

HOSEA.

The Period of Hosea's Prophetic Office was from 785 to 726 B.C.

The Prophet ordered to Marry a Prostitute.

1 **T**HE message from the EVER-LIVING that came to Hosea-ben-Bari in the times of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, the kings of Judah and in the days of Jerabam-
2 ben-Joash, king of Israel.

THE FIRST MESSAGE OF THE EVER-LIVING TO HOSEA.

The EVER-LIVING said to Hosea, "Go! marry a wife from the whores and the child of whores, for the country whores away from the EVER-LIVING!" So he went and married
3 Gomer the daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bore him a son.
4 Then the EVER-LIVING said to him, "Call his name Jezreel,—for before long I will fix the murders of Jezreel upon the House of Jehu, and abolish
5 the kingship of Israel; and at the same time I will break the bow of Israel in the valley of God's Harvest."
6 But she conceived again and bore a daughter. Then He said to me, "Call her name Lo-ruhamah, ('Merciless'): for I will not continue to have mercy on the House of Israel,
7 but I will drive them away. However, I will have mercy on the House of Judah, and save them because of their EVER-LIVING GOD. But I shall not save them by bow and sword and war, by horses, or horsemen."
8 When she had weaned "Merciless," she conceived again and bore a son. Then He said, "Call his name Lo-ammi, ('Not-My-People'), for you are not My people, and I will
2 not be with you. And although the Children of Israel were as numerous as the sand of the sea that cannot be measured or counted, yet in the place where it was said of them, you are Not-My-People,—they shall be called
2 the children of a LIVING-GOD! For I

will collect the children of Judah, and the children of Israel together, and they will appoint a Single Head for themselves and rise up from the earth for the Great Day of God's Harvest.

"Call to your brothers, 'My-
3 People,'—and to your sisters who have been pitied; Plead for your
4 Mother—plead; for she is not my wife! and I am not her husband! Strip her whoredoms from her face,
5 and her adulteries from between her breasts, for fear I should strip her naked, and bare, like the day she was born, and banish her to the desert, where the land is waterless, and kill her with thirst; for I will not pity her
6 children,—for they are children of whoredoms.

"For their Mother prostituted
7 herself, she conceived them shamefully, for she said 'I will go after my paramours who gave me bread, and water, wool and flax, oil, and drinks.' Therefore I will fence up her path
8 with thorns, and weave a hedge, so that she cannot find her beaten path. And when she follows her paramours
9 she shall not overtake them, and when seeking them she shall not find. Then she may say, 'I will go and return to my former man, for it was better for me than now.'

"But she did not recognize that it
10 was I who gave her the corn, and wine, and oil, and silver, and increased her gold, which they used for Bal.

"I will consequently come home,
11 and take away my corn at its harvest, and my wine at its maturity, and shear my wool, and my flax, that would have covered her nakedness. And
12 then expose her shame to the eyes of her paramours, and none will rescue her from my hands.

"I will also deprive her of all her
13 pleasant festivals, her New Moons,

and Sabbaths, and all her Assemblies.
 14 And take away her vines, and figs that she said, 'These are mine; my paramours gave me them;' and make them a forest, and the beasts of the field shall eat them.
 15 "I will also punish her for the Balim days, on which she burnt incense to them, on which she adorned herself with rings, and necklaces, and went after her paramours, and forgot me," says the EVER-LIVING.
 16 "But, afterwards, I will entreat her and lead her out into the country and speak to her heart. And give her a vineyard there, and the Vale of Sorrow as an opening to Hope, and she shall sing there as in the days of her youth, and as in the times of

her girlhood, when she came from Mitzer. And then she will call Me 18 her Husband, and no longer her Master, and I will take the names 19 of her 'Masters,' from her mouth and she will no longer remember their names. I will also at that time 20 make a new contract for her, with the wild beasts of the field, and the birds of the skies, and the reptiles of the ground, when I will break from the earth the bow, sword, and war, and men shall dwell in safety. I will 21 also wed you to Myself for ever,—I will wed you to Myself in Righteousness and Justice, and Gentleness, and Mercy, and I will wed you to Myself 22 in Truth and Knowledge of the EVER-LIVING.

