that holdest the height of the hill: though thou shouldest make thy nest as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the Lord," **Jeremiah 49:16**. And again, "All thy strongholds shall be like fig trees with the firstripe figs; if they be shaken, they shall even fall into the mouth of the eater, who shall devour them at a bite," **Nahum 3:12**.

As Shalman spoiled Betharbel. Shalman signifieth peaceable (saith an interpreter), a man of a calm spirit; but he answered not his name; for he exercised greatest cruelty. There is not a more troublesome sea than that which is called *Mare pacificum*, Pacific Ocean. There is often *aliud in titulo, aliud in pyxide* Different in name from practice. Absalom signifieth the Father's peace; but he proved otherwise than was hoped.

"Fallitur augurio spes bona saepe suo."

But this Shalman is by the best interpreters thought to be Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, in this prophet's time. Shalman is *vex truncata*, a name cut off to the halves; a thing very ordinary in all the learned languages, as were easy to instance. See **Isaiah 15:2**. Bamoth for Bamoth-Baal, **Joshua 13:17**. Chamath for Chamath-Dor. Hesiod puts βῆ for βριαποί, Ennius hath *Fabric* for *Fabricius*. This Shalmaneser (or, as Luther will have it, some other great warrior called Shalman, not elsewhere mentioned in Scripture, but not unknown to the ten tribes) did cruel execution, it seems, upon Betharbel, a city beyond Jordan, **Mark 9:2**, like as Tamerlane (for a terror to the Greek empire, much whereof he afterwards subdued) did at Sebastia; where he made a merciless slaughter of all sexes and sizes; whereby he held the whole East in such awe, as that he was commonly called *The wrath of God*, and *terror of the world*. There are those who think this Arbel to be the same as that Arbela, where Alexander defeated Darius, and won the Persian monarchy. They make it a city or country of Assyria, beneath Arpad, and hinted at by Rabshakeh, **2 Kings 18:34**. "Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad?" sc. Shalmaneser hath utterly destroyed them. See **2 Kings 15:29; 17:24; 19:13**. Arbel is by some interpreted the city of Bel, where Belus or Baal was worshipped. By others Betharbel is interpreted as the house of the ensnaring god, the god of policy or subtilty. It seemed to them that the people of this place had a god that they thought would ensnare and ensnarl all their enemies; but it proved much otherwise.

For, the mother was dashed in pieces upon her children. Dashed against the ground (so the word signifieth), against the walls, or pavements. See **Genesis 32:11; Psalm 137:9; Isaiah 13:16**; (ῥῦψ ἐδαφίζειν. Sept.). Such is the savage cruelty of war, when God lets it out. Such was the barbarous dealing of the French in the Parisian massacre, such the Sicilian Vespers, and at Merindoll, where the paps of many women were cut off, which gave suck to their children; which, looking for suck at their mother's breasts being dead before, died also for hunger. Was not this to "kill the mother with the children?" which God forbade by a symbol of taking the dam with the young, **Deuteronomy 22:6**, and again of killing the ewe and the lamb both in one day, **Leviticus 22:28**. The Spaniards murdered fifty million Indians in forty-two years, as Acosta, the Jesuit, testifieth. Arsenoe was killed upon her children by her bloody brother, Ptolemy, king of Egypt. And another of that name killed thirty thousand Jews, and compelled the living to feed upon the flesh of the dead. When the Switzers vanquished the Thericenses in battle, they banqueted in the place where they won the victory; using the dead bodies of their

adversaries instead of stools and tables. The sight of such like cruelties, common in war, might well make Zwinglius say, when he had been abroad with the army, that he had found more wickedness and bad counsels and courses therein than ever he had known before, either by experience or out of books. This passage in God's book (and the like, **Hosea 13:16**, "their infants shall be dashed in pieces, and their women with child shall be ripped up") he could not be ignorant of. The prophet refers his hearers to a sad example of fresh bleeding cruelty, well known to them; that they might relent, repent, and prevent the like misery upon themselves. This is the use we should all put such examples to. **Luke 13:2, 3, 5; 17:26, 28; 1 Corinthians 10:6, 7, 8, 11.** {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 15. [[@Bible:Hosea 10:15]]{{field-on:Bible}}**So shall Bethel do unto you.** *i.e.* The idolatry that you have committed at Bethel, by a *synecdoche* of the place, this shall undo you. Or, So shall he do unto you, O inhabitants of Bethel. Bethel shall be made a Betharbel. They that take not example by others shall be made an example to others. *Lege historiam, ne fias historia.*

Because of your great wickedness. Heb. the wickedness of your wickedness, the iniquity of your sin, the foolishness of your madness, **Ecclesiastes 7:25**, your idolatry especially, that wickedness with a witness. Let us (by God's example) learn to lay load upon our sins, and not to extenuate, but to aggravate them against ourselves.

In a morning shall the king of Israel be utterly cut off. This was fulfilled in Hoshea, the last king of Israel, **2 Kings 17:6**, cut off in a morning, that is, in a moment, as foam, or a bubble upon the waters. The morning light lasteth not long, but shineth on to the perfect day. Or, in a morning, when some hope appears, and some comfort is expected, as **Psalms 30:6**, it is but a lightning before death.

"Accidit in puncto, quod non speratur in anno."

"It happened in the point, that it is not looked for in the year."

Contrarily, the saints at evening time have light, **Zechariah 14:7**. (See Trapp on "**Zechariah 14:7**") {{field-off:Bible}}

Chapter 11

Verse 1. [[@Bible:Hosea 11:1]]{{field-on:Bible}}**When Israel was a child, then I loved him.** On, because Israel was a child I loved him. Young things are lovely; young children especially, for their innocence and ignoscence. Some sense it thus, Israel was a child, and had nothing of worth or lovely in him; yet I loved him freely, **Deuteronomy 7:7; Hosea 10:9**, called him out of Egypt, out of the iron furnace, led him through the deep, as a horse in the wilderness, **Isaiah 63:13**, possessed him of the promised land. Out of which though I shall shortly cast him for his ingratitude, yet there is hope of his restoration, by the Messiah my Son, whom when I have called out of Egypt, he shall gather together again the dispersed of Israel, and bring life and immortality to light by the gospel. The foundation of which restoration he here maketh to be his own free grace. He hath holpen his servant (or his child, **τοῦ παῖδος**, **Luke 1:53**) Israel, in remembrance of his mercy. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son," &c., **John 3:16**. Here then beginneth our prophet's first evangelical sermon, as Tarnovius observeth, who also readeth the text thus: Albeit Israel was a child, such a forlorn outcast child, as is described **Ezekiel 17; Ezekiel 23**, yet I loved him, and adopted him for my son; not for any defect on my part (for I had an only begotten Son, in whom I am well pleased), or for any desert on his part, for I found him in his blood, in his blood, in his blood, when I cast my skirt of love over him, and said unto him, Live, **Ezekiel 16:6**. Yea, and for his salvation's sake, I have called, that is, I have decreed to call, out of Egypt (whither he fled from Herod, and where he abode two or three years at least) my child Jesus, whose office it is to "save his people from their sins," **Matthew 1:21**. And although I might justly have deprived them of such a Saviour for ever, because when he came to his own, his own received him not (yea, rejected him to whom their own signs given to Herod did so aptly and evidently agree), yet out of Egypt, to show the constancy of my love to Israel, have I called (by mine angel, as Jacob by a messenger called his wives to him into the field, **Genesis 31:4**) my Son Christ, **Matthew 2:23**, who is God's Son, first, by eternal generation, **Proverbs 8:22, 23**; secondly, by personal union, **Psalms 2:7**. And thus God called out of Egypt, first Israel his people, and then Christ, the head of his people; in whom at length this prophecy was fulfilled. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 2. [[@Bible:Hosea 11:2]]{{field-on:Bible}}**As they called them.** *i.e.* As the prophets and ministers (whose names are here concealed, that the Word only may be glorified, as **Acts 13:48**) called to them, to come out of spiritual Egypt, out of darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they might receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among the saints, by faith that is in Christ, **Acts 26:18**.

So they went from them. They went a contrary way, as the child Samuel, when God called him, ran to Eli; or rather as the wilful Jews, when God would have gathered them, as the hen doth her chickens, they would not. When God called his natural Son out of Egypt, he came presently, **Hebrews 10:7; Psalm 40:7, 8**; not so his adopted sons; for they turned upon him the back, and not the face, **Jeremiah 2:27**, they refused to be reformed, they hated to be healed. See **Hosea 7:1**. (See Trapp on "**Hosea 7:1**") Nay, to make up the full measure of their sins, and to heighten their contempt,

They sacrificed unto Baalim, and burnt incense to graven images. *Quasi aegre facturi Deo*, as if they would despite God on purpose, and spit in his very face; commit the like villany in his presence, as the Irish rebels lately did, when they bound the husband to the bedpost, while they abused his wife before him. See the notes on Ho. 2, and almost on every Chapter where their idolatry is cried out upon, and their extreme ingratitude. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 3. [[@Bible:Hosea 11:3]]{{field-on:Bible}}**I taught Ephraim also to go.** A child he was, **Hosea 11:1**, and like a child I dealt with him, teaching him how to set his feet, *pedare*, to foot it, as nurses do their little ones: he keepeth the feet of his saints, **1 Samuel 2:9**; he guideth

their feet in the way of peace, **Luke 1:79**. See for this, **Deuteronomy 1:31; 32:11; Numbers 11:12**. So great is the goodness of God to his people, that he dealeth with us as with his little children, *nos sublevando, submonendo, docendo, ducendo, regendo, tegendo, convocando, condonando, portando, confortando, &c.*, we are supported, admonished, taught, lead, guided, protected, assembled, forgiven, carried, comforted, saith a learned interpreter truly, and trimly (Tarnovius). He speaketh unto us as unto children, **Hebrews 12:5**; *paterne diligit, amice dirigit*, he loveth us as a father, he directs us as a friend, guiding us with his eye, leading us in his hand, setting us between his knees, as some interpret that text, **Deuteronomy 33:3**, setting us upon his knees, as a father doth his darling, and rejoicing over us with joy, yea, joying over us with singing, **Zephaniah 3:17**. His affections are more than fatherly; and his expressions are according. "We are like infants" (saith Mr Baine), "newly born in a manner. They are kept by the loving parents from fire and water; they are fed, laid to sleep, made ready, and unready, and shifted in their scapes, but they know not who doth all this for them. So doth our heavenly Father by us in Christ." But (he knows) little understanding have we of him. After this, he teacheth us to go,

taking us by the arms. to help our feeble knees. And taking us up in his own arms, when we come to a foul or rough place, helping us over the quagmires of crosses, and the difficulties of duties. And whereas we fall seven times a day, and in many things fail all; he taketh us up after that we have caught a knock, and cherisheth us in his bosom, &c. Montanus and Junius carry the sense another way, as if the words were not a description of God's love to the people, but of their unthankfulness to God; rendering the words thus: When, as I inform Ephraim, he taketh them in his arms, that is, he setteth up idols, and after the manner of impudent and shameless strumpets, he taketh the puppets in his arms, and embraceth them before my face. But I like the former sense better.

But they knew not that I healed them. Not only held them, that they might not fall, but healed them when they had fallen. Daring they would be sometimes to stand upon their own legs, to prevail by their own strength, **1 Samuel 2:9**, to say with her in the poet, *Consilii satis est in me mihi*, &c. (Arachno apud Ovid. Metam.). I am wise enough, and able enough to go on, as if they were petty gods within themselves, and had no need of nor dependance upon me. Hence they hurt themselves, but I healed them. I forgave all their iniquities, I healed all their diseases, **Psalms 103:3**, their bruises and putrefying sores, that else had not been closed, bound up, nor mollified with ointment, **Isaiah 1:6**. God left not his people in their low estate, as some physicians do their patients; but provided a sovereign salve, a horn of salvation, such as would cure any disease or maim, ⁽¹⁹⁾ even the sin against the Holy Ghost too, but that it is the nature of it to rage and rave both against the phisic and the physician. Christ is both the one and the other; as being made unto us of God, wisdom righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, **1 Corinthians 1:30**. *Quod sanitas in corpore, id sanctitas in corde*. He is Jehovah that healeth for he is Jehovah that sanctifieth. This Ephraim knew not, that is, out of pride and stoutness they acknowledged it not, but sacrificed to their own nets, wits, endeavours, &c. Of all things God can least endure to be neglected or to have the glory of his benefits transferred upon others, (see **Hosea 2:8**, with the note) When men shall either say, in the language of Ashdod, It is a chance, or else, I have made myself thus and thus happy, **1 Samuel 6:9**; this, though the saints should at any time do yet God will pardon their frowardness, and say as **Isaiah 57:17, 18**, I have seen his ways, his waywardness, and will heal him nevertheless and restore comforts to him. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 4. [[@Bible:Hosea 11:4]]{{field-on:Bible}} **I drew them with cords of a man.** Not of a beast; though they have deserved to be hampered as unruly heifers, and to be yoked and ruled

¹⁹ An injury to the body which causes the loss of a limb, or of the use of it; a mutilation, or mutilating wound.
†In early use more widely, any lasting wound or bodily injury. CED

over with rigour, to be tamed and taken down a link lower, yet I, out of my philanthropy, yea, out of singular grace, have dealt civilly, nay, courteously with them, in an amicable and amiable way, and not as I might have done out of my sovereignty, and according to my justice. I drew them by the cords of a man, that is, 1. Gently and favourably; suiting myself to their dispositions (which are often as different as their faces), hiring them to obedience, afflicting them in measure, with the rods of men, **2 Samuel 7:14**, fitted to the weakness of men. If God should plead against us with his great power, as Job speaks, **Job 23:6**, it would soon grind us to powder; but he hath no such design; he correcteth his children, *vel ad demonstrationem debitae miseriae vel ad emendationem labilis vitro, vel ad exercitationem necessariae patientiae*, saith Augustine, Tract. in Joan. 124; *ad exercitium non ad exitium*, saith another ancient, to refine and not to ruin them. 2. Rationally, by cogent arguments and motives, befitting the nature of a man; able to convince them and set them down with right reason, would they but consider, **Deuteronomy 32:29**, would they but be wise and weigh things aright. This God wisheth they would do, calleth them to reason the case with him, **Isaiah 1:18**, pleads with them in a friendly way, **Jeremiah 2:31**, and then appeals to their own consciences, whether they have dealt well with him, yea or no, **Isaiah 5:3**, making them read the sentence against themselves, as did Judas the traitor, **Matthew 27:4**, and those Pharisees, **Matthew 21:40**. He bespeaks them, after most clear conviction, as **Isaiah 46:8**. Remember this, and show yourselves men; bring it again to mind, O ye transgressors. Most people are led on in a continued hurry of lusts and passions, and never bethink themselves, as **1 Kings 8:47**, never say so much as, What have I done? *Si haec duo tecum verba reputasses quid ago?* saith Cicero to Nevius: Hadst thou but bethought thyself of those few words, What have I done? thou wouldst never have been so covetous a cormorant. Oh, could men have but so much power over their passions and lusts as to get alone and weigh God's ways, much good might be done upon them; but for want of this, *Fertur equis auriga, &c.*, they rush into all excess of riot, as a horse into the battle; yea, they are so far unmanned as to think that they have reason to be mad, and that there is no small sense in sinning. "I do well to be angry, even unto death," **Jonah 4:9**.

With bands of love. Heb, thick cords, cart ropes (as it is rendered, **Isaiah 5:18**), ropes of many wreaths, twisted and intertwined with love, that sweetest attractive. So **Jeremiah 31:3**, "With lovingkindness have I drawn thee"; and **Isaiah 63:9**, "In his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." He gave them a law, the sum of which was nothing but love; and multiplied mercies upon them without measure, as is amply set forth by those holy Levites, **Nehemiah 9:4, 5**. Now, mercy commands duty; and every new deliverance is a new tie to obedience. Love should have love, publicans and sinners yield that, **Matthew 5:46**. Yea, love should show itself strong as death, **Solomon's Song 8:6**. Jonathan would have died for his David; David for his Absalom; Priscilla and Aquila for Paul, **Romans 16:4**. Christ out of his love did die for his people. Have I but one life to lose for Christ? said that holy martyr (*Cos amoris amor*). Let men take heed how they sin against love, for this is the greatest aggravation of sin; this is bestial, this is like unruly horses in a team, to break the gears, to snap in sunder the traces that should hold them. Such yokeless sons of Belial shall one day be held by the cords of their own sin, and whipped with those cords of conviction, that they would not be drawn by. Shall the harlot's hands be bands, her words cords to draw men to destruction, and shall God stretch out his hand all day long to them to no purpose? Shall he lose his sweet words upon them? &c. Peter's heart burst, and he brake out in weeping, when he saw love sparkling in Christ's looks, **Mark 14:72**, and considered how he had burst asunder the bands of love, sinned against such manifestations of mercy, wiped off all his comfortables for the present, drew from Christ those piercing quick questions, Lovest thou me? yea, but dost love me indeed? O let the cords of God's kindness draw us nearer to him, hold us closer; to sin against mercy is to sin against humanity; and as no surfeit is more dangerous than that of bread, so no judgment is more terrible than that which grows out of love felt and slighted.

And I was to them as they that take off the yoke on the jaws, &c. *i.e.* on their neck; albeit it seemeth by that law, made for not muzzling the ox that treadeth out the corn, that those creatures when they wrought were muzzled or haltered up; and that halter fastened to the yoke that was upon their necks. The sense is this, I unyoked them often to give them meat, as the good husbandman doth that is merciful to his beast; he lifts up the yoke that lies hard upon its neck, leads it to the manger, lays food before it. So dealt God by this people all along from the wilderness, and forward; not suffering them to abide, *iugiter, sub iugis Gentium*, long under their enemy's yoke; but delivering them out of the hand of those that served themselves of them, **Ezekiel 34:27**. Christ also hath delivered his out of the hands of those that hated them, and lay hard upon them; as the devil is a hard taskmaster, that neither takes off the yoke nor lays meat; gives no rest or refreshment to his drudges and dromedaries; but acts them and agitates them day and night, &c. Now, those that are his, Christ brings them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may do works meet for repentance, that weigh just as much as repentance doth, **Acts 26:18, 20**, and so find rest to their souls; provided that they take and keep Christ's yoke upon them (not thinking to live as they list more, saying, as those libertines in **Jeremiah 7:10**, "we are delivered to do all these abominations") and learn of him to be meek and lowly in heart, **Matthew 11:29**, so shall they soon find Christ's yoke easy, and his burden light, **Matthew 11:30**. And of this easy yoke of Christ Luther understands this text in Hosea; and thereupon discourseth of the law's rigour, and gospel's relaxation, according to that of Austin, *Lex iubet, gratia iuvat*; the law commandeth, but the gospel helpeth; God by his Spirit assisting, and farther accepting pence for pounds, the will for the work, the desire for the deed done, and laying meat before us, meat that the world knows not of, hidden manna, the *convivium iuge* ever flowing banquet of a good conscience. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 5. [[@Bible:Hosea 11:5]]{{field-on:Bible}} **He shall not return unto the land of Egypt.** That is, he needs not run to Egypt for help (as King Hoshea did), nor to the Assyrian, to whom they were tributaries from the time of Menahem; for they wanted nothing, and less should have wanted if they would have been ruled by me.

