

(verse 11-12)

A nation like a “silly dove?” This is the picture Hosea paints for us in regard to Israel’s backslid behavior. A dove is a cute bird, but silly. How is a dove silly? They don’t have judgment. A dove is a symbol of peace, but not known for much more. A Canadian scientist developed an IQ test for birds. The dove was not mentioned in the results. The crow was surprisingly at the top.

Israel is compared to “*a silly dove without heart.*” They had no judgment. Israel called upon the Egyptians for help and then the Assyrians. They tried to make these nations allies and friends. This was poor judgment such as may be found in a dove. The Egyptians betrayed them and the Assyrians ruined them. Poor judgment indeed! When the citizens of a nation turn from God to sin, it ruins the nation as a whole. Look at America. Each day we are weakened. America is presently plummeting in regard to its once high-and-mighty world standing.

Sin makes even the wisest silly. Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived, got involved in the sin of adultery. Who would ever imagine that he would do such a silly thing as having 700 wives. I Kings 11:3-4 reads “*And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart. For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father.*”

Observe folk today. Look around you. Do you see any *silly doves*? I do. Look at this crowd with tattoos over their bodies and ball bearings in their tongues and wire rings in their eyebrows. They aren’t cute. They are silly. They are void of judgment. They are a heartbeat away from being reprobate. Some may already be reprobate. We know *reprobate* means *void of judgment*. Such is the case of the gay person. Animals have more judgment than do they.

Verse 12 reminds us that Israel will not get by. When the dove has assembled in the field for food, then the net of God will fall upon them. They will be brought down as the fowls of the heaven. God promises to chastise them. Galatians 6:7 reads “*Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.*” No nation has ever turned against God and gotten by. The man who thinks God has forgotten his sin is foolish.

(Verse 13-16)

Verse 13 reminds us that we “can run but we can’t hide.” “*Woe unto them! For they have fled from me.*” No use running from God. No man can outrun God. Jonah thought he could, but God caught up with him in the belly of the whale. Israel is reminded in

verse 13 that God REDEEMED them. This points back to the time when they were in bondage in Egypt and God brought them out by the Passover lamb. If you are redeemed, you belong to God. The word redeemed itself means to be bought back by the paying of a price. Israel is behaving poorly, living sinfully, but they still belong to Jehovah God, for He purchased them. Again, running from God will not work.

Verse 14 through 16 paints a picture of Israel in sin and fleeing from God. It is evident that they know they have sinned. *When you sin, you will be the first to know it.* Yet, verse 14 notes that they have not cried unto the Lord. Instead, they turn to false and pagan gods. They pray to the gods for corn and wine, all the while knowing their provisions come from Jehovah God. While they were rebelling against God and worshipping false gods, God was still their strength, as we see in verse 15. The Devil will never give strength to a child of God. Strength comes from God.

Verse 16 records the deceitfulness that lies in the hearts of the people of God. Deceitfulness is a trademark of a person who has wandered away from the will of God. I call it "*living a lie.*" I meet folk who are out of God's will who simply cannot face the truth. Truth evades them. Lying becomes convenient. They lie to themselves. They lie to their families. They lie to God. They lie to the Holy Ghost. They lie to the preacher and the church.

Israel is described in verse 16 as having become a "deceitful bow." A bow is made by bending a straight stick into a curved shape. A string is then attached to retain the bow in the curved configuration. The string must be tight and well attached. When the archer loads the arrow and pulls back and the string slips, the bow is classified as deceitful. The arrow misfires. The bow looked good. It was religious. It carried a Bible. It wore a fine suit. But it failed in use. It could not be counted on. Is that you? You look like a worker in God's vineyard, but when the pressure is applied in firing the bow, you slip. You cannot be counted on. God hates unfaithfulness.

Chapter 8

(verse 1)

If there is a *single* fault that we can attribute to Israel's spiritual demise, it is the one given to us in verse one. That fault was *rejection of God's covenant and God's law.* What's wrong with America and the world today? Simply, they have rejected the Word of God. When folk reject God's word they become foolish.

God warns Israel you had better "*set the trumpet to thy mouth.*" Israel is sitting by foolishly drinking wine and acting religious. They should be blowing the trumpet warning the people that the enemy is coming. But, because they have forgotten the word of

God, they have gone to sleep and lost their sense of direction and urgency. Most likely the reference to blowing the trumpet is to warn of the invasion from the north of the Assyrians.