The Anthem of God and His Creation.

"And then I will sing," says the LIFE, 23
 I will sing to the skies,

They also shall sing to the earth;
 And the Earth herself sing to the Corn, 24
 And the Vine, and the Olive,
 And they, also, sing to the Harvest

"I will plant her for me in the Land, 25
 And have mercy on her who had none;

Tho' I said 'Not My People,'
 My People you are;
 And she reply, 'You are My GOD.' "

3 But the LORD again said to me;
 "Go! Love your wife, the lover of wickedness, and an adulteress!—For the LORD loves the Children of Israel, although they turn to seducing gods,—and love raisin cakes!"
 2 So I bought her for myself for ten silvers, and a homer and a half of
 3 barley. But I said to her "You shall stay long without me,—you shall not prostitute yourself, nor offer yourself to men,—and then I will be yours."

In the same way the Children of 4 Israel shall stay for a long time, without a King; and without a leader; and without a sacrifice; and without a Capital; and without an Ephod or Teraphim!

At last the Children of Israel will 5 return, and seek the LORD their GOD, and David their King, and reverence the LORD and His beneficence, in the future ages!

A Message Denouncing Israel's Sins.

Hear the LORD'S message, you sons of Israel! 4
 For the Land's people contend with the LORD.

For there is no truth,—and there is no mercy,—
 And there is no knowledge of GOD in the country!

But there is perjury, lying and theft! 2

Adultery is rampant, and blood follows blood—

Therefore the Country is weak and is languid, 3

And the beasts of the field, and the birds of the skies,

And even the fish in the waters all faint!

Alas, no man warns! No man will reprove! 4

And your people like priests who revolt!

And you and your Preachers both stumble by day, 5

So at night I will lock up both your mother and you.

For want of reflection My people will perish; 6

For you have rejected all thought from yourselves.

7 So I reject you from the Priesthood to Me;—
 And having abandoned the Laws of your GOD,
 I will abandon your children Myself!—
 As against Me they sinned in their power,
 To contempt I will change all their honour.
 8 As on the sin of My people they feed,
 Those crimes they shall carry upon their own souls!—
 9 And as with the Mass, it shall be with the Priest,—
 On each will I lay the result of their ways;
 And turn back their paths on themselves.
 10 They eat, but they never are filled;
 They whore, but they do not increase!
 For they pay no regard to the LORD!—
 11 For whoredom, and wine, and strong drink
 Have seized upon all of their hearts.

12 My People ask guidance of wood, and of sticks,—
 For the spirit of whoredom deludes,
 And they whore themselves far from their GOD!
 13 On the top of the mountain they offer up gifts,
 And they burn their perfumes on the Peaks!
 Under Oak trees and Poplars and Pines,
 For the sake of the cool shade they give;
 So your daughters are whored,
 And your brides are all foully defiled!

14 Should I not punish your daughters as whores?
 And your brides as adulterous themselves?
 Who wander about with the whores,
 And with prostitutes offer up gifts?—
 So the stupified People must fall!

15 But if Israel whores;—yet let not Judah fall!
 So come not to Gilgal, nor go to Beth-aven!
 Or else never swear, "By the life of the LORD!"
 16 For Israel bucks, like an obstinate cow,
 When the LORD would lead her like a lamb to the plain

17 Let Ephraim alone;—for his idols seduce.—
 18 Their drink is drunk out; they have whored with their whore,
 And his Princes delight in their shame!
 19 A furious wind will enfold in her wings,—
 And their altars become their disgrace.

The Doom of the Apostate Priests.

5 You Priests listen to this, and Israel's house hear,
 And you, house of the King, for you must decide;
 Upon Mitzfah why set you a trap?
 And spread out a net upon Tabor?
 2 And plan how to whip to the slaughter?
 But I will exterminate all!

