

*\*The heart is deceitful above all things. Jeremiah 17:9*

*\*Ephesians 4:18 They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart.*

*\*2 Thessalonians 2:10 and all the ways that wickedness deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.*

*\*Hosea 12:1 Ephraim feeds on the wind; he pursues the east wind all day and multiplies lies and violence. He makes a treaty with Assyria and sends olive oil to Egypt.*

*2 The LORD has a charge to bring against Judah; he will punish Jacob according to his ways and repay him according to his deeds.*

*3 In the womb he grasped his brother's heel; as a man he struggled with God.*

*4 He struggled with the angel and overcame him; he wept and begged for his favor. He found him at Bethel and talked with him there—*

*5 the LORD God Almighty, the LORD is his name!*

*6 But you must return to your God; maintain love and justice, and wait for your God always.*

*\*Trusting in the Wind.*

1. V:1 **The House of Israel (Ephraim)**. Relies on its treaties made with people who don’t honor God. (Assyria & Egypt) Ephraim (His name means “Fruitful”) How fruitful can you be chasing after the wind?
2. **Chasing** the east wind is living carelessly. Making a treaty with Assyria while trading with their enemy Egypt means their foreign policy was in big trouble.
3. **Daily** **lying** and allowing violence reign produces what kind of life? Destructive!
4. V:2-4 **The entire nation of Israel** is in trouble**.** Judah symbolizes the southern kingdom and Jacob’s name signifies the whole nation.
5. **God would address the nation** as Israel when they were obedient and Jacob when they were disobedient.
6. **Israel's deception** has been there from the beginning. Jacob (Deceiver) the person and the nation must repent and let God start talking and directing them.
7. V:5-6 **We must return to God and the House of God**. Always wait for God don’t go before His movement or His will is revealed in time. Don’t lag behind it.

*\*Hosea 12:7 The merchant uses dishonest scales and loves to defraud.*

*8 Ephraim boasts, "I am very rich; I have become wealthy. With all my wealth they will not find in me any iniquity or sin."*

*9 "I have been the LORD your God ever since you came out of Egypt; I will make you live in tents again, as in the days of your appointed festivals.*

*\*Defrauding and deceit are paths to iniquity leading to slavery.*

1. V:7 **Nations that become prosperous** through dishonest gain will not be blessed by God**.**
2. V:8 **A nation that boasts of its wealth** and lies about its dealings will answer to God. If a nation also claims uniqueness because of its God then beware. The house of Israel was a nation for a little over 2 centuries when God dealt with them over their compromises.
3. V:9 **They need to return** or revisit the times that God took care of them in their wilderness.

*\*Hosea 12:10 I spoke to the prophets, gave them many visions and told parables through them."*

*11 Is Gilead wicked? Its people are worthless! Do they sacrifice bulls in Gilgal? Their altars will be like piles of stones on a plowed field.*

*12 Jacob fled to the country of Aram; Israel served to get a wife, and to pay for her he tended sheep.*

*13 The LORD used a prophet to bring Israel up from Egypt, by a prophet he cared for him.*

*14 But Ephraim has aroused his bitter anger; his Lord will leave on him the guilt of his bloodshed and will repay him for his contempt.*

\*Trusting the spoken Word of God means we are more than literalists.

1. V:10 **The Word of God is truth.** Yet, God uses allegories, figurative speech, and parables. God even uses humor, satire, puns, metonymies, and much more to teach through His Word.
2. V:11 **The Balm of Gilead.** A spiritual metaphor for the healing power of Jesus Christ over sin and even the sins of a nation. Yet, the place Gilead that should be a symbol of God’s power became a place of wickedness.
3. V:12 **Jacob worked twice as hard to receive the wife he loved.** He was known as a deceiver and it came back to him twice. Once when he worked 14 years for his wife. Then when his sons deceived him over the death of Joseph.
4. V:13 **The Lord uses Prophets** to bring his people out of captivity and to care for His people. Prophets are more than proclaimers o
5. V:14 **It is a terrible thing to provoke God.** After two centuries of disobedience, God’s righteous wrath came upon the house of Israel. How long can the house of God have contempt of Him and not receive judgment? The house of Israel's guilt remained on them when their God is one of grace and mercy.