But they refused to return. He was not to have returned to the land of Egypt or of the Assyrian, who is his king; so some read the text. Others sense it thus: When I threaten them with the Assyrian they think to move and shelter themselves in Egypt; but I shall keep them thence, or find and ferret them out there. God knows how to cross wicked men of their will, to spoil their plots. Egypt shall prove no better than a broken reed running into the hand of him that leaneth on it, **2 Kings 18:21**. The Egyptian was ever an enemy to Israel; and though for his own ends he gave goodly words, and seemed reconciled, yet such reconciliations are but *vulpine amicitiae*, friends to the fox. But were he never so fast a friend, yet sin guilty Israel shall not have there an *asylum, nec stabile stabulum* (see **Hosea 9:3**) (*See Trapp on "Hosea 9:3"*) because the "desire of the wicked shall perish," **Psalms 112:10**. They take counsel together, but it shall come to nought, they speak the word, but it shall not stand, **Isaiah 8:10**. Confer **Isaiah 30:1, 2 31:1-3; Proverbs 21:30**.

But the Assyrian shall be his king. Will they, nill they, they shall be carried captive to Assyria; and since they will needs be crossing of God, he will cross them much more; he will walk contrary, to those that walk contrary to him, **Leviticus 26:21**, and be as froward as they for the hearts of them, **Psalms 18:26**. They will not return to me, saith the Lord, they shall not therefore return to Egypt; they will not submit to my sceptre, they shall therefore have the Assyrian for their king, that proud, cruel, stout-hearted prince, **Isaiah 10:5, 7, 12**, who will tyrannize over their bodies and over their cattle at their pleasure, so that they shall be in great distress, **Nehemiah 9:37**.

Because they refused to return. Heb. (וַאֲנִי) they disdained to do it, scorned the motion,

slighted the messenger. By their sins they had run from God; by repentance they should have returned unto him, and then the amends had been well nigh made: for *quem poenitet peccasse poene est innocens*, the penitent is in almost as good a case as the innocent (Sen. in Agamem.); Ambrose saith he is in a better (*plus est a vitiis se revocasse quam vitia ipsa nescivisse*). But for these men, to all other their sins to add obstinace and impenitence, as Herod to all his former evils did the death of the Baptist, this was to "heap up wrath against the day of wrath,"

Romans 2:5. The word here rendered "refused" is by the Seventy turned they would not (οὐκ ᾔθελσαν). That therefore they returned not to God, it was the fault of their will. True it is, they had no power to turn themselves; but the cause of that inability too was in themselves. They therefore neither could nor would return; and both by their own fault and folly.

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Verse 6. [[@Bible:Hosea 11:6]]{{field-on:Bible}}**And the sword shall abide on his cities.**

Heb. shall keep residence or rush upon his cities. It can do no less; it cannot return into the scabbard, rest or be still, till the Lord, who put it into commission, call back again his commission, **Jeremiah 47:6, 7.** It is a dreadful thing when the sword abideth on a people; as in Germany, that stage of war; Ireland, still a land of divine ire, &c. England hath some halcyons at present, praise be given to God; and let every good man pray with David, "Scatter thou the people that delight in war," **Psalms 68:30.** The Pirates' war was despatched by Pompey with incredible swiftness, to his eternal commendation (*incredibili celeritate et temporis brevitate a Pompeio confectum*). And we have cause to bless God (saith a countryman of ours) that God hath raised up instruments for us, who have hazarded the shortening of their own lives for the shortening of the war; who have done their work of late, as if they had took it by the great, &c. And the same author observeth, that it is a sad thing for the sword to be in the field; but for the sword to be in the cities it is much more sad: and he instanceth in Jerusalem out of Josephus, where the number of the slain was 1, 100, 000; (Jos. de Bell. Jud. l. 7; c. 7.). We may further instance in that unhappy city of Magdeburg, in Germany, where so much cruelty was exercised first by Charles V (much regretted by him at last in his retired life, taking account of his actions), and since that in our memory by M. Tilly, who, like a bloody villain, put to the sword there 20, 000; persons at least of all ranks, ages, and sexes: that great city also he burned down, utterly turning it into cinders, excepting 139; houses. The like immunity was exercised by the pope's champions upon the poor Protestants at Angroque, in France; where they killed and burned without mercy; but could never set fire upon the two temples there, nor upon the minister's house, which remained whole, the houses round about being all consumed with fire.

And shall consume his branches and devour them. His branches, or his villages, which are as branches of the greater cities. The trees of America (but especially of Brazil) are so large, that it is reported of them that several families have lived in several arms or branches of one tree, to such a number as are in some petty village or parish here. The greater cities are as the body or root of a tree, the village as the branches. The Scripture often calleth them mother and daughter, as Heshbon and all her daughters, that is, villages, **Numbers 21:25**, as the Chaldee here explaineth it. See **Ezekiel 16:44, 45, 48, 53.** Hence we read of a city and mother in Israel, **2 Samuel 20:19.** Branches also are called daughters of the trees they grow from, **Genesis 49:22.** The word here rendered branches is by some rendered bars, by others, diviners or liars, as the word here used is interpreted, **Jeremiah 50:36.** A sword is upon the liars or diviners, and they shall dote: *potest Augur Augurem videre et non ridere?* saith Cicero of such diviners: that is, Can they one look upon another and not laugh, considering how they gull people with their lies and fopperies? The sword shall be upon such, as it was upon Balaam, Satan's spelman, they shall be a portion for foxes, **Psalms 63:10**, as those that

"Astutam vapido servant sub pectore vulpem."

Because of their own counsels. He that goeth to school to his own carnal reason is sure to have a fool to his master; an *ignis fatuus*, a foolish fire, that will bring him into the bogs and briers. The wisdom of the flesh is enmity to God. *Nemo daeditur nisi a seipso.* (See Trapp on "*Hosea 10:6*") {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 7. [[@Bible:Hosea 11:7]]{{field-on:Bible}}**My people are bent to backsliding from me.** They have a principle of apostasy in them, as those Galatians had of whom the apostle, "I marvel that you are so soon removed unto another gospel," **Galatians 1:6**, and as those old apostates in the wilderness, who, as soon as Moses' back was turned almost, cried out to Aaron, Make us golden gods. This people was before accused to be acted by a spirit of fornication, a certain violent impetus, a strong inclination to whoredom, and to be apt to backslide with a perpetual backsliding: all their recidivations and revolts were but a fruit of the bent of their spirits, which were false and unsettled; not resolved whether yet to turn to God, though they were beset with so many mischiefs; they hanged in suspense, and rather inclined to the negative than else. *Suspensi sunt*, so Calvin, Pareus, and others read this text. My people are in suspense, or in a mamerling whether to turn to me or not; they hang in doubt, as the same word is rendered, **Deuteronomy 28:66**. God liketh not that his people should stand doubtful as sceptics, and adhere to nothing certainly; to be in religion as idle beggars are in their way, ready to go which way soever the staff falleth; but that they should strive to a full assurance in what they believe, **Luke 1:4**, to be fully persuaded, as **Luke 1:1**, and to a firm purpose of heart in what they should practise, **Acts 11:23**. Irresolution against sin or for God can hardly consist with the power of godliness: be not off and on with him, halt not, hang not in doubt what to do, but follow God fully as Caleb did; come off freely as David, who had chosen God's precepts when he was solicited to have done otherwise, **Psalms 119:173**. And again, "I have chosen the way of truth: thy judgments have I laid before me," **Psalms 119:30**. I have weighed them, and am resolved to keep them, I am come to a full determination. Mr Diodati senseth the words thus, They desire and expect that I should turn in favour to them and relieve them; whereas they should turn to me by repentance, which they will not do: and herein he followeth Arias Montanus. Thus those stiffnecked Jews in Jeremiah expected that God should still deal with them (however they dealt with him) according to all his wondrous works, **Jeremiah 21:2**, presuming and promising themselves impunity; and thus Judas also had the face to ask, **Matthew 26:25**, as the rest did, "Is it I?" as resting upon Christ's accustomed gentleness, and that he would conceal him still, as he had done certain days before.

Though they called them to the most High. They, that is, the prophets, as **Hosea 11:2**, called them with great importunity, upon every opportunity, to the most High, to God (in opposition to those *dii minutuli*, petty deities, whom they doted on. See **Hosea 7:16**), to come up to him, to have high and honourable conceptions of him, not casting him in a base mould, as those miscreants did, **Psalms 50:21**, but saying as David, and with a David-like spirit, "Thou, Lord, art high above all the earth: thou art exalted far above all gods"; and thence inferring, "Ye that love the Lord, hate evil," **Psalms 97:9, 10**. "I am God Almighty; walk before me and be upright," **Genesis 17:1**. "The God of glory appeared to Abraham," **Acts 7:2**, he so conceived of God; and hence his unchangeable resolutions for God.

None at all would exalt him. Heb. together he exalted not, scarce a he, a single man, that would do it, that would lift up his head to listen to such good counsel (so some sense it), or that would exalt and extol the most High; who, though he be high above all praise, as **Nehemiah 9:5**, and cannot be praised according to his excellent greatness; yet is he pleased to account himself exalted and magnified by us, when, considering the infinite distance and disproportion that is between him and us, we lay ourselves low at his feet for mercy, we set him up in our hearts for our sole sovereign, we esteem him as the people did David, more worth than ten thousand, **2 Samuel 18:3**, we give him room in our souls, and with highest

apprehensions, most vigorous affections, and utmost endeavours we bestow ourselves upon him, as the only worthy. Now this is done but of a very few, and well done but of fewer yet; so drossy and drowsy are men's spirits, and so little is the Lord lifted up by the sons of men. See the prophet Isaiah's complaint, **Isaiah 64:7.** {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 8. [[@Bible:Hosea 11:8]]{{field-on:Bible}} **How shall I give thee up, Ephraim.** Here beginneth the second part of this chapter, full of many sweet evangelical promises, and here, if ever, mercy rejoiceth against judgment, or treadeth on the very neck of it, as St James's word importeth, **James 2:18**, κατακαυχᾶται from αὐχὴν (*cervix*). The Lord seemeth here to be at a stand, or at strife with himself, about the destruction of this people fore warning; which well might have been a guff to swallow them up, and a grave to bury them in for ever, being most worthy to perish, as were the cities which God destroyed in his wrath, **Genesis 19:23-25**. Howbeit God in the bowels of his mercy yearning and taking pity of his elect among them (for he had reserved seven thousand hidden ones that had not bowed their knees to Baal), spareth to lay upon them the extremity of his wrath, and is ready to save them for his mercy's sake. Hear how father-like he melts over them:

How should I expose thee, O Ephraim? how should I deliver thee up, O Israel? How should I dispose thee as Admah? how should I set thee as Zeboim. *q.d.* Justice requires that I should lay thee utterly waste, and even rain down hell from heaven upon thee, as once upon Sodom and her sisters. But mercy interposeth her four "hows" (in the original two only expressed, but the other two necessarily understood, and by interpreters fitly supplied), for such pathetic interrogations as the like are not to be found in the whole book of God, and not to be answered by any but God himself; as indeed he doth to each particular in the following words: "My heart is turned within me," that is the first answer; the second, "My repentings are kindled together"; the third, "I will not execute the fierceness of my wrath"; the fourth, "I will not return to destroy Ephraim." And why? First, "I am God and not man"; secondly, the "Holy One in the midst of thee."

My heart is turned, or turneth itself, within me. That is, my mind is changed, or at least is in doubt what to do in this business. This is spoken, ἀνθρωποπαθῶς, after the manner of men, and must be understood, θεοπρεπῶς, agreeably to God's greatness. Here is *mutatio rei non Dei, effectus non affectus, facti non consilii*, a change of a matter not of God, to effect and not to alter, to do senselessly. Repentance with man is the changing of his will. Repentance with God is no more than the willing of a change: ill is not a change of his will, but of his work. Confer **Lamentations 1:20; 2:11; Amos 1:12**. There are those who render it, My heart is turned against me, that is, against my former severe sentence of cutting them all utterly off at one blow; *Fiat iustitia, pereat mundus*. Oh! I cannot find in my heart to do it. For my

Repentings are kindled together. *Simul aestuant viscera mea poenitentia*. So Tremellius; My bowels are altogether on a light fire with repentings, as **Genesis 43:30; 1 Kings 3:26**. Now repentings are as improperly attributed to God as bowels. There were a sort of ignorant monks in Egypt, who started this foolish and ridiculous question (which yet bred no small stirs there, A.D. 403), *An Deus corporeus sit?* Whether the Divine essence be a body, having hands, heart, bowels? &c. The ruder sort of them held it affirmatively. What blasphemies Vorstius hath vented in that base book of his, *de Deo*, I need not relate. How God is said to repent hath been said already. Sure it is, that herein he graciously accommodateth himself to our rudeness, and speaketh as we are able to bear (Calvin). It appeareth that fury is not in God, **Isaiah 27:4**. Our sins put thunderbolts into his hands, and it is, *Non nisi coactus* with him, when he proceeds to punishment. His bowels are very ready to work in the ways of grace and mercy toward sinners; and the least act of faith in that mercy would certainly set bowels on work amain. This the Church in Isaiah well knew, and therefore prayed when deserted, Look down from heaven, &c. Where is thy zeal, and thy strength? the sounding of thy bowels and of

thy mercies toward me? are they restrained? Doubtless thou art our Father, notwithstanding thine austerities, **Isaiah 63:15, 16**. God seemeth sometimes to lose his bowels, and then we must find them for him; to sleep, and we must awake him; to hide himself, and then we must fetch him out, as the woman of Canaan did by the force of her faith, **Mark 7:24, 25**. God will come, but he will have the faithful prayers of his people to lead him. I came for thy word, **Daniel 10:12**. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 9. [[@Bible:Hosea 11:9]]{{field-on:Bible}} **I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger.** Heb. the heat of it. God's heart kindled, and whatsoever might cause repentance came together, and lay glowing, as it were, at his heart; and this cooled and even quenched the heat of his wrath (as the sunbeams when they shine full upon the fire), so that now he resolves not to execute the height of his heat, the extremity of his fury, for then the spirit should fail before him. Ephraim is God's dear son, his pleasant child; whom, when he hears bemoaning himself, as **Jeremiah 30:18-20**, he soon repents him of the evil, and cries,

—*"Satis hoc pro crimine magno
Paulum supplicii lenem sumpsisse parentem."*

I will not return to destroy Ephraim. I will not undo him twice over, or utterly ruin him; as those that have laid their enemy for dead, return to see whether he be dead outright; or as soldiers that have once pillaged a city return after a while to take all that little that was left before, and to set the rest on fire. God will not deal so hardly with Ephraim, though he might do it. Reprobates indeed shall have an evil, an only evil, **Ezekiel 7:5**, without mixture of mercy; they must expect one plague upon another, as it fared with Pharaoh, till God had dashed the very breath out of his body. But for his elect people, Hath he smitten them, as he smote those that smote them? No, but in measure, in the branches only; he stayeth his rough wind, &c., **Isaiah 27:7, 8**. And as Croesus' dumb son burst out into, Kill not King Croesus (**Ἀνθρωπε, μὴ κτεῖνε τὸν χροισον**. Herod.), so when enemies are ready to devour the Church, or Satan to swallow God's child up in despair, his heart's work; he can hold no longer, but cries, Save my child, save my Church. Why should "the spirit fail before me, and the souls which I have made? I have seen his ways and" (though bad enough) "I will heal him, I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him and to his mourners," **Isaiah 57:16-18**.

For I am God, and not man. Yea, such a God as the like is not, for pardoning iniquity, and passing by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage, **Micah 7:18**. It is natural to him, **Exodus 34:6**; it is usual, **Nehemiah 9:17**, there he is called a God of pardons, as, **Isaiah 55:7**, he is said to multiply pardons. He hath commanded men to forgive an offending but repenting brother, seventy times seven times in a day, **Matthew 18:22**. What then will himself do? For he is God Almighty, and not man. Man is an angry, vindictive, cruel creature; one man is a wolf, yea, a devil, to another; unsociable, implacable, unmerciful, as those were, **Romans 1:31**. Beware of men, saith our Saviour to his disciples, **Matthew 10:17**; absurd and wicked men, **1 Thessalonians 3:2**; barbarous and brutish, skilful to destroy, **Ezekiel 21:31**. Yea, beware of good men when enraged. What strange deaths doth David (soon after his foul fall and not fully recovered) put the poor Ammonites to, **2 Samuel 12:31**. Further, men as they are unmerciful so they are unmindful of their promises. But God is not a man that he should lie, **Numbers 23:18**. What he hath spoken with his mouth he will make good with his hand. The Eternity of Israel will not lie (as men will, **Romans 3:4**), nor repent (as men do, whatever he may seem to do; (See Trapp on "Romans 3:3") **Romans 3:3**); for he is not a man that he should repent, **1 Samuel 15:29**. Men are mutable; the truest friend is **Ευμεταβλητον ζῶν**, an easily changeable creature, as the heathen complained; all in changeable colours, as Tertullian saith of the peacock; as often changed as moved. Not so Almighty God. "I am Jehovah, I change not," **Malachi 3:6**. (See Trapp On:mal 3:6") and remember still to retain high thoughts of God; not measuring him by our model; as to think him to be as merciful as we are, as powerful as our

understanding can reach, &c. See **Isaiah 55:8, 9**, and beg supernatural grace; without which it is impossible for a finite creature to believe the infinite attributes of Almighty God.