3 Ephraim I know well;—nor is Israel hid,—
 For by Ephraim's whoredom is Israel defiled!
 4 That practice prevents your return to your GOD!
 For your breast holds the Spirit of whores!
 And you never acknowledge the LORD.
 5 And Israel's pride flashes up in his face;
 So Israel and Ephraim shall fall in their sin,
 And Judah shall stumble with them!—

With your flocks and your herds, go and question the LORD,— 6
 Yet they find not ;—He draws off from them !
 The LORD you betrayed when you bore bastard sons,— 7
 Now a month will eat them and their herds.

A Warning to Israel.

Sound the trumpet in Ghibeh, the loud gong in Ramah,— 8
 Rouse Beth-aven,—and Benjamin bring in with you !
 For Ephraim shall be waste in the day of reproof,— 9
 To Israel's Tribes, I proclaim the event.
 Judah's Chiefs are like breakers of bounds ! 10
 So on them I will pour out My rage like a stream !
 Ephraim is broken, and crushed by defeat, 11
 Because he consented to follow the lies.
 So to Ephraim I was like a moth, 12
 And to Judah's House like a decay.
 But when Ephraim perceived his disease, 13
 And when Judah discovered his wound,—
 Then Ephraim went off to seek Ashur,
 And set loose the Ravaging King ;—
 But he could not find you a cure,
 Nor could he take from you your sore !
 For to Ephraim I was like a lion, 14
 And a tiger to Judah's house, I !
 I will tear,—and be off,—
 I will snatch—and no man shall release.
 I will go and return to My den, 15
 Till they suffer and seek for My face ;
 About Me they will think in their grief !

Israel Talks of Repenting.

EPHRAIM SPEAKS.

" Let us go and return to the LORD, 6
 He has torn us, He only can heal ;
 He wounded, and He can bind up ;
 Can revive us from day on to day ;
 Can raise,—and make live in His presence,—
 Can teach and instruct to know LIFE. 2
 His progress is fixed like the dawn,
 And He comes to us like showers come ; 3
 Like the Harvest rain poured on the earth !"

THE LORD REPLIES.

" What can I do for you Ephraim ? 4
 And what can I Judah for you ?
 Your piety, like morning clouds,
 And like dew, at the dawn fades away !
 Tho' I sought you by Preachers,— 5
 And slew by their words from My mouth,
 And My Judgments flashed on you like light ?
 I wish more for Mercy than Offerings, 6
 And for knowledge of GOD more than Gifts.
 But like Adam you broke from the contract, 7
 You always were faithless to Me !
 " Gilad is a city of villains,— 8
 It is rich in the foot-marks of blood !
 And like gang-robbers hiding for men, 9
 Gangs of Priests on the Shekem road murder,—
 There they practise deliberate crime !

10 In Israel's home I see horrors!
Ephraim whoring, and Israel defiled!
11 And Judah is ready for reaping,
So I turn you, My people, to slaves!"

The Incurable Vices of Israel.

7 When Israel I would have cured,
The vices of Ephraim were found!
And Shomeron's sins that make falsehood;
For thieves are within;—robbers pillage outside!
2 Nor reflect in their heart I remember their crimes,
Tho' they wrap up their acts, from My face!
3 Their King loves their crimes, and their Princes are pleased!
4 They are like a baker, when heating his oven,
Only rest from their lust, as he rests from his kneading,
Until the dough swells up in ferment!
5 Daily fury of wine heats our Princes and King;—
He joins hands with the scoffers,
6 Whose heart like an oven is ready prepared,—
All night sleeps the Baker till morning,
But his fire still burns with a flickering flame.
7 So they burn as an oven, and devour their Judges,
Their Kings are all fallen,—none cried to Me for them!

8 Ephraim mixes himself with the pagans;
Ephraim is like to a cake never turned,—
9 Strangers suck out his strength, and he knows not!
He has sprinkled grey hairs, but he never perceives!
10 Israel's haughtiness shows in his face,
But they never will turn to the LIFE,
Nor for all this will seek for their GOD.

11 Ephraim has become like a dove,—
Without any heart in her fears;
To Egypt they cry, and to Ashur they go;—
12 As they fly I will throw My net for them,
Bring down like the birds from the skies;—
As their Senate has heard, I will punish!