The enemy is about to swoop in like an eagle. Moses warned in Deuteronomy 28:49–50 *“the Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand; a nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor show favor to the young.”* Throughout the Old Testament Israel struggled with the authority of God’s Word. They just could not bring themselves to accept what God said and to do it. II Chronicles 36:16 tells us *“they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words.”* Psalm 119:126 *“it is time for thee, Lord, to work: for they have made void thy law.”* Isaiah 30:9 says *“that this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord.”* A person who fails to heed the authority of God’s word is only making a fool of himself. I Peter 2:2 *“as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.”*

Let us emphasize once again Israel’s whoredom and idolatry and rebellion came about for one simple reason- they turned away from God’s covenant and God’s law, that is, God’s Word. If America turns away from God’s Word, destruction will follow. If Europe turns away from God’s Word, destruction will follow. Nations may attempt to rule God out of their life, but it is not possible. All people of all nations are created by God in His image and for His glory. Thus, you cannot escape God being involved in your life.

(Verse 2-3)

Verse two shows us just how far Israel has come in deception. They boast to God *“we know thee.”* Is Israel so backslid they are hallucinating? Ask any outlaw in my home city if they know God and they will say “sure, I am a Christian.” Oh how I am reminded of some folk I know who profess to be saved but they are so far away from God they don’t know that they are away from God. Such is the case with Israel. Israel said *“we know thee.”* They are so cold and away from God spiritually they do not realize there is a problem. It is as if they are saying “hello God, aren’t things wonderful between You and us?” Isaiah 29:13 says *“wherefore the Lord said, forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me...”* Titus 1:16 reads *“they profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.”* When we lose our true spiritual connection with God, we devise a plan made by man in hopes of remaining attached to God. He sure is a nice guy

to know when we have trouble. This is how many false religions are invented.

Verse three tells us that Israel has cast off and rejected the thing that is *good*. God is good. I Chronicles 16:34 “*O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good.*” Nahum 1:7 reads “*the Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble.*” Psalm 34:8 says “*o taste and see that the Lord is good.*”

(Verse 4)

God’s Word is authority. If you have ever been close to God’s Word, you could not help but recognize that His word is authoritative. It tells us what to do and what not to do. It tells us how to act, how to talk, how to walk, and where to go. I have no problem with that, for I am a child of God trying to live my life in subjection to God’s word. However, when folk who have known the authority of God’s word rebel against the Word, what happens? They substitute other authority for the authority of God’s Word. This verse four tells us Israel had set up *Kings and princes*. God says “you did not get My permission to do that. I knew nothing about it and for sure I did not approve it.” Israel had used their gold and silver to make idols. They prayed to the idols. They believed the idols gave them commands and instruction by which their life should be guided. Yes, they substituted the word of kings and princes and idols for the WORD OF GOD!

Be careful! If you have ever walked with God and lived in accordance with the command of His Word and you then stray, I predict you will substitute some other authority in place of God’s Word. True believers sometimes stray from God and wander off into the authority of cults! Help us Lord to stay with the BIBLE.

(Verse 5-6)

“*Thy calf, O Samaria, hath cast thee off.*” The calf first showed up in Israel’s wilderness journey in the time of Moses and Aaron. The people threw their gold into the fire and out came a calf! The people worshipped the calf. Where did they get this notion? They got this notion in Egypt where they were in prison to the Egyptians. The Egyptians had great temples devoted to cattle and had sacred cattle with sacred names that they worshipped. Israel saw the Egyptians in their idol worship of cows. And when Israel chose to go into idolatry, they chose the calf as their god. In the time of Hosea, Israel had calves of worship in the city of Bethel and the city of Dan. The meaning of “*Thy calf, O Samaria, hath cast thee off*” is “your calf stinks.” God hates idols. Idols stink in the nostrils of God. God hates any object be it a boat, camper, home, children, grandchildren, job or any other thing that stands between Himself and one of His children.

(Verse 7)

In their idolatrous way of sinful and selfish living, Israel has wasted their lives. When we “sow to the wind,” what is the meaning? It means we are *carelessly wasting our substance*. Are you sowing to the wind? Every Christian has three things of great value: time, talent, and treasure. Are you throwing your treasure into the wind? Are you wasting your talent by tossing it into the wind? Likewise, your time, is it being tossed carelessly into the wind?

Wind is one thing and the whirlwind is yet another. The whirlwind is a *storm*. If we do not live for God and walk with Him after He has saved us, He can send a storm that will waste away our health, our income, our possessions, our families and friendships, our churches, and our testimonies.