The Holy One in the midst of thee. Though Israel had deeply revolted, set up golden gods, and done wickedly as they could, so that there was no visible Church among them, yet God was the Holy One in the midst of them; seven thousand he had reserved that Elijah knew not of, **1 Kings 19:18**, and a Church there was in Israel when at worst. Like as there was in *medio Papatu*, in the darkest midnight of damned Popery; and at this very day there are said to be thousands of professed Protestants, even in Italy itself; and in Seville, a chief city of Spain, there are thought to be no fewer than twenty thousand.

And I will not enter into the city. I will not invade the city as an enemy, to waste all with fire and sword, as once at Sodom. For what reason? there are holy ones in the midst of thee (so Rivet expoundeth it by an enallage of the number), a considerable company of righteous people, for whose sake I will spare thee, **Jeremiah 5:1**. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 10. [[@Bible:Hosea 11:10]]{{field-on:Bible}} **They shall walk after the Lord.** Powerfully calling them by his Word and Spirit, going before them, and bringing up the rear, **Isaiah 3:12**; their king shall pass before them, and the Lord on the head of them, **Micah 2:13**. There was a time when they fled from God, **Hosea 7:13**, and said, "I will go after my lovers," &c. **Hosea 2:5-7**. Now they are of another mind and other manners; they shall walk after the Lord, *non pedibus sed affectibus*; they shall be carried after him with strength of desire and delight, which he shall work in them; they shall follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, **Revelation 14:4**. God's people are said in Scripture to walk before him in godly sincerity, to walk with him in a humble familiarity, to walk after him in a holy conformity, yielding unto him the obedience of faith. As Israel in the wilderness, so must we, follow God and the line of his law, though it seem to lead us in and out, backward and forward (as them), as if he were treading a maze.

He shall roar like a lion. By the preaching of the gospel he shall shake heaven and earth. The voice of the gospel is, repent. *Aut poenitendum, aut pereundum*, except ye repent ye shall all perish. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned," was a terrible voice, **Mark 16:16**. Of the lion it is reported, that he roareth so fiercely that the rest of the creatures stand amazed; and that, whereas his own whelps come dead into the world, he roareth over them and reviveth them. Afterwards, when he meeteth with prey, he roareth for them to come about him. Let this be applied to the Lion of the tribe of Judah. Confer **Joel 3:16**.

Then the children shall tremble from the west. The children of grace, **Deuteronomy 14:1**, shall join themselves in spirit to the communion of the Church from all the ends of the world, where they have been scattered; they shall serve the Lord with fear, rejoice with trembling. The ancient Hebrews applied this promise to the coming of the Messiah; only they dreamed of an earthly kingdom of his, as did also the disciples, being soured with the leaven of the Pharisees. Others think it to be a prophecy of the conversion and calling of the Jews, to be accomplished in the last days; as also of the general spreading of the gospel, and gathering of the elect, far and wide, from one end of the heavens to another. And this they call the time of the restitution of all things. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 11. [[@Bible:Hosea 11:11]]{{field-on:Bible}} **They shall tremble as a bird out of Egypt.** *Trepide accurrent*, so Tremellius; they shall run tremblingly. Fear causeth haste. Men delay and trifle till God strikes their hearts with fear; then it is *Ecce ego, mitre me*, Here I am, send me; Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth; What wilt thou have me to do, Lord? &c. *Timor addidit alas*. As the doves when pursued by the hawk fly quicky into their dove cotes, as birds frightened fly to their nests, and other creatures to their holes and harbours; so do those that

are pricked at heart with the terrors of the law flee to the precious promises of the gospel, hiding themselves in the wounds of Christ crucified, and are relieved. All St Paul's care was, that when he was sought for by the justice of God, he might be found in Christ, not having his own righteousness, but that which is through the faith of Christ, **Philippians 3:9**.

And as a dove out of the land of Assyria. *i.e.* out of what country soever, where they shall be scattered, I will recollect them by my gospel, which is therefore called God's arm, because thereby he gathereth his elect into his bosom. Doves fly swiftly, **Psalm 55:6**, and by flocks, **Isaiah 60:8**; so shall the elect to Christ, both of Jews and Gentiles. By the children of the west may be meant these western Churches, and plus the northern parts. By Egypt, the whole south. By Asshur, all the eastern tract, those large and mighty kingdoms that lie eastward from Judea, even to the sunrising. Thus "many shall come from east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven," **Matthew 8:11**. The molten sea stood upon twelve oxen, which looked to all the four quarters of the world; so did the twelve gates of the new Jerusalem.

And I will place them in their houses. Not in strong garrisons, but in their own houses; where they shall dwell securely under their own vines and fig trees; for they shall have the gospel of peace and the peace of the gospel, see **2 Samuel 7:10**. Or thus, I will place them in their own houses, that is, in my Church (saith Polanus), which hath its houses and places of receipt among all people the whole world throughout, where they may serve God without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all their days. Thus the apostles in their travels, wherever they came, found brethren, &c., and having nothing, yet they possessed all things, **2 Corinthians 6:10**. True tranquillity and sound security is to be found nowhere but in Christ, **Micah 4:4; 5:5**, nor by any but by those that hear him roaring, and calling them to the participation of his grace and peace. Those that hearken to Christ's oracles shall dwell in his tabernacle. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 12. [[@Bible:Hosea 11:12]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Ephraim compasseth me about with lies.** They get about me as if they would do me doughty service (**Psalm 76:11**, the saints are called a people that are round about God; and **Psalm 148:14**, a people near unto him, and that compasseth his altar. See **Revelation 4:4**), but all is but counterfeit; a mere imposture, a loud lie, **Psalm 78:36**, whereby they would deceive me of heaven if they could; putting upon me false coin silvered over a little; and circumventing me, if it lay in their power. But what saith Bernard? *Sapiens nummularius Deus est; nummum fictum non recipiet.* God is a wise mint man; there is no beguiling him with counterfeit coin. Hypocrisy (that real lie) is an odious, a complexive evil; for it hath in it, 1. Guile, opposite to simplicity, as intending to beguile God, which he cannot, and man, which he fain would, and often doth, to farther his worldly and wicked designs, as Judas, Herod, **Matthew 2:8**, Pharisees, **Matthew 23:14**. 2. Falsehood, opposite to truth; as only acting religion, playing devotion, compassing God with deceit, as the house of Israel here, deceiving him not by impotence only, and in the event, but by imposture, and so in purpose; contenting themselves with a show, with a semblance, **Luke 8:18**, with a form of knowledge, **Romans 2:20**, and of godliness, **2 Timothy 3:5**, rather seeming to be good than seeking to be so. These are hell's freeholders; and other sinners are said but to have their part with them. There are those who thus interpret this text: "Ephraim compasseth me," the prophet preaching mercy, and promising good things, they beset me, and gather close about me, as desirous of my doctrine: but it is *in mendacio*, in hateful hypocrisy, (see **Ezekiel 33:31, 32**) and when I cross them never so little, they craftily conspire to prejudice my ministry, to asperse my person, &c. To preach, saith one, is nothing else but to derive the rage of the whole world upon a man's self, to become the butt mark, yea, the centre *ad quod omnes lineae dolorum tendunt*, to which all the lines of lies and falsehoods do tend (Meisner in loc.).

But Judah yet ruleth with God. To serve God is to rule with him; as Livia said, she ruled her

husband Augustus by obeying him. It is the greatest liberty, **Romans 6:18, 22; 1 Peter 2:16**. Abraham was a prince of God. Jacob prevailed with God, and had power as a prince, **Genesis 32:28**. Moses (as if he had been chancellor of heaven) overruled the business, and God is fain to bespeak his own freedom, **Exodus 32:10**. Judah also is here said to rule with God, to be potent with him; because God was sincerely served among them, and they held fast their first integrity; the true religion was openly professed, and the true worship of God incorruptly maintained in the temple at Jerusalem. This made Abijah (though none of the best) so boldly to boast, and he prevailed; so that there fell down of Israel slain 500, 000, **2 Chronicles 13:10, 17**, and yet the men of Judah that slew them were but 400, 000; in all, **Hosea 11:3**. Israel's apostasy is here aggravated by Judah's integrity; they were not under the temptation of evil example. Judah was the worse for them, and not they for Judah.

And is faithful with the saints. Or, with the most Holy: he keepeth the faith to God, those holy ones, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (so some sense it), as **Joshua 24:19; Proverbs 9:10**; he is far from those false and fraudulent dealings wherewith the ten tribes seek to circumvent and beguile God. Or thus, Judah is faithful with the saints of former ages; he holds to his old principles, to the good old way, wherein Abraham and the other ancients went before him. He is also faithful with such as are sanctified, the true priests of God, consecrated to himself, and set apart for holy use: in opposition to the ten tribes, who went after those leaden priests made by Jeroboam of the lower sort of the people, and well fitted to golden deities. Lastly, he is faithful with the people of God, those good souls that left the ten tribes and went to Judah, to the true worship of God. With these Judah was faithful, courteous, and communicative; embracing and encouraging them all that might be. This was a singular commendation.

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Chapter 12

Verse 1. [[@Bible:Hosea 12:1]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Ephraim feedeth on wind.** Slender feeding; unless Ephraim were of the chameleon kind: *quippe nec cor auro satiatur nec corpus aura*. Wind fills, but feeds not, **Isaiah 55:10**. Ephraim had sowed the wind, **Hosea 8:7**, but to what profit? He that ministereth seed to the sower, and bread to the eater, would here, surely, neither give bread for food, nor multiply their seed sown, **2 Corinthians 9:10**, but send them to the gods that they had chosen, and to their confederates whom they so relied upon, from whom they should reap the whirlwind. (*See Trapp on "Hosea 8:7"*) Wind, we know, bloweth up storms and tempests; so doth idolatry and creature confidence, the tempest of God's wrath that will never be blown over.

And followeth after the east wind. Which if he catch, a great catch he is like to have of it. *Eurus est ventus urens et exsiccans*. The east wind is noted in Scripture for pernicious and harmful to fruits and herbs, **Genesis 41:6; Ezekiel 7:10; 29:17; Hosea 13:15**; violent it is also, and spareth not men, **Jonah 4:8**. The Seventy render it, *καύσωνα*, a burning blast, as they do the former words, Ephraim is an evil spirit, by a mistake of the points. Job speaketh of some that fill their bellies with the east wind; they think to do so, but it proves otherwise; they snuff up the wind with the wild ass, but it tumors them only, and proves pestilential. It is very dangerous for men to follow after their own conceits and counsels. It may be worse to them upon their deathbeds, when they are launching into the main of immortality, than any rough east wind (*Euroaquilo*), or than any Euroclydon, that wind mentioned **Acts 27:14**, that hath its name from stirring up storms, and is by Pliny called *navigantium pestis*, the mariner's misery, *una eurus notusque ruunt* (Virg.). An empty body meeting with tempests will have much ado to bear up. If Ephraim first feed upon wind, and then fall under the east wind, it must needs go hard with him. The godly man, who is filled with all the fulness of God, **Ephesians 3:19**, shall have him for a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall, **Isaiah 25:4**. His prayer is that of Jeremiah, **Jeremiah 17:17**, "Be not thou a terror unto me, O Lord: thou art my hope in the day of evil." If the wind be not got into the earth, and stir not there, storms and tempests abroad cannot make an earthquake; no more can afflictions, or death, a heart attack, where there is peace with God. Such a man's mind, *immota manet*, is as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed.

He daily increaseth lies and desolation. This being the fruit and consequence of those; for *flagitium et flagellum sicut acus et filum*, sin and punishment are inseparable companions. "Woe unto them! for they have fled from me: destruction unto them! because they have transgressed against me," **Hosea 7:13**. (*See Trapp on "Hosea 7:13"*) To heap up lies is to hasten desolation. "A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall perish," **Proverbs 19:9**. They tell us of a threefold lie, *i.e.* a merry lie, an officious lie, and a pernicious lie. But the truth is, every lie is pernicious; and a man should rather die than lie. He that lieth in jest may go to hell for it in earnest. Jacob told his father an officious threefold lie, and scarce ever had a merry day after it, **Genesis 27:19**. God followed him with one sorrow upon another, to teach him and us what an evil and a bitter thing it is to cumulate lies, as here, and how it ensnares and ensnarles us.

And they do make a covenant with the Assyrian, and oil is carried into Egypt. That is, all precious and pleasant substance was carried for a present, to make room for them. Oil is instanced, as the chief staple commodity of the land, (*see Ezekiel 27:17*) and in Egypt very scarce. This sin of theirs in seeking to other nations, and relying on the arm of flesh, is often reproved and threatened throughout this prophecy, (*see Hosea 5:13; 7:11; 9:8; 10:4; 11:5*) to teach God's ministers to continue crying out against the prevailing sins of the people, and never give over, till they see a reformation wrought among them. "The Cretians are always

liars," &c. "Rebuke them sharply," saith the apostle, *Titus 1:12, 13*; yea, be instant and constant, in season and out of season, using the same liberty in beating down sin that men do to commit it. Chrysostom told his hearers at Antioch that till they stopped their swearing he would never stop preaching against it. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 2. [[@Bible:Hosea 12:2]]{{field-on:Bible}} **The Lord hath also a controversy with Judah.** Lest the prophet should be thought partial in the law, *Malachi 2:9*, (*See Trapp on "Malachi 2:9"*) and lest Ephraim should say of Judah, as once Oded did of Israel, "Are there not with them, even with them also, sins against the Lord?" *2 Chronicles 28:10*. The prophet answers by way of concession, that there were so indeed; and that therefore God had a controversy with them, a litigation, or disceptation: he was expostulating with them by words, and some lighter strokes, notwithstanding he had commended them before, as ruling with God, and retaining his pure worship. God would take his time to deal with them too for their many impieties, and especially for running to Egypt for help, as they did in the days of Ahaz and Zedekiah, see *Isaiah 30:2; 31:1*; but because they were not yet so bad as the ten tribes, nor so desperately wicked, therefore the Lord was yet but pleading with them; he had not passed sentence, he was not resolved upon their ruin and utter extirpation, *Hosea 4:15; 5:5-14; 6:11*; as he was for the ten tribes, those foul apostates and shameless covenantbreakers; concerning whom he saith, and is set upon it,

I will punish Jacob according to his ways. See the like words *Hosea 4:9*. (*See Trapp on "Hosea 4:9"*) He calls them Jacob, because they gloried much in him, their progenitor; as did likewise the Samaritans that succeeded them, *John 4:12*. So did the Jews in *Micah 2:7*. But the prophet Hosea answereth them in effect (as there) by proving a disparity. "O thou that art named the house of Jacob" (that wilt needs be named so, and therein pridest thyself), "is the Spirit of the Lord straitened?" (ye are not surely straitened in him, but in your own bowels, that ye express Jacob no better, that ye resemble him no more). "Are these his doings?" was Jacob a man of your practices? No; (20) for he left no means unattempted that he might attain the blessing; he strove for it with his brother in the womb, βρέφος, afterwards with the angel, against whom with much wrestling and raising of dust he prevailed, as it followeth in the two next verses. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 3. [[@Bible:Hosea 12:3]]{{field-on:Bible}} **He took his brother by the heel in the womb.** To have hindered him if he could of the first birthright; so desirous he showed himself so soon of that desirable privilege and the promises annexed. Whence we may learn (saith one) that God taketh care even of unborn babes, that belong to him, and worketh strangely in them sometimes, as he did in the Baptist, *Luke 1:44*, the child leaped in the womb, by a supernatural motion; he leaped more like a suckling at the breast, as the word signifieth, than an unborn embryo. Mention had been made in the former verse of the name of Jacob; here we have the etymology, or reason of that name; He took his brother by the heel, or foot sole, as if he would have turned up his heels and got to the goal before him. Hence his name was called Jacob, *Genesis 25:26*, that is, *calcanearins*, or heel catcher, as if he would have pulled his brother back; or presage of what he should afterwards do, viz. supplant Esau, and get the pre-eminence both of birthright and blessing, *Genesis 27:36*, and with it a fruit, an instance of God's free grace, in preferring Jacob (when he could not yet do anything that was good) before Esau, though he were the elder, stronger, stouter, a manly child, a man already, as his name importeth, one that had everything more like a man than a babe. See *Malachi 1:2*. (*See Trapp on "Malachi 1:2"*) And observe, that God here upbraideth Jacob's degenerate brood with his benefits toward him, their forefather, whereof they now walked so utterly unworthily.

²⁰ *Odiosum et impium dogma Anabaptistarum, qui ideo pueris baptismum negant, quia sensu ac mente careant. Luther in loc.*

And by his strength. By his hard labour, say the Seventy, ἐν κόπῳ αὐτοῦ: but better, by, or in, his strength, that is, by the supply of the spirit of Jesus Christ, **Philippians 1:19**, and by the power of the Almighty, casting him down with the one hand, and bearing him up with the other.

He had power with God. Heb. he played the prince with God, *fortiter et fideliter se gessit*, he bore himself bravely, and had strength with God. He doth not lie down sullen and discouraged, but wrestleth with excellent wrestlings; he held with his hands, when his joints were out of joint. He wrestled in the night and alone, and when God was leaving him, and upon one leg, and prevailed, as it is in the next verse. This he did partly by his bodily strength elevated, for he was a very strong man, as appeareth, **Genesis 29:10**, by his rolling the great stone from the well's mouth; but principally by the force of his faith put forth in prayer, which can work wonders. Oh, it is a sweet thing indeed to be strengthened with might by the Spirit in the inner man, **Ephesians 3:16**. *O quam hic homo, non est omnium!* This is the generation of them that seek him: that seek thy face, this is Jacob, **Psalms 24:6**; yea, this is Israel, for so God knighted him, as it were, in the field for his good service, and new named him, **Genesis 32:28**. Neither were the faithful ever since called Abrahamites, or Isaacites, but Israelites, for honour's sake.