13 Woe to them! wanderers from Me!
Alas for them! who revolted from Me!
When I rescued, about Me they lied!
14 They called not to Me from their hearts,
Altho' they have yelled on their beds!
They assemble for corn and for wine,
But rebel against Me!

15 If I weakened or strengthened their arms,
Yet they thought but of mischief for Me!
16 They do not rebound,—they are like worthless bows;
So their Princes shall fall by the sword,
Because of their swaggering tongues;
They are scorned in the country of Mitzer.

The Rebolt of Israel from God.

8 Put the Horn to your lips!—
Fly over the House of the LORD like an Eagle!
They have broken My Bond,
And rebelled from My law!
2 Yet he called Me 'My GOD,'
So you, Israel, knew Me!

Israel cast off the Good ;—
 So his foeman pursues!— 3
 They made Kings to reign,—
 But it was not from Me!— 4
 They made themselves Princes,
 But I approved not!
 They made Idols of silver and gold
 By whom they have cut themselves off!

Shomeron! cast off your calf!
 My anger is hot against you!
 Can you never succeed to repent? 5
 The thing that was made by a smith,
 Can never be Israel's GOD! 6
 So Shomeron's Calf shall be smashed!
 And as they have sown only Wind,—
 The Whirlwind alone shall they reap. 7
 Without stalk,—the ear cannot make meal,—
 Or what it yields strangers devour!
 Thus Israel, you are gulped down,— 8
 Among nations like things they dislike ;
 For they went up to Ashur, a lonely wild ass ;— 9
 Ephraim paid him to bring paramours!
 Altho' they have hired the heathen, 10
 I will gather them, and they shall sigh,
 Depressed by the load of the Emperor-King!

Since Ephraim has multiplied Altars for Sin, 11
 His Altars shall bring him to grief!
 I wrote him a number of Laws,— 12
 But he thinks they are things that are strange.
 They sacrifice offerings to Me,— 13
 They sacrifice flesh,—and they eat—
 But the LORD will not take it from them,
 For He thinks of their vice,
 And will visit their sin.—
 So to Mitzer they now shall go back.
 For Israel, his Maker forgetting, 14
 Has Palaces built for himself;
 And Judah increases strong cities,—
 But I will send fire to his towns,—
 And her Palaces I will consume.

Denunciation of Pagan Alliances.

Let not Israel joy in the dance of the Heathen ;— 9
 For you whore from your GOD,
 And make love here in every barn!
 Neither corn store nor wine bin will fill, 2
 And new wine shall be wanting to you.

No more dwell in the land of the Lord,— 3
 But, Ephraim, to Mitzer return,
 Or eat in defilement with Ashur,
 Pour no more wine to the LORD, 4
 Nor be pleasing to Him by your Gifts,
 For they shall be like funeral bread,
 All eating of them be defiled.
 Their food shall be like to their persons,
 Not enter the House of the LORD!

What will you do on the day of Assembly? 5
 At the time of the feast of the LORD?

- 6 Tho' they fly from destruction to Mitzer,
There Memph will collect and entomb,—
The nettles possess their bright silver,—
In their mansions the thorns shall spring up!
- 7 The day of the reckoning has come,
The day of repayment arrived!
And Israel shall know the reciters were fools,
That the man with a Spirit was mad!
And because of your manifold vices,
Your destruction be equally great.
- 8 Ephraim keeps a look against GOD!—
His Prophets lay traps in his paths
And destroy in the house of his gods
- 9 They are deeply corrupt, as in Gibeah's day;—
He remembers their fault, and will punish their sin!
- 10 I met Israel like Grapes in the Desert,
I looked on your fathers like early ripe figs!—
They came to Bal-paor,—and fell in their shame!—
And became as corrupt as their laws!
- 11 Ephraim's Glory shall fly like a bird,—
Without child, or embrace, or conception!
- 12 If their sons should grow up,—I destroy them as men!—
Woe to them when I turn against them!
- 13 I see Ephraim like Tzur on a beautiful site,—
"But Ephraim produces his sons to be slain!"
- 14 Give to them, LORD;—Yes! what will You give?—
Give them a womb that will fail,
And the breasts that are dry!
- 15 For their sin is in Gilgal; I noticed their plan;
On account of their sin I will drive from My home;—
I love them no more, for their Princes rebel!
- 16 Ephraim is felled! and their root is dried up!
They cannot bear fruit, or, if they should bear,
I will kill the beloved of their breast!
- 17 My God will reject them,—they list not to Him;—
And they shall be wanderers in Nations!