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Verse 4. [[@Bible:Hosea 12:4]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Yea, he had power over the angel.** That Angel of the covenant, **Malachi 3:1**, the Angel of the great council (μεγάλης βουλῆς ἄγγελος), as the Seventy render **Isaiah 9:6**, the Lord Christ, who redeemed Jacob from all evil, **Genesis 48:16**, and is called Elohim in the former verse. Jacob is reprov'd for asking his name, an argument of his majesty. God, as he surmounteth all creatures, and hath no parallel, so he surpasseth all notion, and is above all name. The Africans call him Amon, that is, *Heus, tu, cluises?* Our best eloquence of him is a humble silence: or if we say anything, to say as in the next verse following, Jehovah, God of hosts, Jehovah is his memorial.

And prevailed. Sept. ἐδυνάσθη. He had power, or got the better, Christ yielding himself overcome by the prayers of the patriarch: "for the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much," saith St James. There is a kind of omnipotence in it, saith Luther, of whom also that saying passed among his friends, *Iste vir potuit apud Deum quod voluit*, That man could do what he would with God. The reason whereof is given by St Jerome, in these words, *Deus ipse qui nullis contra se viribus superari potest, precibus, vincitur*; that is, God himself, who is otherwise insuperable, may be overcome by prayers (*Invictum vincunt vota precesque Deum*); provided that men persevere in prayer as Jacob did, holding out till the morning light, and growing more resolute toward the latter end than he had been before.

He wept and made supplication. Jacob did (not the angel, as Mercer and Drusins would carry it). His wrestling was by weeping, and his prevailing by praying.

*"Verbum, preces, et lachrymae,
Miserae arma sunt Ecclesiae."*

We read not till this text of his weeping for the blessing (no more we do of the earthquake in Hezekiah's days, till **Amos 1:1**; **Zechariah 14:4, 5**), but this we know, that ardent prayer is a pouring out of the soul to God, not without a shower of tears, or at least a storm of sighs. And as music upon the water sounds farther and more harmoniously than upon the land, so prayers with tears are more pleasing to God, and prevalent with him. Christ could not but look back to those weeping women that followed him to the cross, and comfort them. Tears of compassion and of compunction, when men love and weep, as Mary Magdalen did, are very acceptable to God, who puts them into his bottle as precious. There are tears of another sort, lachrymae nequitiae, tears of wickedness, expressed either by hypocrisy or a desire of revenge: such were Esau's tears for the blessing too, **Genesis 27:38**, but he went without it, because he

was a profane hypocrite; he cried out of discontent, and threatened his brother Jacob; he complained of his father's store, (Hast thou but one blessing?) of his brother's subtilty, (was he not rightly called Jacob?) but not a word of his own wickedness. He roared for the disquietness of his heart, but he did not, as Jacob, weep and make supplication to his Judge, deploring his own wants, and imploring the supplies of his grace, quam unice expetiit, as the main thing he desired.

He found him in Bethel. That is, the Lord found Jacob there, **Genesis 28:18, 19**; but especially, **Genesis 35:14, 15**, confirming his promises to him and all his posterity.

There he spake with us. Who were then in Jacob's loins, and promised that God should be our God; but we have falsified with him, and turned Bethel into Bethaven; abusing that place to idolatry and calf worship, where we, in our forefathers, had so many manifestations of Divine mercy. Oh better he had never spoken with us there than that we should have so slighted his promises, cast his words behind our backs, and wickedly departed from our God. Is this Jacob-like? &c. There he spake with us. What he spake with Jacob he spake with us; and we are to hold ourselves no less concerned therein than he was. See a like expression **Psalms 66:6**. See likewise **Romans 15:4**; **Hebrews 13:5**. What God spake to Joshua, **Joshua 1:5**, he spake to all believers. And that which he spake to his afflicted, **Psalms 102:17**, "He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer," that he spake to us: for, **Psalms 102:18**, "This shall be written for the generations to come." The Hebrews have a proverb, *Quae patribus acciderunt signum sunt filiis*, What things befell the fathers, those were a sign to their children; and thence it is that the deeds of the fathers are often attributed to the children. Let us labour to see our own names written upon every promise; and secure our interest by searching for the conditions whereunto the promises are annexed; and then put them in suit by faithful prayer, saying with David, "Remember thy word unto thy servant, whereupon thou hast caused me to trust." {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 5. [[@Bible:Hosea 12:5]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Even the Lord God of hosts.** Lo, he it is who promised, who spake with us at Bethel; even that Jehovah, who is himself unchangeable and Almighty; whose promises are eternal and infallible; who will perform with his hand what he hath spoken with his mouth, to the thousandth generation of those that return unto him. Concerning God's name, Jehovah, (**See Trapp on "Malachi 3:6"**) Concerning his title, God of hosts, (**See Trapp on "Malachi 3:17"**) Doct. 1.

The Lord is his memorial. Jehovah is that *nomen maiestativum* (as Tertullian hath it), that holy and reverend name of God, **Psalms 111:9**, whereby he will be known and remembered, **Exodus 3:15**, which place doth notably illustrate this. True it is that the Jews, to countenance their conceit of the ineffability of this name Jehovah, do corrupt that text; and for this is my name, *Legnolam*, for ever; they read, this is my name, *Legnalam*, to be concealed. Where it is well observed by one, how cross the superstition of men is to the will of God. They, in a pretended reverence to God, will not so much as mention this name, because they say it is a name that God so much glorieth in; and yet the text saith, this name is God's memorial; it is the name by which he would be remembered to all generations, as that which setteth forth his glory more than any other name whatsoever. So that when we would have a holy memorial of God (and to remember him is every whit as needful as to draw breath, saith an ancient, *tam Dei meminisse opus est quam respirare*. Nazianzen) we need no images or other unwarrantable helps: the meditation of the name Jehovah, and the import of it, will be of singular use that way. Papists have their pictures and their memories, as they call them; idolaters feign to themselves various representations and remembrances. "Behind the doors also and the posts hast thou set up thy remembrances," **Isaiah 57:8**, where God's law should have been written, according to **Deuteronomy 6:9; 11:12**, and whereas God's name should have been remembered, **Psalms 135:13; Psalms 102:12**. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 9. [[@Bible:Hosea 12:9]]{{field-on:Bible}}**And I that am thy Lord God from the land of Egypt.** This seemeth to be interlaced for the comfort of the better sort, that trembled at the former threatenings; for as in a family if the dogs be beaten the children will be apt to cry, so is it in God's house. Hence he is capable to take out the precious from the vile, and telleth them that he hath not cast off his people whom he foreknew; but would surely observe his ancient covenant, made even in the land of Egypt towards his spiritual Israel.

I will yet make them to dwell in tabernacles, &c. *i.e.* I will deliver my Church from the spiritual Egypt, and make her to pass through the wilderness of the world, in particular Churches, aspiring toward the heavenly Canaan; even as my people dwelt in tents in the wilderness, the remembrance whereof is celebrated in the feast of tabernacles, **Leviticus 23:43.** See **Zechariah 14:16.** (See Trapp on "Zechariah 14:16") {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 10. [[@Bible:Hosea 12:10]]{{field-on:Bible}}**I have also spoken by the prophets.** And not suffered you to walk in your own ways, as did all other nations, **Acts 14:16.** The ministry is a singular mercy, however now vilipended, (*critized*) **Isaiah 30:20.**

And I have multiplied visions. Whereby I have discovered thy present sins and imminent dangers, though thou hast said, "They shall find none iniquity in me," &c. The wit of mammonists will better serve them to palliate and plead for their *dilectum delictum*, their beloved sin, than their pride will suffer them once to confess and forsake it, though never so plainly and plentifully set forth unto them.

And used similitudes by the ministry of the prophets. Heb. by the hand, which is the instrument of instruments (*ὄργανον ὀργάνων*), saith the philosopher; so is the ministry of the word for the good of souls. It is called a hand, because it sets upon men's souls with the strength of God, and a certain vehemence. "Did not my word lay hold upon your fathers?" **Zechariah 1:6.** (See Trapp on "Zechariah 1:6") It is said, **Luke 5:17**, that as Christ was teaching the power of the Lord was present. "The gospel of Christ is the power of God," **Romans 1:16**; it is his mighty arm, **Isaiah 53:1.** Now it was ordinary with the prophets to use similitudes, as **Isaiah 5:2**; **Ezekiel 16:3**, which is an excellent way of preaching and prevailing; as that which doth both notably illustrate the truth, and insinuate into men's affections. Galeatius Caraeciolus, an Italian Marquis, and nephew to Pope Paul V, was converted by Peter Martyr, reading on **1 Corinthians 1.** and using an apt similitude. Ministers must turn themselves into all forms and shapes, both of spirit and of speech, for the reaching of their hearers' hearts; they must come unto them in the most wooing, winning, and convincing way that may be. Only in using of similes, they must, 1. Bring them from things known and familiar, things that their hearers are most acquainted with and accustomed to. Thus the prophets draw comparisons from fishes to the Egyptians, vineyards to the Jews, droves of cattle to the Arabians, trade and traffic to the Egyptians. And thus that great apostle, **1 Corinthians 9:24**, fetcheth similes from runners and wrestlers, exercises that they were well acquainted with in the Isthmian games, instituted by Theseus, not far from their city. 2. Similes must be very natural, plain, and proper. 3. They must not be too far urged; we must not wit wanton it in using them: and let it be remembered, that though they much illustrate a truth, yet *theologia parabolica nihil probat*. theological comparisons prove nothing. There are interpreters of good note that read this whole verse in the future tense and make a continuation of that promise in the verse before. I will speak by the prophets, *sc.* in the days of the gospel, when "great was the company of those that published it," **Psalms 68:11.** I will multiply visions. See this fulfilled **Acts 2:17**; cf. **Joe 2:28.** I will use similitudes, teach in parables, and illustrate therewith grave sentences and doctrines, as Christ and his apostles did, and as the best preachers still do, that they may thereby set forth things to the life, and make them as plain as if written with the sunbeams. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 11. [[@Bible:Hosea 12:11]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Is there iniquity in Gilead.** What, in Gilead, a city of priests? (*Hosea 6:8*) (*See Trapp on "Hosea 6:8"*) yea, Gilead is a city of those that work iniquity, a very Poneropolis, a place of naughty packs, *Hosea 4:15*. Now there is not a worse creature on earth than a wicked priest, nor a worse place than a wicked Gilead. The Hebrew hath it thus, Is Gilead iniquity? Or as Luther, Drusius, and others, Surely it is so (ⲛⲉ ⲉⲣⲉ, *certe, vere, profecto*). Confer *Micah 1:5*. Gregory Nazianzen reports of Athens, that it was the plagiuest place in the world for superstition. Our universities were so in times of Popery, and began to be so again a few years since. *Revera Gilead est iniquitas, profecto vanitas sunt*, they were grown so incorrigibly flagitious that they seemed to be, as it were, transformed into sin's image. Some render the text thus: "Is there iniquity in Gilead? Are they only vanity in Gilgal? They sacrificed bullocks," and set this sense upon it. What? think you the men of Gilead, those beyond the river of Jordan, whom Tiglathpileser spoiled and led captives, that they only were guilty of idolatry, and you not, because you remain at home, untouched of the Assyrian? Nay, saith he, the very entrance into the country, Gilgal itself, so aboundeth with idolatry, that it is not to be doubted but in the rest of the parts of the kingdom their altars are as thick as furrows in the field, that is to say, innumerable. Some think this last clause, "their altars are as heaps in the furrows of the field" (or of my fields, whereof I am chief Lord, and wherein he should have served me, and not idols), hath reference to some superstitious way of theirs, of seeking God by erecting altars in the furrows, for the fructifying of their fields: the heathen did so to their *Dii Terminales*; boundary gods, and the Papists still do so in their solemn processions, erecting crosses and crucifixes in the bounds of their fields, and thereby thinking to get a blessing on their corn and pastures. Tarnovius noteth here, that God in the Old Testament would therefore have but one altar whereon to offer sacrifice, and that to be at Jerusalem only; to teach them that Christ, the anti-type of all their sacrifices, should once be offered up upon the altar of his cross, a propitiation for their sins, *Hebrews 9:1-10:39*. This altar he also appointed to be in the temple, that the sacrificers might believe the gracious presence of God with them, and might worship him in spirit and in truth. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 12. [[@Bible:Hosea 12:12]]{{field-on:Bible}}**And Jacob fled into the country of Syria.** Jacob, in whom ye glory, was a poor forlorn fugitive, glad to run for his life, and to take hard on for his livelihood, *Genesis 28:1-29:35*. This they were bound by the law to make confession of ever when they offered their basket of firstfruits, and to say, "A Syrian ready to perish was my father," &c., *Deuteronomy 26:5*; that, considering the meanness of their origin, they might not boast of their ancestry, but magnify God's free grace in their present enjoyments; and say, as that noble Athenian general, Iphicrates, did, in the midst of all his triumphs, ἔξ ὀύων εἰς ὀἶα, from how great baseness and misery to what great blessedness and glory are we exalted! King Agathocles would be served in earthen vessels, to remind him of his father, who was a poor potter. Willigis, Archbishop of Mentz, A.D. 1011, being a wheelwright's son, hanged wheels and wheel wrights' tools round about his bedchamber, and underwrote in capital letters, *Willigis, !! Willigis, !! recale unde veneris*, Remember thine origins (Bucholcer). How low and mean were we of this nation at first! Brith signifieth blue-coloured, sc. with woad; hence our name Britains. This was their fine clothing; their food was bark of trees and roots. Holinshed saith, that some old men he knew, who told of times in England, that if the good man of the house had a mattress, or a flock bed, and a sack of chaff to rest his head on, he thought himself as well lodged as the lord of the town; for ordinarily, they lay upon straw pallets covered with canvas, and a round log under their heads instead of a bolster; they said pillows were fit only for women in childbed; and in a good farmer's house it was rare to find four pieces of pewter; and it was accounted a great matter that a farmer should show five shillings, or a noble, together in silver. There are those who render the text thus: Thither fled Jacob out of the country of Syria, after Israel had served for a wife, and for a wife had kept sheep.

And Israel served for a wife. He had nothing to endow her with, he would therefore earn her

with his hard labour; wherein he showed singular humility, patience, meekness, waiting upon God's providence; none of all which graces were found in his degenerate posterity, who yet prided themselves in their father Jacob.

And for a wife he kept sheep. *q.d.* Jacob, that he might obey his father, was content to serve his uncle, and to suffer a great deal of wrong from him; but ye refuse to serve me though a liberal lord, a bountiful benefactor, He held close to me in that hard service; but you, abusing your liberty, enslave yourselves to false gods. He in his misery kept his confidence of the blessing; but you in your prosperity cast it clean away, &c. Luther upon this text speaketh much about the blessing of a good wife (a commodity that cannot be too dearly bought), and the plague of a scold that is always railing and wrangling, *Cum qua perpetuo rixandum*. The heathen well saith, that every man when he marrieth bringeth either a good or an evil spirit into his house; and so maketh it either a heaven or a hell. Pareus well observeth here, the great use of histories and holy examples, according to **Romans 15:4**. Plato (in Cratylo) thinks that *historia* comes *παρὰ τὸ ἱστάναι τὸν ῥοῦν*, of stopping the flux of errors and enormities. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 13. [[@Bible:Hosea 12:13]]{{field-on:Bible}} **And by a prophet the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt.** That is, Gilead served as a sanctuary unto Jacob, when he fled from Laban. In Gilgal also God by *Joshua* renewed his covenant with your fathers, after he had brought them out of Egypt, by the hand of Moses and Aaron. A horrible thing therefore it is, if well considered, that these two places should now be so impured with idolatry, and become the nurseries of evil, which heretofore were the means of so great comfort to God's people. Thus Junius, Polanus, and others. A witty interpretation, but somewhat forced. By Moses, that prophet, by an excellency; as Aristotle is called the philosopher, Cicero the orator, Paul the apostle, Calvin the most learned interpreter, &c. Moses was a famous prophet indeed, and a type of Christ. Confer **Deuteronomy 18:15, 18; 34:10-12; Acts 3:22; 7:35-38**. Theodoret calleth him the great ocean of divinity, *τὸν τῆς θεολογίας ὠκεανὸν*. Bellarmine, God's special favourite, than whom antiquity had *nihil sapientius, sanctius, mitius*, none more wise, meek, and holy; indeed, titles of honour are not worthy of him. Howbeit he was but a mean man at first; **Exodus 4:20**, "He took his wife and his son and set them upon an ass"; that was the best and the only beast that he had, for aught we read. It was not very likely that so poor a prophet should do so great a deed. But God loves to help his people with a little help, **Daniel 11:34**, that through weaker means his greater strength may appear. His end here may seem to be the same as before, in setting forth Jacob's meanness, to take down the haughtiness of the people, proud of their founders and forefathers. A prophet he is purposely called, and his name concealed: 1. To show that the work was done not by might nor by power, but by God's Spirit, **Zechariah 4:6**; 2. To show what God will do for his people by the prayers and for the sake of his prophets, when they are most shiftless and hopeless; 3. To let this unworthy people see how much God had done for them once by a prophet, how little soever now they set by such. This is Cyrus' observation. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 14. [[@Bible:Hosea 12:14]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Ephraim hath provoked him to anger, most bitterly.** Heb. with bitterness, or unto bitter displeasure, or with bitter things, that is, sins that embitter God's Spirit and put thunderbolts into his hands. *Excusserunt ex suavissimo pectore meo suavitatem*. As a bee stings not till provoked, so neither doth God punish till there be no remedy, **2 Chronicles 36:16**. If Ephraim will provoke him to anger (which he will not dare to do to his landlord), if he will put it to the trial, whether God can be angry, as those did (*ἔδοκίμασαν*), **Hebrews 3:9**, he shall know the power of his wrath, **Psalms 90:11**, he shall feel, to his sorrow, that it is an evil thing and bitter, that he hath forsaken the Lord, and that his fear is not in them, **Jeremiah 2:19**. There will be bitterness in the end. *Principium dulce est, sed finis amoris amarus. Amor amaror*. Lust is a lie, as Amnon proved. "Her end is bitter as wormwood, though her lips drop as an honeycomb," saith Solomon of sinful pleasure,

Proverbs 5:3. It is like Jonathan's honey, or Esau's pottage, or Judas' thirty pence, which he would gladly have been rid of, but could not. Those that provoke God shall one day hear, "Do ye provoke me to anger? Are ye stronger than I?" they shall be taught to meddle with their match, and not to contend with him that is mightier than they, **Ecclesiastes 6:10**; they shall cry out in the bitterness of their souls, as **Lamentations 3:15**, "He hath filled me with bitteresses, he hath made me drunk with wormwood." And God shall reply, as **Jeremiah 4:18**, "Thy way and thy doings have procured these things unto thee; and this is thy wickedness, because it is bitter."

Therefore shall he leave his blood upon him. God shall bring upon him deserved destruction; he shall bring him into the fire, and leave him there, **Ezekiel 22:20**; the guilt of his sin shall remain upon his soul, and then punishment cannot be far off. See **Ezekiel 24:7, 8**; cf. **18:13**; **Joshua 2:19**. Or, the enemy shall leave him all bloody.

And his reproach shall his Lord return unto him. His Lord, not the Assyrian, as some sense it, but his liege lord (whom he hath reproached, by changing his glory into the similitude of a calf, and other corruptible things), shall cry quittance with him, as **Hosea 12:2**, cast utter contempt upon him, according to **1 Samuel 2:30**, and make him know that he is his Lord.

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Chapter 13

Verse 1. [[@Bible:Hosea 13:1]]{{field-on:Bible}}**When Ephraim spake trembling.** Or, there was trembling, as there is among the beasts of the field when the lion roareth. Ephraim, while innocent of the great offence, spake with authority, and none durst budge against him; for he had great power in his hand. Now, as the philosopher told Adrian the emperor, who challenged him to dispute, *Difficile est ei contradicere qui potest aqua et igni interdicere; vel adversus eum scribere, qui potest proscribere.* It is dangerous meddling with the lion's beard. Nebuchadnezzar's majesty was such that "all people, nations, and languages trembled and feared before him," **Daniel 5:19**; wheresoever his commands or armies came there were very great heart quakes and concussions of spirit. "Where the word of a king is, there is power: and who may say unto him, What doest thou?" **Ecclesiastes 8:4**. Job was no king; and yet while he was Jobab, **Genesis 36:34**, that is, in a prosperous condition, "The young men saw him, and hid themselves; the nobles held their peace, and their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth," **Job 29:8, 10**. The people feared Joshua, **Joshua 4:14**, as they feared Moses, all the days of his life; for what reason? the Lord had magnified him in the sight of all Israel. Natural conscience cannot but stoop to the image of God in whomsoever. When Ephraim was first in the throne he became formidable; but when he fell openly from God he grew feeble; first he was a terror, and then a scorn.

But when he offended in Baal, he died. When, by Jezebel (who did all under her husband, she was king, and he queen) Baal worship was brought in, then Ephraim fell from his dignity; then every paltry adversary trampled upon him, as the hare will do upon a dead lion. See how Benhadad insulted over Ahab, **1 Kings 20:3, 4**; "Thy silver and thy gold is mine; thy wives also and thy children, even the goodliest, are mine. And the king of Israel answered and said, My lord, O king, according to thy saying, I am thine, and all that I have." Look how the worried cur falls upon his back, and holds up all four, as craving quarter; so did this sordid idolater, glad to crouch to his enemy: when God was departed from him he was even as a dead carcase.

"Morti vicinus iam magis atque magis."

He that departeth from God (who is his life) by an evil heart of unbelief, **Hebrews 3:12**, subjecteth himself to all sorts of deaths, natural, civil, spiritual, and eternal. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 2. [[@Bible:Hosea 13:2]]{{field-on:Bible}}**And now they sin more and more.** Heb. They add to sin: God in his just judgment hath given them up unto hardness of mind, and to their heart's lust; that for all this sudden change they repent not, but run more and more into idolatry. Not content to worship Baal and such heathen deities,

They make them molten images of their silver. They laid their money together, to make the golden calves, or silver shrines, as **Acts 19:24**, and other idolatrous trinkets; they lavished silver out of the bag, and were at no small charge. They multiplied their altars, **Hosea 10:1**, and abused God's gold and silver to mystical adultery, **Hosea 2:8**. All this they did now, saith the text; most unseasonably, and as it were in flat opposition to God; after he had sought to reclaim them both by counsels and corrections, and had hanged Ahab and his house up in gibbets, as it were, before them, for their admonition. Surely it is a just both presage and desert of ruin not to be warned. See **Hosea 7:1**. (See Trapp on "**Hosea 7:1**")

And idols according to their own understanding. *i.e.* According to their own inventions, *motu suo proprio*; forsaking the rule of the word, they will needs be scholars to their own reason, though they are sure to have a fool to their master. That is a good saying of Solomon, **Proverbs 3:5**, "Trust in the Lord with all thy heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding," in matters of God's worship especially; for there *Deus damnat quicquid arridet iudicio hominum vel rationi* God despises whatever is pleasing in the opinion of men or reason.

(Calv. in loc.), "that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God," **Luke 16:15**.

All of it the work of the craftsmen. And should men worship the work of their own hands? what can be imagined more irrational and sottish? But it is a most righteous recompense of their error, **Romans 1:27**. See **Isaiah 29:13, 14**, God doth blind and blast such, causing their madness to appear to all, and that they are men compact of mere incongruities, soloecising in opinion, speeches, actions, all: nothing is more irrational than irreligion.

They say of it, Let the men that sacrifice kiss the calves. They, that is, the king and his counsellors, or the idolatrous priests by their appointment. These were active to invite and incite men to partake of those idolatrous services. Should we be less diligent in calling upon others to "kiss the Son," with a kiss of love and homage? should we not be as serious and sedulous in building staircases for heaven as the wicked are in digging descents to hell?

Kiss the calves. That the custom of kissing in divine worship was used in all nations is evident. They kissed either the idol's mouth or their own hand (where the idol stood on high, so that they could not come at it) in token of homage. See **1 Kings 19:18; Job 31:27**. (*Adorare est quasi applicare manum ad os*.) To worship is just as to bring the hand to the mouth. So (after the example of Dioclesian) the pope holds forth his foot to be kissed by the greatest potentates, while he sitteth as God, in the temple of God. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 3. [[@Bible:Hosea 13:3]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Therefore they shall be as the morning cloud.** They shall vanish and come to nothing: the morning cloud, irradiated by the sun, seems very gay at first, but is soon dispelled by it; the dew lies very lovely upon the grass, and seems to impearl it, but is soon dried up; see **Hosea 6:4**. The chaff lies hollow and high, but is soon dispersed before a whirlwind; see **Psalms 35:5; Daniel 2:35; Psalm 1:5**. The smoke rolls out of the chimney as if it were some solid substance, and would muffle the whole heavens, but is presently scattered *evaporat et evanescit*, the higher it ascendeth the sooner it vanisheth. See here how that is verified, **Hosea 12:10**, "I have used similitudes by the ministry of my prophets" (four in a breath we have here), and be hereby advertised. 1. Of man's weakness; 2. Of God's power; 3. Of the swiftness of Ephraim's ensuing misery; 4. The severity of God's dealing with idolaters; he will leave no sign nor remain of them; he will utterly remove them, as a man takes away dung, till it be gone, **1 Kings 14:19**. *Sic transit gloria mundi*. So passes worldly honour. Life itself is but a shadow, a dream, yea, a dream of a shadow (*οκίας ὄναρ ἄνθρωπος*), **Psalms 144:4**; profit, an uncertainty, **1 Timothy 6:17**; pleasure, a spirt; honour, a blast, pomp, a fancy, **Acts 25:23**; the whole world a scheme or notion, that hath nothing in it of any firmness, or solid consistency, **1 Corinthians 7:31**. Why then should wicked wordlings brag, and look so big? Why should the saints be affected either with its allurements or affrightments, and not cry out with that heroical Luther, *Contemptus est a me Romanus et favor et furor*, I care neither for Rome's favour nor fury, I am neither fond of the one nor afraid of the other, for all is but *fumus aut funus*, vanity and vexation? {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 4. [[@Bible:Hosea 13:4]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Yet I am the Lord thy God,** &c. Yet for all the sorrow; and though I thus threaten thee: "for since I spake against thee, I do earnestly remember thee still," &c., **Jeremiah 31:20**. It is easy to observe all along this chapter, an interchange of menaces and mercies, as in the preceding verse and this, so **Hosea 13:8, 9, 13, 14, 16; 14:1**, to show how soon the Lord repents him of the evil, and how ready to show mercy to the worst that return. If men could but find a penitent heart, he would easily find a pitying heart; like as David would have been friends with Absalom after all the unkindness, would he have been but better at last. To reduce Ephraim it was, that this chapter, like checquer work, is made up of promises and threatenings; that the tartness of the one might make him the better to taste the sweetness of the other.

Yet I am the Lord thy God from the land of Egypt. See the note on *Hosea 12:9*. He was their God before, *Genesis 17:7*, but then he mainly manifested himself so to be, when he brought them thence with a strong hand, and so declared himself to be Jehovah, *Exodus 6:2*; yea, I am ready to show thee the like mercy still; for "I remember" (saith he) "the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown," *Jeremiah 2:2*.

And thou shalt know no God but me. *i.e.* Effectually acknowledge, worship, serve, love, none save me, *Deuteronomy 13:2*; *Galatians 5:9*. Thou shalt experience none other. It is a blessed thing to be ignorant of false worship; and not to be insighted into, or versed in, the depths of Satan, *Revelation 2:24*. Thou shalt not inquire how these nations worshipped their gods, *Deuteronomy 12:30*. Ahaz got hurt by seeing the altar at Damascus: many that will needs see the Popish service are insnared thereby.

For there is no Saviour beside me. This is a title that God much glorieth in; see *Isaiah 60:16*; *63:1*; *Acts 5:31*; and we should go often to him in this name, as *Jeremiah 14:8*, since "he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto him," *Hebrews 7:25*, to save them perpetually, and perfectly, εἰς τὸ παντελές. He is a sole Saviour, a thorough Saviour, a Saviour *in solidum*; and doth not his work to the halves, as Papists make it. How blasphemous is that direction of theirs to dying men, to say, Join, Lord, mine obedience with those things which Christ suffered for me. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 5. [[@Bible:Hosea 13:5]]{{field-on:Bible}}**I knew thee in the wilderness, in a place of great drought.** *In terra torridissima*, where I gave thee *pluviam escatilem et petram aquatilem*, as Tertullian phraseth it, where I gave thee bread from heaven, set the flint abroach, kept thy clothes whole and fit, kept back thine enemies, led thee by a pillar of cloud, sent thee in flesh at even and bread in the morning, served thee as never prince was served in his greatest pomp, *Psalms 78:20, 24*. And wilt thou yet kiss the calf, *qui te nec servat, nec satiat, ut ego?* who neither saveth thee, nor satisfieth thee, as I have done? not suffering thee to lack anything, *Deuteronomy 2:7*, but crowning thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; insomuch as Moses stands amazed at it, and cries out, "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved of the Lord?" *Deuteronomy 33:29*. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 6. [[@Bible:Hosea 13:6]]{{field-on:Bible}}**According to their pasture so were they filled.** Saturity bred security; fulness, forgetfulness. This was a foul fault, and is much complained of, *Deuteronomy 32:13, 14*; *Psalms 78:10, 11*. God had brought them out of a place of great drought into large and fat pastures, a land flowing with milk and honey, where he filled their "hearts with food and gladness," *Acts 14:17*, where he fed them among the lilies, daily and daintily. But they, as if God had hired them to be wicked, basely abused his bounty to luxury, and having fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness, grew proud as Sodom, and out of measure sinful, *Ezekiel 16:49*; forgetting God and his will, themselves and their duties, and running out into all excess of riot, though they had been fairly warned and commanded to the contrary, *Deuteronomy 8:10*, &c. Their heart grew fat as grease, and became as a foul stomach, which the more you fill it the more you spill it; or like fed horses, they grew fierce and filthy, *Jeremiah 5:7, 8*, there was no hoe with them, ὅπόσον ἂν θρέψῃς μᾶλλον βλάβῃς (Hippoc.). See *Ezekiel 34:16, 18, 20*. While they were in the wilderness God knew them, yea, he knew their souls in adversity: they both knew God, and were known of him. But now, God neither knew them so much, nor they him; they lived not upon him now, as once in the wilderness; but being "filled, yea, filled," *Galatians 3:1, 2*, (you have the word here twice together), to note how they fell upon those allowed delights, and even glutted themselves, gorged themselves; they flew upon them, as those in Saul's time did upon the spoil of the Philistines; they fed without fear, as those Pseudo-Christians in Jude, *Jude 1:12*; they gormandized, as those flesh mongers before the flood, more like beasts than men, as the Greek

word signifieth, **τρώγοντες**, **Luke 17:27**. And hereupon.

their hearts were exalted. Prosperity and plenty will easily blow up such a blab as pride, in the best hearts, if care be not taken to the contrary; as Agur knew, and therefore prayed, Give me a mediocrity, "lest I be full and deny," and proudly ask, "Who is the Lord?" **Proverbs 30:9**; and as Solomon felt, whose wealth did him more harm than his wisdom did him good, **Ecclesiastes 2** and as Hezekiah experimented to his cost, **Isaiah 39**. Indeed of Jehoshaphat it is noted, **2 Chronicles 17:3**, that he walked in the first ways of David his father (for the truth is, David's first ways were his best ways; neither was he ever so good and tender as when he was hunted as a partridge in the mountains); and of Vespasian it is reported that he was made the better man by being made emperor (*Vespasianus unus accepto imperio melior rectus*); but he was a rare bird and had scarce his fellow again. It is the property of prosperity to turn out the heart and *ubi uber, ibi tuber*. where there is pleny there is a tumor. See **Psalms 73:3, 6; 1 Timothy 6:17**, they eat and are swelled, as being poisoned with pride; they are fatted, but it is for the slaughter.

Therefore have they forgotten me. *Non tam theoretice quam practice*, they remember there is a God, but they honour him not as God; they forget their engagements to him, and through the pride of their countenance, they seek not after him, **Psalms 10:4**, they consider not their distance, their dependence, &c. Now of all things God cannot abide to be forgotten, **Isaiah 1:2, 3**, it is a sin that he can hardly pardon, **Jeremiah 5:7**. (See Trapp on "**Hosea 8:14**")

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Verse 7. [[@Bible:Hosea 13:7]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Therefore will I be unto them as a lion, as a leopard**, &c. Thus still God proceedeth to use similitudes by the ministry of his prophets, as he did before, **Hosea 13:3**. He here compareth himself (who otherwise is compared to an eagle, bearing her young upon her wings; to a hen, hovering over chickens; to a father, cherishing his children, **Exodus 19:4; Deuteronomy 32:10, 11; Matthew 23:37**) to a lion, yea, to an old lion, which taketh the prey but seldom, and therefore is more ravenous of it when taken; (see **Hosea 5:14**) to a leopard, or panther, that diligently observeth by the way, and lieth in wait for his prey, and useth subtilty, as not being so swift of foot, confer **Jeremiah 5:6**; to a bear robbed of her whelps, which are very dear to her; to any other cruel creature, **Hosea 13:8**, as the tiger that flieth upon the very picture of a man, and teareth it, or if he cannot come at it, teareth himself for anger. Neither is it for nothing (saith Rivet) that God compareth himself here to all these together; but to show that there was no hope of escape, neither could he that had avoided one danger be safe from another, so dreadful a thing is it to fall into the punishing hands of the living God. Oh consider this, ye that forget God; lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 8. [[@Bible:Hosea 13:8]]{{field-on:Bible}} **I will meet them as a bear bereaved of her whelps.** *Surgit hic oratio*. The bear is more cruel than the lion, for the lion is said to spare the prostrate; but the bear falleth foul upon all, yea, upon dead carcasses. See **Amos 5:9; cf. 2 Samuel 17:8; Proverbs 17:12**. See also what work the two bears made upon the forty-two children, **2 Kings 2:24**.

And will rend the caul of their heart. The pericardium, ⁽²¹⁾ that fat heart of theirs, **Hosea 13:6**, that hoof upon their hearts which the Word could not pierce through, that filthy foreskin that grew to their uncircumcised hearts.

There will I devour them like a lion. Once more like a lion (**אִיבֵל**), *ut immanis leo*, for the

²¹ The membranous sac, consisting of an outer fibrous and an inner serous layer, which encloses the heart and the commencements of the great vessels. Also applied to the sac enveloping or enclosing the heart or corresponding organ in certain invertebrates. ED

word is not the same as before; as a lion, that is, in heart, and that loves to suck the blood, and the fat that is about the heart. "There will I devour them," that is, in their cities and houses, where they hold themselves safest; as the lions dealt by those mongrel colonies that made a mixture of religions, **2 Kings 17:25**.