Israel's Progress in Wealth and in Sin.

- 10 A luxurious vine, Israel poured out his fruit,
As his fruits were increased, so his Altars increased;
As his country excelled, so his Idols excelled!
- 2 Double-hearted, they now are condemned.—
- 3 He will throw down their altars, their Pillars destroy,
"For, now," they exclaim, "there is no King for us,
For we fear not the LORD;—and what can a King do?"
They make to betray when they ratify bonds,
So justice springs up like a weed on a furrow!
- 4 And Shomeron's mob grieve for Beth-aven's Calf,
Its people faint for it, its Priests for it roll,—
On account of its glory,—now taken away;—
- 6 To the proud King of Ashur it went as a gift!
- 7 Blush Ephraim! blush Israel! because of your thoughts!
For Shomeron's King floats a chip on a stream!
- 8 Aven's Columns are wrecked,—they were Israel's sin;
On their Altars the thorns and the thistles will grow!
And they cry, "Hide us Mountains! and, "Hills on us fall!"
- 9 From Ghibeah's days, you, O Israel, sinned!
There they stood!—

Should not war seize on the children of Sin in Gibeah ?
 " When I wish I will punish,—and bring on them Nations
 To punish them both for their sin." 10

For Ephraim was a heifer, delighting to thrash ;
 But I put a rider on Ephraim's fair neck ;— 11
 And she now ploughs for Judah, and harrows for Jacob.
 Sow for yourselves, and then reap perfect mercy ; 12
 Plough your fallows, in season to seek for the LORD,
 Until He may come and instruct you aright.—
 You have ploughed for revolt,—you have reaped only sin ;— 13
 And you ate falsehood's fruit ; for you trusted your course,—
 On your number of men !
 But a riot shall rise in your people and forts ;— 14
 And be plundered as Shalmon, and plundered Beth-arbel ;
 When mother and children were slaughtered in fight !
 Thus because of your crime shall be done you in Bethel,
 And Israel's King be destroyed in a morning !

Israel Called out of Egypt.

When Israel was young I loved him,
 And I called my Son out of Mitzer ;— 11
 They called them, so they ran off,
 To offer to Balim, and incense to Idols ! 2
 Although I gave Ephraim a Leader,
 Who lifted him up in his arms, 3
 They would not perceive that I helped them.
 I drew them by human affections,
 Came taking the bit from their jaws, 4
 And coaxed them along by My feeding.

To Mitzer he must not return ;— 5
 Yet Ashur rules, for refusing repentance !
 So the sword shall be whirled in his towns, 6
 Destroying their chiefs and devouring their statesmen !
 For My People persist in desertion ! 7
 Tho' called to their God, none exalt Him !

Yet, how can I leave you, Ephraim ?
 How can I abandon you, Israel ? 8
 How can I make you like Admah ;—
 And waste you till like to Zeboim ?
 My heart turns within Me at once,
 And now My affections are burning !
 So I will not act in My wrath,—
 I will not make Ephraim a desert ! 9
 I am GOD,—I am not a mere Man,—
 So only be pure in your breast,—
 And I will not enter in anger.

Walk after the LORD, when He roars like a lion !— 10
 He will roar—and the Sons of the Westerns will tremble !—
 They will tremble like sparrows in Mitzer, 11
 And like doves in the country of Ashur !—
 When I bring you back to your Home, says Jehovah !

Reprobing the Deceptions of Ephraim.

Ephraim surrounds me with lies,— 12
 And Israel's household with falsehood
 But Judah yet runs with her GOD,—
 And with the faithfully Holy !