The wild beast shall tear them. When they but stir anywhere abroad; so that there shall be no safety, no peace to him that goes out, or to him that cometh in, **2 Chronicles 15:5**, but

*"crudelis ubique
Luetus, ubique pavor, et plurima mortis imago."*

"Let us therefore have grace, whereby we may serve God with reverence and godly fear: for even our God" (and not the God of the Jews only) "is a consuming fire," **Hebrews 12:28, 29**, is a devouring lion, is a furious leopard, a raging bear; yea, put all the dreadfulness of all the creatures in the world together, it is all to be found in the wrath of God, even the quintessence of all. Hence that of the Psalmist, "Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath," **Psalms 90:11**; as who should say, Let a man fear thy displeasure never so much, he is sure to feel thee much more, if once he fall into thy fingers. Now a fearful man can fancy vast and terrible fears, as ramping lions, ravenous leopards, fire, sword, racks, scalding lead, burning pitch, running bell metal, all this in extremity, and that to all eternity: and yet all these are but as a painted fire in comparison of the unconceivable and unsupportable wrath of God. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 9. [[@Bible:Hosea 13:9]]{{field-on:Bible}} **O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself.** Heb. He, or, It hath marred thee, O Israel; that is, either thy sin of self-exaltation and forgetfulness of me, as **Hosea 13:6**; or thy king, in whom thou trustest, as **Hosea 13:10**; or thy calf, whom thou worshippedst, hath been the cause of thy confusion. Or thy feigned comforts, as Aben Ezra will have it; thy soothing up thyself in sinful practices. Or, one hath destroyed thee; or; somewhat hath undone thee, but not without thee. Whatever it is that hath done it, it is not I, what hard thoughts soever thou mayest have of me, because I appear thus dreadful to thee, as in the former verse. Fury is not in me, but thou mayest thank thyself, and fault thy sin as the mother of thy misery, as the cause of thy calamity, Σφῆσιν ἀτασθαλίῃσιν ὑπὲρ μόνον ἄλγε' ἔχοντες (Hom. Odyss.), thou hast destroyed thyself, and thine own heart may say to thee, as the heart of Apollodorus seemed in a dream to say to him, when he was tortured by the Scythians; It is I that have drawn thee to all this, εφω σοι τούτων αἰτία. It is the observation of a great politician: England is a mighty animal, which can never die except it kill itself. Answerable whereunto was the speech of the Lord Rich to the justices in the reign of Edward VI. Never foreign power could yet hurt, or in any part prevail, in this realm but by disobedience and disorder among ourselves; that is the way wherewith God will plague us if he mind to punish us. We use to say, No man is hurt but by himself. "Ye have not injured me at all," saith St Paul to the Galatians, **Galatians 4:12**; you cannot do it unless I will. The devil can do nothing at us if we give not way to him. And though there were no devil, yet our corrupt nature would act Satan's part against itself; it would have a supply of wickedness (as a serpent hath of poison) from itself; it hath a spring of its own to feed it. *Nemo igitur sibi palpet de suo: quisque sibi Satan est*, saith an ancient. And it was no ill wish of him that begged of God to deliver him from that naughty man, himself (*Domine, libera me a malo heroine, meipso*), for he knew, that as in that first chaos, **Genesis 1:2**, were the seeds of all creatures (πάνσπερμά), so in man's heart, of all sins and miseries that follow thereupon. "God made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions," **Ecclesiastes 7:29**, many shifts and sharking tricks. Sin and shifting came into the world together; **Genesis 3:12**, "The woman whom thou gavest me," &c. God must bear the blame of Adam's sin; so must his decree of reprobation still be alleged as the cause of man's perdition. But this covering is too short; for no man is destroyed because he is reprobated, but because he is a sinner; neither are any damned because they cannot do better,

but because they will do no better. If there were no will there would be no hell (*Cesset voluntas propria, et non erit infernus*), and this indeed will be the very hell of hell, that they have been self-destroyers. The worm of conscience (say divines), that never dying worm, is nothing else but a continual remorse and furious reflection of the soul upon its own wilful folly, and now woeful misery.

But in me is thy help. Heb. In me, in thy help, that is (saith Drusius), I am in thy help, and thy help is in me; whatsoever help thou hast, I am in it. We can easily undo ourselves; as a child can easily break a glass that all the men in the country cannot piece up again. But God both can and will help us, though never so shattered; and repair that image of his, lost in Adam, that one that destroyed Israel. Lord, saith Augustine, *Ego admisi unde tu damnare potes me; sed tu non amisisti unde salvare potes me*: that is, I have done enough to undo myself for ever, but with thee there is enough for my safety here, and salvation hereafter. God, as he both can and will help his that cry, Give us help from trouble, for vain is the help of man; so he will then chiefly do it when they seem to themselves and others to be in an undone condition. "Thou hast destroyed thyself, in me is thy help": **Psalm 9:11**, his holy hand is reserved for a dead lift. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 10. [[@Bible:Hosea 13:10]]{{field-on:Bible}} **I will be thy king.** Thine eternal King, so Pagnine. As I have been thy prophet, **Hosea 13:4, 5**, so I will be thy king; I will also be thy priest and thy Redeemer, **Hosea 13:14**, that so thou mayest hear my voice, submit to my sceptre, and apply my death for thy deliverance from death's dominion. Or, I will be thy king, and not be borne down by thy boisterousness, who calleth for another king, and repinest against my righteous regiment. Thou wouldst cast off mine authority, but I will maintain it. The Lord is king, be the people never so unquiet, **Psalm 99:1**, he will reign over rebels in spite of their hearts; and those that will not be his subjects, his willing people, shall be his slaves, his footstool, **Psalm 110:1, 3**. The Geneva Bible reads it thus, "I am: Where is the king that should help thee in all thy cities?" R. Aben Ezra, Calvin, Oecolampadius, and others go the same way; only they render it, Ere, I will be one and the same (according to that name of mine, "I am that I am," **Exodus 3:14**, and "Before Abraham was, I am," **John 8:58**); though you be off and on with me, though you change often, yet I am Jehovah, I change not, I will be. What will he be? The same that I said I would be, thy Saviour, thine helper: or, I will be a bystander, to see what will become of thee, and how thy king (in whom thou trustest) will help thee. This last is R. Solomon Jarchi's interpretation. Pareus will have it run thus: I will be, what? a lion, a leopard, a bear, &c., and nothing shall alter my resolution.

Where is any other that may save thee in all thy cities. Thou sayest (but they are but vain words) I have counsel, and strength for war; I have a king, and princes, and strong cities. But alas, where are they? Let them increase their army, and come forth, as he once said, **Judges 9:29**. *Ubi est Rex tuus? ubinam? nunc servet te*, &c. Where is the king? where is he? let him now save thee in all thy cities: so Polanus rendereth it. Can they save thee, who cannot save themselves? It is a sarcastic concession. See the like **Deuteronomy 32:37, 38; Judges 10:14; Amos 4:4**. And observe that it is of God to deride and insult over men in their carnal confidence; and his people are licensed to do so too, so it be out of pure zeal, **Psalm 52:6, 7**, and not out of private revenge.

And thy judges. Or chief officers, princes, that are necessary to a king, and are called his comites, cousins, and counsellors.

Whereof thou saidst. And wast set upon it; thou wouldst needs have them, *contra gentes*, against the nations, as they say, and hadst soon enough of them. Strong affections bring strong afflictions.

Give me a king and princes. It was partly their ambition, and partly discontent with the

present government (as the present is always grievous, τὸ παρὸν βαρὺ, Thucyd.), that prompted them to this request; and they had it, but for a mischief. It is not always in mercy that prayers are answered: for *Deus saepe dat iratus, quod negat propitius*, God often throws that to his enemies, when they are overly importunate, which he denies to his friends, in great mercy to their souls. They do best that, acknowledging him the only wise God, pray, Not our will, but thy will be done. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 11. [[@Bible:Hosea 13:11]]{{field-on:Bible}} **I gave thee a king in mine anger.** As once before he gave them quails to choke them. A king, that is, all those kings they had since they fell off from the house of David. These were God's gifts, but giftless gifts (ἄδωρα δῶρα καὶ οὐκ ὀνήσιμα), which he cast upon them in his anger, for a punishment both of the sins of David's house, and likewise of the people's rebellion. It was *ab irate potius quam ab exorato Deo*. Take him (saith he, since you will needs have him) with all that shall follow after. The hypocrite shall reign, that the people may be ensnared, **Job 34:30**. "Set thou a wicked man over him" (saith the psalmist), "and let Satan stand at his right hand," **Psalm 109:6**; see **Daniel 8:23**. Saul was a hypocrite, Jeroboam a wicked man; so were all his successors in that throne. **Leviticus 26:17**, it is written as a heavy curse of God, If you still trespass against me, I will set princes over you that shall hate you, mischievous, odious princes; odious to God, malignant to the people.

And took him away in my wrath. Heb. In mine immoderate wrath, that passed the bounds. This is spoken of God after the manner of men; for he cannot exceed or over do; "fury is not in him," **Isaiah 27:4**; but here he threateneth to take away king and kingdom together: as he did Hoshea, by the Assyrian that carried them all captive. Observe here, that better a bad magistrate than none, for this latter is the fruit of God's utter indignation. Those Anabaptists that from this text inferred that no Christian can with a good conscience take upon him kingly dignity should have observed, that as an evil king is reckoned as a plague to a people, so a good king is to be held a special blessing to them. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 12. [[@Bible:Hosea 13:12]]{{field-on:Bible}} **The iniquity of Ephraim is bound up.** sc. in a bundle, or fardle, or fagot, as the French hath it. And like as all fardles are opened on a fair day, so shall Ephraim's iniquities be brought to light, and punished at the last day: as the householder bindeth up the tares in bundles at harvest and burneth them; so shall it be in the end of the world. "The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all scandals, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire," **Matthew 13:30, 41, 42**. As the clerk of assizes binds up the indictments of malefactors in bundles, or seals them up in a bag for more surety, and at the assizes brings his bag, takes them out, and reads them; so will it be at that last and great day. "My transgression is sealed up in a bag," saith Job, **Job 14:17**, "and thou sewest up mine iniquity," viz. as the writings, or informations of a process, which is ready to be sentenced. See **Deuteronomy 32:34**; **Jeremiah 17:1**; **Hosea 9:9**. Sinners shall one day know that God's forbearance is no quittance; and that however he is silent for a season, and thereupon they are apt fondly to conceit him to be such another as themselves, yet he will confute them, and set their sins in order before their eyes, **Psalm 50:21** Their actions are already in print in heaven; and God will one day read them aloud in the ears of all the world. And then though their sin be hidden for the present, all shall be revealed, to their utter shame and everlasting contempt, **Daniel 12:2**; that last light of the day of wrath shall reveal all, **Romans 2:5**, punish all, **Hosea 9:9**. Whatever God hath threatened shall then be inflicted; whatever arrows are in the bowstring shall then flee, and hit, and stick deep. And the longer the Lord is in drawing the heavier they will light; *Morae dispendium faenoris duplo pensabitur*; the longer he forbeareth the heavier he punisheth; so that there shall be no cause why sinners should say, "Where is the God of judgment?" **Malachi 2:17**. (See Trapp on "Malachi 2:17") God will inquire after their iniquity, and search after their sin, **Job 10:6**. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 13. [[@Bible:Hosea 13:13]]{{field-on:Bible}}**The sorrows of a travailing woman shall come upon him.** This commonwealth was before compared to a mother, *Hosea 1 Hosea 3*. And as a woman that hath conceived is not for a while discerned to be with child till she biggen, and burnish, and grow near her time; so it is with sinners. See it elegantly set forth by St James, *James 1:14, 15*. The sorrows of a travailing woman are known to be unexpected, exquisite, and inevitable; so shall God's judgments be upon the workers of iniquity, such as they shall never be able to avert, to avoid, or to abide. This is set forth by an apt similitude, ordinary in Holy Scripture, *Micah 4:9, 10; Psalm 48:7; Jeremiah 49:24; 50:43*. And whereas some might say, A travailing woman is soon delivered; her pain is sharp, but short; she hath hope, not only of an end but of a birth; the joy whereof maketh her remember her anguish no more, *John 16:21*; the prophet replieth, that it is otherwise with Ephraim.

He is an unwise son. That will be the death both of his mother and of himself. He hath no wish to help himself, and to get free of the straits and perils of the birth, by passing through the narrow womb of repentance, and being born anew. God stands over him, stretching out his hands all the day long, to do a midwife's office, to take him out of the womb, as *Psalm 21:9*, to cut his navel and wash off his blood, to salt him, and swaddle him, as *Ezekiel 16:4*, but he hath no mind to come out of the filth of his sins, or to be washed from his wickedness. Rather than be regenerated (without which there is no heaven to be had, *John 3:5*, or freedom from deadly dangers upon earth), he will venture to stay a while at least (as the text here hath it תת) *in the mouth of the matrix*, though it cost him a choking. Such Ephraims we have not a few, that proceed no farther than to conviction; debarring themselves of the benefit of a thorough conversion. These go as far as Kadeshbarnea, they are nigh to God's kingdom, they are almost persuaded to be true Christians, they are come as far as the place of the breaking forth of children, but there they stick and are stifled; they are never brought forth from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive remission of sins, and inheritance among the saints and sons of God, *Acts 26:18*. Oh make much of the least beginnings of grace (saith a reverend man), even those called repressing; since they prepare the heart for conversion. There is a faith in the true convert of no better perfection than that in the temporary, though he stay not there, as the other (being an unwise sot) doth. And although we bring forth good things (saith another), as Sarah's dead womb brought forth a child; it was not a child of nature's, but of the mere promise; yet it cannot be denied that a natural man (though he be theologically dead, yet he) is ethically alive, being to be wrought upon by arguments; and that grace doth for the most part prepare naturals before it bring in supernaturals; and if we hide our talent we are not allowed to expect the spirit of regeneration; as if we die in the wilderness of preparatory antedecedaneous works, we never get to Canaan. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 14. [[@Bible:Hosea 13:14]]{{field-on:Bible}}**I will ransom them from the power of the grave,** &c. Some read it thus, I would have ransomed them, &c., I would have redeemed them, &c., had they been wise, or oughts (as we say), had not their incurable hardness and obstinace hindered; had they put forth into my hands, as unto a midwife, &c. But (alas) it is no such matter; therefore that which will die let it die.

Repentance shall be hid from mine eyes. I am unchangeably resolved to ruin them; or, repentance should have been hid from mine eyes, my goodness toward them should never have altered, &c. But let us rather look upon the words as a most sweet and comfortable promise of a mighty redemption and glorious resurrection to the remnant according to the election of grace, whom God would not have to want comfort. I will ransom them. Here, therefore, he telleth his heirs of the promises, that he will bring them back out of captivity wherein they lay for dead, as it were; and that this their deliverance should be an evident argument and sure pledge of their resurrection to life eternal. To which purpose the apostle doth aptly and properly allege it, *1 Corinthians 15:55*, and thereupon rings in death's ears

(out of this text and **Isaiah 25:8**) the shrillest and sharpest note, the boldest and bravest challenge, that ever was heard from the mouth of a mortal: "Death, where is thy sting? Hell, where is thy victory? &c. Oh thanks be to God, who hath given us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ," and thereby hath made us more than conquerors, that is, triumphers, **2 Corinthians 2:14**. But to return to the text. Be it, saith the prophet, that the commonwealth of Israel, both mother and child, must perish for want of wisdom, as was threatened in the foregoing verse; yet let not the penitent among them despair; for I, the Lord Christ, will ransom them, by laying down a valuable price (so the word Ephdem signifieth) *from the power* Heb. hand, of the grave, or of hell, that though hell had laid hands on them, yea, closed her mouth upon them, as once the whale had upon Jonas, yet I would open the doors of that Leviathan, and fetch them thence with a strong hand.

I will redeem them from death. By becoming their near kinsman according to the flesh, whereby I shall have the next right of redemption. But how shall all this be done? After a wonderful manner.

O death, I will be thy plagues. Not one, but many plagues, even so many as shall certainly do thee to death. The Vulgate rendereth it, *Ero mors tua, O mors, morsus tuus, O inferne*. The apostle for plagues hath sting; for the plague hath a deadly sting, and so hath sin much more; the guilt thereof is by Solomon said to "bite like a serpent, and sting like a cockatrice," **Proverbs 23:32**. Now Christ by dying put sin to death, **Romans 8:3; Ephesians 1:7; Hebrews 2:14**. We read of a certain Cappadocian, whom when a viper had bitten, and sucked his blood, the viper herself died, by the venomoas blood that she had sucked. But Christ (being life essential) prevailed over death; and swallowed it up in victory, as Moses' serpent swallowed up the sorcerers' serpents, or as fire swalloweth up the fuel that is cast upon it; yea, by death, he destroyed him that had the power of death, the devil; whose practice it was to kill men with death, **Revelation 2:23**, this is the second death.

O grave (or, O hell), I will be thy destruction. Thy deadly stinging disease joined with the pestilence, **Psalms 91:6**. Death to a believer is neither total nor perpetual, **Romans 8:10, 11**. Christ hath made it to him, of a curse a blessing, of an enemy a friend, of a punishment an emolument, of the gate of hell the portal of heaven, a postern to let out temporal, but a street door to let in eternal life. And to assure all this,

Repentance shall be hid from mine eyes. *i.e.* there shall be no such thing as repentance in me, for "all things" that are at all "are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do," **Hebrews 4:13**. The meaning is, I will never change my mind for this matter, "My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips," **Psalms 89:34**. Confer **Psalms 110:4; Romans 11:29**. Some render it (but not so well), Consolation is hid from mine eyes, and so make them to be the words of the Church, *q.d.* I see not this promise with mine eyes, but I receive it, and accept of it by my faith. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 15. [[@Bible:Hosea 13:15]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Though he be fruitful among his brethren.** In allusion to his name Ephraim, which signifieth fruitful and flourishing, **Genesis 41:52**. Confer **Genesis 48:16, 19, 20; 49:22**. See the like allusions **Amos 5:5; Micah 1:10**.

An east wind shall come. Which is violent and hurtful to the fruits of the earth.

The wind of the Lord. A mighty strong wind, meaning that most merciless and impetuous enemy, the Assyrian, sent by the Lord to avenge the quarrel of his covenant.

Shall come up from the wilderness. Where the winds blow most fiercely, because they meet with no resistance.

And his spring shall become dry, &c. This is a description of extreme desolation, and it is

explained and amplified in the next words.

He shall spoil the treasure of all pleasant vessels. He, that is, the Assyrian, not Christ (as Jerome, Mercer, and Ribera will have it), who shall take away from death and hell all matter of glorying. Not the fire of the last day, as Lyra. No, nor Ephraim, as Pareus and Tarnovius carry it: as if it were a promise of their conquest in Christ over all their enemies, corporal and spiritual, dividing the spoil of the converted Gentiles, who shall come in to them with all their desirable things, as some read that text, *Haggai 2:7*. Confer *Amos 9:11, 12; Obadiah 18; Zechariah 14:14, 16, 20, 21*. That this whole verse containeth a promise of Ephraim's reduction to the Church of God I could easily yield; reading it especially, as many good interpreters do, "For he shall fructify among his brethren, after that an east wind coming, a wind of Jehovah coming up from the desert, his spring shall become dry, and his fountain shall dry up: the same shall spoil the treasure of all pleasant vessels." This is a similitude (say they) from a piece of ground all dried up and parched, that nothing is able to grow: notably expressing the miserable and distressed estate of this people; that, as an easterly wind, and a tempestuous storm, hath dried them quite and spoiled all their delightful treasures, made them the vilest and most contemptible of the earth. Marcellinus tells of an emperor, that, meeting with some of this nation, and annoyed with the sight and stench of them, cried out, *O Marcommani, O Quadi, O Sarmatae, &c.*, O Mareomans, Quades, and Sarmatians, I have found at length a more loathsome and sordid people than you. All which notwithstanding, Ephraim shall flourish again, and hold up their heads among their brethren, sc. by the merit and spirit of him who ransometh them from the power of the grave, from the dint of death. This sense of the words is confirmed by that which follows in the next chapter, *Hosea 14:5-7*. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 16. [[@Bible:Hosea 13:16]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Samaria shall become desolate.** Here many begin the fourteenth chapter, but not so well; for this verse evidently cohereth with the former, and sheweth that Ephraim shall not only be plundered, but butchered by the Assyrian by their own default. "Samaria shall become desolate," or be found guilty, *rea peragetur*, (as the Chaldee hath it, and the words may bear). How can she be otherwise, whereas

she hath rebelled against her God. She hath embittered him, or bitterly provoked him to wrath, (as *Hosea 12:14*) (*See Trapp on "Hosea 12:14"*) who therefore sent in the Assyrian to desolate her: "that bitter and hasty nation, to march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwellingplaces that were not theirs," *Habakkuk 1:6*. This was a bitter affliction, but behold a worse:

They shall fall by the sword. They shall lose not their land only, and the treasure of all their pleasant vessels, as *Hosea 13:15*, but their dearest lives, which to save a man will gladly part with all that he hath, *Job 2:4*, or submit to any servile employment, as the Gibeonites in Joshua's days did; who were willing to take hard on as slaves and underlings rather than to be cut off with the rest of the Canaanites.

Their infants shall be dashed in pieces. Sept. τὰ ὑποτίθια αὐτῶν, their sucklings, that are ordinarily spared for their innocence, ignorance, &c. See *Hosea 10:14*, with the note; and consider that infants are not so innocent (though they have yet done neither good nor evil) but that God may justly inflict upon them all torments here, and tortures in hell, for the guilt of original sin that cleaveth to their natures. Howbeit this excuseth not the barbarous cruelty of his executioners, who shall be surely and suitably punished, *Psalms 137:8*.

And their women with child shall be ripped up. Of this kind of savage inhumanity, see *Amos 1:13; 2 Kings 8:12; 15:16*, where you shall find that the tyrant Menahem ripped the infants of Tiphshah out of their mothers' bellies, because their fathers opened not the gates unto him. The like cruelty was exercised in the Sicilian Vespers and Parisian Massacre, by those Romish Edomites; maugre whose malice Ephraim is yet fruitful, the Church flourisheth.

Sanguine fundata est Ecclesia, sanguine crescit.

By blood the church is established, by blood she thrives. {{field-off:Bible}}

Chapter 14

Verse 1. [[@Bible:Hosea 14:1]]{{field-on:Bible}} **O Israel, return unto the Lord.** *Usque ad Dominum*, all the way to God, as far as to the Lord: give not the half, but the whole turn; and take it for a mercy that you are yet called upon to return, and may be received; "that yet there is hope in Israel concerning this thing," **Ezra 10:2**. All the former part of the prophecy had been mostly denunciations; this lastChapter is wholly consolatory; the Sun of Righteousness loves not to set in a cloud.

Return unto the Lord thy God. He is yet thy God: no such argument for our turning to God as his turning to us, **Zechariah 1:3**. See the note there. *Tantum velis et Deus tibi praeoccurret*. If ye be willing and obedient ye shall eat, &c. The father's plenty brought home the prodigal; he had but a purpose to return, and his father met him, **Isaiah 65:24**. See **Joel 2:12, 13; Isaiah 55:6, 7; Jeremiah 31:18; Hosea 3:5; Acts 2:38**. This is the use we should make of mercy. Say not, He is my God, therefore I may presume upon him; but, he is mine, therefore I must return unto him. Argue from mercy to duty, and not to liberty, for that is the devil's logic, which the apostle holds unreasonable, yea, to a good heart impossible, **Romans 6:1, 2**. His mercy is bounded with his truth, with which it therefore goes commonly coupled in Scripture. It is a sanctuary for the penitent, but not for the presumptuous.

For thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. *i.e.* "Consumption is decreed, yet a remnant reserved," **Isaiah 10:22, 23**. Thou hast fallen into great calamity, and that by thine iniquity, which puts a sting into thy misery. This it is fit thou shouldst be sensible of; for conviction is the first step to conversion. But if thou art fallen, wilt thou there lie and not rise again by repentance, and return to him that smiteth thee? wilt thou not submit to his justice, and implore his mercy? Here, then, is another motive to conversion; as indeed this verse abounds with arguments to that purpose, Pareus well observeth. First, thou art a prince of God, who hath greatly graced thee above all people: return to him therefore. 2. Thou hast run away from him by thine iniquity; and turned upon him the back, and not the face: return therefore. 3. He is the author of thy being and well-being. 4. He is God, to whom thou must either turn or burn for ever: *aut poenitendum, aut pereundum*; he can fetch in his rebels. 5. He is thy God in covenant with thee, and will accept of pence for pounds, desires for deeds, sincerity for perfection. 6. Thou hast fallen by thine iniquity; and yet wilt fall farther, and never rise again, as **Amos 8:14**, if thou stop not, step not back by repentance, and stir up thyself to take hold of God. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 2. [[@Bible:Hosea 14:2]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Take with you words, and turn to the Lord.** Confess your sins, beg pardon, and promise amendment. Sue to God to give you those words that he bids you take: go to him in his own words, put his promises in suit; crave the help of his Holy Spirit, without which what can we do? **Romans 8:26**. Say to God, as **Job 37:19**, "Teach us what we shall say unto thee: for we cannot order our words, by reason of darkness." David promiseth not only to pray, but to marshal up his prayers, to put them in good array, so the word signifieth, **Psalms 5:3**, "In the morning will I direct my prayer," order it in the best manner: his words should be *nec lecta, nec neglecta*, neither curious nor careless, but such as are humble, earnest, and direct to the point, avoiding vain babblings. Here is a form prescribed in the text (forms of prayer therefore are not so unlawful as some conceive them), words put into their mouths (as the phrase is, **2 Samuel 14:3**), that they might not miss. Men must as well look to their words as to their feet, when they come before God; and see that their affections in prayer be not without answerable expressions. Take with you such words as may testify that ye turn heartily to the Lord, and not from the teeth outward, as they in the Psalmist, **Psalms 78:36, 37**. Turn before ye begin to pray; for God heareth not sinners, since their incense smells of their hand that offereth it, **Isaiah 1:13**.

Say unto him. Mentally and vocally; with spirit and speech. True it is, that prayer is not the

labour of the lips, but the travail of the heart; and God hath promised to answer his people before they call, **Isaiah 65:24**. By calling upon his name we neither inform him of what he knoweth not, nor move him to show us more mercy than he intendeth. But yet prayers are necessary, as means which God will have used, that we may receive what he of free mercy giveth. Besides, it prepareth us holily to enjoy the things received; and makes us ready, either to wait for them, or to want them; and to be content that he may be glorified, though we be not gratified. And although God knoweth our thoughts, and understands the mind of the spirit, as being the searcher of hearts, **Romans 8:27**, yet he calls for the calves of our lips, the service of our tongues, **James 3:9**, guiding them now and then in a wonderful manner, far beyond all natural apprehension: and strangely enabling his praying servants, who do also find no small benefit by this practice of pouring out their hearts before him, both of the preventing of distractions, and kindling affections, and discerning their profiting in holy desires; for the more worthy effect followeth where more fervent affection went before.

Take away all iniquity. Few words, but full of matter: *O quam multa, quam paucis!* (Cicero, de Bruti epistola). What a short but pithy prayer is this! Such was that of the publican, **Luke 18:13**; that of our Saviour in his agony, when yet he is said to pray more fervently; that also which he taught us to pray, **Matthew 6:7, 8**, &c., set in fiat opposition to Paganish battologies. This in the text is not much unlike that perfect pattern; for here they are taught to beg, *Ut auferantur sua maleficia, conferantur Dei beneficia*, Take away all evil, and give good; and then to restipulate thanks, "So will we render," &c. Take away from us, as an unsupportable burden, such as we cannot stand under, all iniquity, stain and sting, crime and curse, power and punishment, that there be no later reckonings; cross out the black lines of our sins with the red lines of thy Son's blood, that Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world by his merit and Spirit, by his value and virtue; that true scape goat, that carrieth the sins of his people into the wilderness, **John 1:29; Hebrews 9:28**.

And receive us graciously. Heb. Receive good, that is (as some interpret it), Accept, out of thy fatherly favour, the true witnesses and effects of our thorough conversion. But better they that thus sense it, Take good, to wit, to bestow upon us, as **Psalms 68:19; cf. Ephesians 4:8**. And it is not improbable (saith Dr Reynolds) that the prophet here secretly leadeth us to Christ the Mediator, who first receiveth gifts from his Father, and then poureth out them forth upon his Church, **Acts 2:33**.

So will we render the calves of our lips. Thy benefits shall not be cast away upon unthankful persons; but we will present unto thee a sacrifice that will please thee better than an ox or bullock, that hath horns and hoofs, **Psalms 69:31**. This cannot be done but by a sound convert; for the leper's lips must be covered according to the law; and the sacrifice of the wicked is abomination to the Lord. To the wicked God saith, "What hast thou to do to take my name into thy mouth," &c.; he liketh not a good motion from an ill mouth, as that state in the story: The lip of excellence becometh not a fool, (**Proverbs 17:7**) no more than lying doth a worthy man that is renowned for his wisdom. It well becometh the saints to be thankful, to cover God's altar with the calves of their lips. This expression implieth (saith one) that God's people should not offer their thankfulness to God of that which cost them nothing; but bring, 1. A calf; do something to farther God's worship, or relieve the necessities of others. 2. It must be a dead calf, that is, it must proceed from humble and mortified minds. 3. A sacrificed calf: where is required, 1. An altar; our praises must be tendered in the mediation of Christ; 2. Fire; for the bare throwing out of words, though in the name of Christ, will not serve without feeling, ardency, and zeal. 3. We must lay our hands on the head of the calf; that is, in all humility, confess our unworthiness of the blessings we give thanks for, as being less than the least, **Genesis 32:10**. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 3. [[@Bible:Hosea 14:3]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Asshur shall not save us**, &c. *q.d.* He cannot

if he would; he shall not if he could. The two great sins of this people were creature confidence and idolatry; both these they do here renounce and abandon. The best repentance, saith Luther, is a reformed life. It is true, say they, we have gone to the Assyrian (wherein we have dealt as the silly bird flying to the snare, or as fishes, which, to avoid the pole wherewith the water is troubled, swim into the net); we have taken our horses instead of our prayers, and gone about to find out good; have been so foolish as to think that dumb idols, that cannot help themselves, should help us. But now we are otherwise resolved, *experientia edocti et poenitentia ducti*; we find at length (that which we should have believed sooner, without trying conclusions) that men of high degree are but a lie, that horses are but a vanity, that an idol is nothing, and can give nothing: that power belongeth unto thee, none else can do it; that mercy belongeth unto thee, none else will do it: therefore since in thee only the fatherless, that is, the friendless and shiftless, find mercy, O be thou pleased to do us good.

For in thee the fatherless findeth mercy. The poor pupil, the forlorn orphan, that is left to the wide world, and lost in himself, cries out, Lord, I am hell, but thou art heaven, &c. I am an abject, oh make me an object of thy pity. **Jeremiah 39:17**, "Because they call thee an outcast, saying, This is Zion, whom no man seeketh after, therefore I will restore health unto thee." *Miseria res digna misericordia* (Ruperti Imp. symb.). The proud Assyrian, and other enemies, would be apt to insult over Israel, as afterwards Cicero did; the Jewish nation, saith he, show how God regards them, that have been so often overcome by Pompey, Crassus, &c. But let God's people be but fatherless enough, let them withdraw their confidence from men and means, and cast it wholly upon God, making him their tutor and protector, and they shall be both preserved and provided for. *Deo confisi nunquam confusi*. Have confidence in God and you will never be disappointed, I will not leave you orphans, saith Christ, **John 14:18**. Hence the Church resteth on God, in the fail of other comforts, **Psalms 10:14, 17, 18; 27:10; Habakkuk 3:17; Psalm 102:13**. The prayer of the destitute he regards. The Hebrew word signifieth a poor worthless shrub in the wilderness, trod upon by beasts, unregarded. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 4. [[@Bible:Hosea 14:4]]{{field-on:Bible}} **I will heal their backslidings.** Relapses, we know, are dangerous, and apostasy little less than incurable, **2 Peter 2:20, 21; Hebrews 6:6**. Bishop Latimer, in a sermon before King Edward VI, tells of one notorious backslider that repented; but beware of this sin, saith he, for I have known no more but one that did so. To fall forward is nothing so dangerous as to fall backward, with old Eli. Hence Paul so thundereth against the Galatians, and Peter against apostatizing libertines, **2 Peter 2:22**; but if Jehovah the physician (as he is called, **Exodus 15:26**) undertake the cure, and say, I will heal their backslidings, what can hinder? Christ, in the Gospel, cured the most desperate diseases; such as all the physicians in the country might have cast their caps at, **Matthew 4:23, 24; 8:16**. *Omnipotentis medico nullus insanabilis occurrit morbus* (Isidor.). He refused none that came to him, **Matthew 12:15**, no, not his enemies, as Malchus. Will he then reject his Ephraim, a child, bemoaning himself, though not a pleasant child, a towardly son, **Jeremiah 31:18, 20**, a backslider indeed, but such a one, as crieth now, that God bindeth him, **Job 36:13**. No sooner doth God cry, "Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings, I will love you freely"; but Ephraim, melted with such a love, replieth, "Behold, we come unto thee; for thou art the Lord our God," **Jeremiah 3:22**. O most happy compliance! See the like **Zechariah 13:9**. (See Trapp on "Zechariah 13:9") "They shall return even to the Lord" (from whom they had deeply revolted), "and he shall be entreated of them, and shall heal them," **Isaiah 19:22**. They had begged of him to take away all iniquity, **Hosea 14:2**; and he here (in answer) promiseth to heal their backslidings, that compound of all iniquities, that falling sickness, that often hales hell at the heels of it, **Hebrews 10:38**.

I will love them freely. Ephraim might remember, and Satan would be sure to suggest, that the prophet had said before, "Ephraim is smitten or wounded, My God will cast them away, or hate them, Mine anger is kindled against them," **Hosea 8:5; 9:16, 17**. Here, therefore, upon

their repentance, all this is graciously taken off in one breath, and Satan silenced. Be it that they are backslidden and sore wounded by their fall; I will heal their backslidings, and make their broken bones to rejoice. Be it that there is nothing at all in them that is laudable, or lovable, yet I will love them freely, *ex mero motu*, of mine own free, absolute, and independent grace and favour, out of pure and unexcited love, without any the least respect to their merit, which in nothing better than hell. Be it that they have bitterly provoked me to anger, and (as angry people use to do) I have both threatened them and punished them; yet now mine anger is turned away from them; I am fully reconciled unto them in Christ, will clear up my countenance toward them, and remove mine heavy judgments from them. God's favour is no empty favour. It is like the winter sun, that casts a goodly countenance when it shineth, but gives little heat or comfort. If he love a man freely, and out of the good pleasure of his will, ἐν δὲ δόκιᾳ, *cum spontaneitate* (as he doth all his, **Ephesians 2:8**, making them accepted in the beloved, **Ephesians 1:6**), such a man may promise himself all the blessings of this and a better life. Excellent is that of Bernard; He that sent his Son for thee, poured his Spirit into thee, promised to clear up his countenance upon thee, what can he deny thee? *Qui misit unigenitum, immisit spiritum, promisit vultum, quid tandem tibi negaturus est?* He that inviteth thee to feed upon the fatted calf, will not only take away all iniquity, but give good. That was the second petition they preferred, and they have it answered in the next verse, *ad cardinem desiderii*; God not only grants their prayer, but fulfils their counsel, **Psalms 20:4**. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 5. [[@Bible:Hosea 14:5]]{{field-on:Bible}} **I will be as the dew unto Israel.** I will give good in abundance; and this is sweetly set forth in a sevenfold metaphor, all answering to the name of Ephraim (which signifieth fruitful) and to the ancient promises made unto him; and all again opposite to the many contrary curses, threatened in the former parts of the prophecy, under metaphors of a contrary importance, as Pareus and (out of him) Tarnovius have well observed. As first of solid and fruit causing dew, in opposition to that vanishing and barren dew, **Hosea 6:4; 13:3**; secondly, of the flourishing lily, contrary to those nettles, thorns, and thistles, **Hosea 9:16; 10:8**; thirdly, of the well-rooted and durable trees of Libanus, contrary to dry roots, **Hosea 9:16**; fourthly, of spreading and growing branches, instead of branches consumed, **Hosea 11:6; 9:16; 10:8**; fifthly, of trees yielding pleasant shade and repose, contrary to **Hosea 9:3, 6**; sixthly, of corn to satisfy hunger, contrary to **Hosea 8:7**; lastly, of a vine bringing forth excellent wine, contrary to **Hosea 9:16; 10:1**. And all these fruits the fruits of Lebanon, a most fertile mountain, the valleys whereof were most rich grounds for pasture, grain, and vineyards.

As the dew unto Israel, he shall blossom as the lily. *Quot verba, tot lumina, imo flumina orationis.* This prophet aboundeth with similitudes, as is before noted. (see **Hosea 12:10**) (See **Trapp on "Hosea 12:10"**) He beginneth here with a simile drawn from the dew of heaven; a mercy very much set by, in those hotter countries especially, where from May to October they had no rain. The Chaldee paraphrase and Hebrew doctors understand this text concerning Christ and his benefit. Truly he is good to Israel, to the pure in heart, **Psalms 73:1**. Peace and mercy, sanctity and safety, all spiritual benedictions in heavenly things in Christ, shall be upon the Israel of God, **Galations 6:16; Ephesians 1:3**. What the dew is to the herbs, fields, fruits, that is Christ to his Israel. 1. The dew comes when the air is clear; so doth Christ by his blessing, when the light of his countenance is lifted up upon us, 2. As the dew refresheth and cherisheth the dry and fady fields (hence it is called the dew of herbs, **Isaiah 26:19**, which thereby recover life and beauty), so doth Christ our hearts, scorched with the sense of sin; and fear of wrath. 3. As the dew allayeth great heats, and moisteneth and mollifieth the earth, that it may fructify; so Christ cooleth the devil's fiery darts, and filleth his people with the fruits of righteousness (Aristot. lib. 1, Meteor. cap. 10; Plin. lib. 2, cap. 60, et lib. 18, cap. 29). "He is unto them as a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest," **Isaiah 18:4**, and maketh their souls as so many watered gardens, **Jeremiah 31:12** 4. As the dew falls in a narrow compass, without noise, and

is felt only by those (in the force of it) on whom it descends; so the grace of Christ watereth his faithful only; secretly and sweetly insinuating into their hearts: the stranger meddleth not with their comforts. See **John 14:17**. The cock on the dunghill knows them not.

He shall grow as the lily. Which hath its name in the Hebrew from its six leaves, and serves here and elsewhere to set forth the great comeliness, sweet odours, and true humility of the Church: for the lily grows in valleys, **Solomon's Song 2:1**; as Theophylact upon this text notes, sweet it is but not great, ἔχει τὴν εὐωδίαν μέγεθος οὐκ ἔχει, and the more it blossometh the more it shooteth upwards, to teach us heavenly mindedness. It is also of a perfect whiteness, to remind us of innocence. "Her Nazarites were purer than snow, whiter than milk," **Lamentations 4:7**. Lastly, *Lilio nihil est foecundius*, saith Pliny, nothing is more fruitful than the lily; *et lachryma sua seritur*, saith the same author, it is sown in its own tears. Weeping Christians grow exceedingly.

And cast forth his roots as Lebanon. *i.e.* as the cedars of Lebanon, as the Chaldee Paraphrast interpreteth it; or as the frankincense tree, which taketh very deep rooting, so Cyril senseth it. The lily (with its six white leaves, and seven golden coloured grains within it) soon fadeth, and loseth both beauty and sweetness; but so doth not Christ and his people. He can as well die at the right hand of his Father as in the hearts of his elect, where he dwells by faith, **Romans 6:10**, whereby they are "rooted and grounded in love, strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man," **Ephesians 3:16, 17**, so that the gates of hell cannot prevail against them. *Immota manet*, is the Church's motto; *Nec fluctu, nec flatu movetur*, It is not moved by wind or waves, which is the Venetian motto. "They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever," **Psalms 125:1**. Winds and storms move neither Libanus nor the well-rooted cedars thereof: which the more they are assaulted the better they are rooted. So fareth it with the saints. Plato compareth man to a tree inverted. The Scripture often compareth a good man to a tree planted by the rivers of waters, that taketh root downward, and beareth fruit upward, **2 Kings 19:30**.

—*"quae quantum vertice ad auras,
Aethereas, tantum radice ad tartara tendit."*

Let us cast forth our roots as Lebanon; stand fast rooted in the truth, being "stedfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord," and with full purpose of heart cleaving close unto him, **1 Corinthians 15:58**, being established by his grace, **Colossians 1:11; Hebrews 12:28; 13:9**. In the civil law, till a tree hath taken root it doth not belong to the soil whereon it is planted. It is not enough to be in the Church, except, like the cedars of Lebanon, we cast forth our roots, and are so planted, that we flourish in the courts of our God, and bring forth fruit in our old age, **Psalms 92:12-14**. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 6. [[@Bible:Hosea 14:6]]{{field-on:Bible}} **His branches shall spread.** Heb. shall walk, or expatiate; shall reach out, and stretch themselves all abroad: so shall the Church be propagated all the earth over; she shall flourish as the palm tree, which though it have many weights hung on the top, and many snakes hissing at the root, yet it still saith, *Nec premor, nec perimor*, I am insuperable: "I am like a green olive tree in the house of God: I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever," **Psalms 52:8**.

And his beauty shall be as the olive tree. That goodly tree, **Leviticus 23:40**, that retaineth her greenness in the depth of winter; yea, in that universal deluge, Noah's dove met with an olive leaf. "The Lord hath called thy name," saith the prophet to the Church, **Jeremiah 11:16**, "a green olive tree, fair, and of goodly fruit." The cypress is fair, but not fruitful; the fig tree fruitful, but not fair and flourishing. But the olive tree is both fair and fruitful; her fruit also is of singular use to mankind, both for food and medicine and light for the lamp, **Exodus 29:20; Leviticus 6:15, 16**. In one respect it is an emblem of peace, it maketh the face shine, **Psalms**

104:15; and in the other, it is an emblem of grace and spiritual gifts, **1 John 2:20**, of increasing with the increase of God, by the Spirit, and of reigning with him in eternal glory.

And his smell as Lebanon. Whereby is meant the sweet savour of the gospel, which spreadeth itself abroad in the ministry of the word, and in the lives of believers, **2 Corinthians 2:14, 15**, who besides their continual offering up to God spiritual incense and services in prayers, thanksgivings, alms, and good works, they perfume the very air they breathe upon by their gracious and savoury communication, **Ephesians 4:29**; yea, the very company they come into: as a man cannot come where sweet spices and odours are beaten to the smell but he shall carry away the scent thereof in his clothes. When the Spirit of Christ blows upon them, and grace is poured into their hearts, then their lips drop sweet-smelling myrrh, **Solomon's Song 5:13; 4:16**, then also their "good name is better than a precious ointment," **Ecclesiastes 7:1**; see the note there; when the wicked stink alive and dead, *Nihil nisi foetidum et foedum exhalavit* (Rivet.). {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 7. [[@Bible:Hosea 14:7]]{{field-on:Bible}} **They that dwell under his shadow shall return.** Or, shall sit still, shall be at rest. The Chaldee hath it, They shall dwell in the shadow of his Christ. See a like promise of reconcillation and protection, **Isaiah 4:6; 25:4; Psalm 35:8**. The refuge and refreshment of the Church is wholly from Christ; under the shadow of whose divine grace she resteth in her members, shaded and sheltered under the hollow of his hand, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall, **Isaiah 25:4**, when indignation is kindled, **Isaiah 26:20**, and when the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the land for their iniquity; then shall true converts have a chamber of rest, a Pella provided for them; or, at least, be able to sing David's requiem, return to thy rest, O my soul, hover and cover under God's wing, run to his name as a tower, and be safe. Why art thou case down? trust in God, trust in an angry God, in a killing God, as Job, believe him upon his bare word; and that against sense, in things invisible; and against reason, in things incredible. This is faith's triumph, and this is the saint's safety.

They shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine. The Seventy and Latin render it, They shall live with corn; that is, they shall have great plenty of all things necessary, as **Psalm 87; 144:13**. But the other reading is better; They shall revive as the corn, which suffering much from frost, hail, snow, tempest, lieth for dead, as it were, in winter; but at the return of the sun in springtide reviveth, and yieldeth a great increase, **John 12:24; 1 Corinthians 15:36-38**. In like sort the vine, when pruned and lopped, spreads again, and is the more fruitful; so those that are *viti verae inserti*, set into the true vine, though lopped and harrowed with sore and sharp afflictions, yet can truly and triumphantly say, "As dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed," **2 Corinthians 6:9**. Their bodies also by death are not so much rotted as refined, and shall be conformed to Christ's most glorious body the standard, **Philippians 3:21**.

And the scent thereof as the wine of Lebanon. Which was noted for the best, as Kimchi proves, and Athenaeus confirmeth. Among the Jews at this day the women, when they speak of their dead husbands, say, His scent, or his memorial, is as the wine of Lebanon.

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Verse 8. [[@Bible:Hosea 14:8]]{{field-on:Bible}} **Ephraim shall say, What have I to do, &c.** Heb. Ephraim, what have I to do, &c. This some make to be the speech of God to Ephraim; as if Ephraim here were the vocative case and God were brought in abhorring the notion of parting stakes with idols, of sharing his glory with another. But because this God never did (for what communion hath light with darkness, Christ with Belial?) and because the Chaldee Paraphrast, and from him the best interpreters, supply "shall say," I take this latter to be the better translation. Here, then, God promiseth, first, what Ephraim shall do, or rather, what he by his

grace will cause him to do; he shall utterly abominate and abandon his idols, whereunto his heart had been joined, or glued, **Hosea 4:17**; secondly, what he will thereupon do for Ephraim; what special favour he will show him, and what a gracious compensation he will make him: "I have heard him, and observed him," &c. Ephraim, now grown penitent, shall say (see the like ellipsis supplied, **Isaiah 5:9**), with utmost indignation and aversion, with greatest heat of anger and height of hatred, shall he utter it. See the like **2 Samuel 16:10**; **2 Kings 3:13**; **Matthew 8:29**.

What have I to do any more with idols. Or sorrows, or bugs, those Balaam's blocks, those images and monuments of idolatry, those images of jealousy, that provoke to jealousy, **Ezekiel 8:3**, those dunghill deities, that can produce no good, hear no prayers, work no deliverance, bring nothing but evil and auguish to us. What, then, should we rather do, than pollute those images that we had perfumed, cast them away with detestation, as a menstruous cloth, and say unto them, Get ye hence? **Isaiah 30:22**. Then will God soon say, I have heard him thus bemoaning and befooling himself, **Jeremiah 31:18**. God hath a quick ear in such a case; he hath also an eye open to the supplications of his servants, in all that they call upon him for, as Solomon telleth us, **1 Kings 8:52**.

I have observed him. Or fixed mine eyes upon him, with a most vigilant care and critical inspection. It would be wide with God's Ephraims, and they would want many things, if he should not see as well as hear, if he should not seriously and solicitously consider and care for them, above all that they ask or think, **Ephesians 3:20**, and without any monitor, aid and accommodate them. He is many times better to them than their prayers; for what reason? "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, as well as his ears are open to their cry," **Psalms 34:15**. The Vulgate Latin rendereth it, *Dirigam eum*, I will direct him, as a tutor and guardian doth his pupil, his orphan, see **Hosea 14:8**. He will also protect him, that nothing may be wanting to his happiness.

I am like a green fir tree. Green all the year about, and of so large branches, and broad leaves thick set, that neither sun nor rain can easily come at the wearied passenger, reposing himself under them. And whereas Ephraim might say, Here is repose, but where shall I have repast? it is added;

In me is thy fruit found. *q.d.* The fir tree is indeed green and shady, but also barren; it bears no fruit, either *ad esum*, or *ad usum* to eat or to use. It boweth itself down to the earth, so that a man may easily lay hold upon the branches, saith Rabbi David and other Hebrews. But what shall he get by that more than a green bower, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat? &c. As an ancient, speaking of Ahab, describeth him sitting in his ivory palace in Samaria, in the time of the three years' famine: He had everything else, but wanted bread; so Ephraim here hath shade, but can he live by that? what shall he do for food? He shall not want for that, saith God all-sufficient; for

From me is thy fruit found. *Praesto est* (so some render it), here it is ready, and mouth meet; yea, *satis est* (so others render it), it is enough of it, satisfactory, and proportionable to thy necessity. Yea, I would thou shouldest know that what fruit soever thou hast, or shalt bear as an olive or vine, **Hosea 14:6, 7**, it is found in me, proceeds in me; the root of the matter is in me, as Job speaketh in another case. *Sine Deo omnis copia est egestas* (Bern.). Without God, all plenty is poverty. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 9. [[@Bible:Hosea 14:9]][{{field-on:Bible}}**Who is wise and he shall understand these things.** A pathetic perclose, whereby the prophet (orator-like) would leave a sting in the hearts of his hearers, and so seal up, and set on all that he had said before, *conclusio gnomica, exclamatio emphatica*.

Who is wise? *q.d.* I could wish there were more; but I see there are not many. Store there are of fools, *Stultorum plena aut omnia*, such dust-heaps there are in every corner to be found, not a few that either know not the will of God, or stumble at it. "But who hath known the mind of the Lord?" **1 Corinthians 2:16**. "Who among you will give ear to this? Who hath believed our report? or to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? Who is the wise man, that may understand this?" **Isaiah 42:23; 53:1; Jeremiah 9:12**. *Lucerna accensa hominem quaerebat Aesopus*. Jeremiah was bidden run to and fro to find a man that sought the truth, v. 1. *Rari quippe boni* (Juven. Sat. 13). Not many wise, wise, I mean, to salvation, **2 Timothy 3:15**, that make sure work for their souls, and draw their wisdom from God's holy word, from the mine of the mystery of Christ, **Psalms 119:98, 99**. All others are "foolish people, sottish children; they have no understanding," **Jeremiah 4:22**, be they never so shrewd and of deep reach for the world, be they never so wise in their generation. The fox is so in his; and the devil in his, for when he was but young he outwitted our first parents, **2 Corinthians 11:3**, who yet were no babes, simple and weak in understanding, as the Socinians affirm them to have been or else they would not (say they) have so sinned. A fond conceit, and without footing in God's holy word, where we find that they were created in God's image, which consisteth in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, as saith the apostle, **Ephesians 4:24**.

And he shall understand these things. "Which none of the princes of this world know," **1 Corinthians 2:8**, because their learning hangs in their light; and, like moles, they dig dexterously under-ground, but are blind above-ground. *Sapiens est cui res sapiunt prout sunt*, saith Bernard. He is the wise man that savoureth things as they are. And herein lieth the whole wisdom of a man, saith Lactantius, *ut Deum cognoscat, et colat*, that he know and worship God aright, that with a practical judgment he ponder the words and ways of God, in order to salvation. This is that wisdom that dwelleth with prudence, **Proverbs 8:12**. Aristotle, in many places of his works, distinguisheth between wisdom and prudence. Wisdom he maketh to be a right apprehending of truths in general; prudence, an applying them to particular cases and uses. But Socrates said, that there was no such difference; since he that knoweth good things to do them, and evil things to avoid them, is to be held a wise man, and none else. They may seem here to be put for one and the same; since the wise man is said not to know, but to understand, judge, and ponder, and the prudent to know; teaching us, that God calls for a prudent wisdom, and a wise prudence, directing the soul to an orderly carriage, and a holy care, that godliness (which is the only wisdom) may run through our whole lives, as the woof doth through the web.

For the ways of the Lord are right. Understand it not so much of the ways of predestination, providence, &c., wherein God walks towards us (which yet are all right and equal), as of those ways of his will, word, and worship, wherein he requireth us to walk towards him. These are called the way of God, **Matthew 22:16**, and the way of salvation, **Acts 16:17**, and the way of truth, **2 Peter 2:2**, and the right way, **2 Peter 2:15**, and the way of righteousness, **2 Peter 2:21**. Right these ways are called, or straight. First, because they are conformed to the will of a righteous God, which is the *mensura mensurans*, the first rule of right, the standard, *Non solum recta, sed et regula*. Secondly, because the matter of it is holy, and just, and good, a doctrine of righteousness, that teacheth us to give God his due, and men theirs. It is also put for every purpose, **Psalms 19:7, 8; Proverbs 30:5**. Of the Book of Psalms, Athanasius hath observed, that they are so penned that every man may well think they speak *de se, in re sun*, of himself, and to his own particular necessities. Thirdly, because it rectifieth us, and transformeth us into the same image; it maketh such as deliver up themselves thereunto to walk as patterns of the rule, as a transcript of the word, that dwelleth richly in them, and worketh effectually, as a seed of immortality. Fourthly, because it carrieth us on in a straight line unto a right end without crooking or compassing about, **Psalms 19:8; 25:4; 125:5**. *Has vias qui terit, non terit*. Pray therefore as David did, **Psalms 18:29**, lest breaking out into byways (all which are highways to

hell), or but stepping over the hedge, to avoid a piece of foul way, we brush and bruise ourselves to get in again, break our bones with David.

And the just shall walk in them. Such as are just with a double righteousness, imputed and imparted; that of justification, and this of sanctification: these will choose the way of truth, **Psalm 119:39; 25:12**, and be willing to walk honestly, **Hebrews 13:18**, orderly, and by rule, **Galations 5:25**, accurately, and to the utmost, **Ephesians 5:15**, directly and distinctly, eyeing the mark, and propounding to themselves the highest pitch, and the best patterns (στοιχεινακριβως): often comparing themselves with the rule, laying their lives by the line, and reforming their outstrays, **Psalm 119:59, 60**, making it the main of their endeavour, that all their deeds may be wrought in God, **John 3:21**. Lo, this is the just man's practice; and it is here propounded for a precedent.

But the transgressors shall fall therein. They perish from the way, **Psalm 2:12**; they stumble at the Word and fall into perdition, as the Chaldee here hath it; and so show themselves to be transgressors, traitors, rebels, yea, reprobates. See **1 Peter 2:8**, they "stumble at the word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed." Oh, fearful! "A bridge is made" (saith a reverend divine) "to give us a safe passage over a river, but he who stumbleth on the bridge is in danger to fall into the river. The Word is given us as a means to carry us over hell to heaven; but he who stumbleth and quarrelleth at this means shall fall in thither, from whence otherwise he had been delivered by it." Neither may we think the worse of the Word for this accidental effect of it upon transgressors; since the fault is merely in themselves: as when a lame man stumbleth in a plain path, the fault is not in the way, but in the foot. Blear eyes cannot abide the light; nor children endure honey when they have sore mouths. The same sun makes flowers smell sweet, but carrions stink loathsomely. Moses saved the Israelite, killed the Egyptian; and Abigail's voice pacified David, but made Nabal's heart died within him as a stone. Oecumenius telleth us that the fragrance of precious ointments is wholesome for doves, but kills the beetle, *columbam vegetat, scarabaeum necat*. And Aristotle affirmeth, that oil of roses is deadly to vultures, who hunt after only dead men's carcasses. Christ himself, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, was set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign to be spoken against, **Luke 2:34**, for a butt mark, against whom his enemies should shoot the shaft of their gainsayings. To the Jews he became a stumblingblock, and unto the Gentiles foolishness, **1 Corinthians 1:23**. Let them alone (saith he, concerning the Pharisees, who were offended at his sayings, **Matthew 15:14**). Let them stumble and fall, and be broken, and snared, and taken, **Isaiah 8:15**. Christ in his ordinances is to reprobates a rock of offence, **2 Peter 2:8**, but such a rock as that, **Judges 6:21**, out of which goeth fire and consumeth them. "For if any love not the Lord Jesus Christ, he is Anathema Maranatha," **1 Corinthians 16:22**. "Behold, they have rejected the word of the Lord; and what wisdom is in them?" **Jeremiah 8:9**.

"Linea ducta mihi est, gratia, Christe, tibi."

"By the plumline it has been leading to me,
oh Christ by grace to thee" [{{field-off:Bible}}