- 2 Ephraim browses, and follows the East wind!—
All day he multiplies lies and destruction!—
He makes a treaty with Ashur,—
And his oil is poured out to Mitz'raim!
- 3 But the LORD has a case against Judah,—
And will visit his ways upon Jacob!
He will pay him for what he has done!
- 4 In the belly he tripped up his brother,
And in his strength strove with an Angel!
- 5 He strove with the Angel, and won!
Wept, and prayed, when he met Him in Bethel,—
And so He will speak to ourselves there!
- 6 For He was the LORD GOD OF HOSTS;—
The LORD Who remembers!
- 7 So you now! Return to your GOD,
By the practice of Justice and Mercy!
And always rely on your GOD.
- 8 A trader, false balance in hand,
He always desires to be cheating!—
- 9 And Ephraim says, "Yes! I am rich!
I have found by my industry plenty!
I earned it,—and nothing is found
About me that I perceive sinful!"
- 10 But I am JEHOVAH your GOD,
Until now from the country of Mitzer;
And will send you to wander in tents,
As I did in old times that are ancient.
- 11 For I have declared by My Preachers,
And I have revealed it by Visions,
And by the means of the Prophets foretold!
- 12 For Gilad is guilty!—and infamy rest upon Gilgal!
They sacrifice bullocks on Altars,
Like clods in a plough-field!
- 13 Once Jacob fled to the wild-plain of Aram!
And Israel slaved for a wife,
And wearily watched in his sorrow!
- 14 And the LORD Israel led by a Preacher;
And by a Prophet He guarded from Mitzer;
- 15 Yet, now, Ephraim is bitterly vexed,
For he is all spattered with bloodshed!—
So his Judge will fix infamy on him!

Ephraim once was Great;—and why he became Filial.

- 13 When Ephraim had spoken they trembled,
He was so high placed in Israel!
But he died—for his guilt about Baal!
- 2 Yet still they continue to sin,
And make themselves Idols!
Of fanciful silver made forms,—
Ideas put in shape by a blacksmith!
- 3 All who sacrifice men to the calves,
They order to kiss them!
- 4 So they shall be like the clouds at the dawn,
And like morning dew they shall vanish;
Like chaff a storm sweeps from a barn,
And smoke that comes out from a chimney!

But I am the JEHOVAH your GOD,
 Who brought from the country of Mitzer :
 You should know no GOD except Me,—
 And except Me, there can be no Saviour !
 I acknowledged you when in the Desert,
 In the land that possesses no water.— 5
 There, they were full pastured and gorged,
 But their heart then rebelled and forgot me! 6

So, I am a lion, a leopard,
 To them on the journey to Ashur ! 7
 I will seize like a fierce raging bear ;
 Who tears when bereaved of her young ones, 8
 And rip up the cage of their heart !
 The wild beasts of the field shall devour them !

Israel, you are a wreck ! And it is only I that can help you !
 Where now is your King ? Let him come, 9
 And help you in all of your Cities ! 10
 And your Judges?—Against whom you said,
 Give me a king and his princes ?
 In My anger I gave you a King !—
 But I took him away in My fury !— 11

Ephraim's sin is packed up ;
 He hoards up his faults as his treasure ! 12
 To him came the troubles of childbirth ;
 To him as lad without sense, 13
 Not expecting the birth of his children :

Shall I free from the hand of the Grave,
 Or shall I redeem you from Death ? 14
 Where are your terrors O ! Death ?
 And where now O ! Grave, your destruction ?

Pity is hid from My eyesight ;—
 Tho' he flourish in beautiful meads,
 An easterly wind shall arrive,
 A wind of the LORD, from the desert,
 And his spring shall be dry, and his fountain shall fail,
 And his store shall be robbed of all beautiful products !—
 And Shomeron will be repaid, 14
 Because it rebelled against GOD !
 Her children shall fall by the sword,
 And her pregnant be crushed, and be ripped up !

An Appeal to Israel to Return to his Duty.

To your LIVING GOD, Israel return !— 2
 For by your own sins you have fallen !
 Choose your words and return to the LORD,— 3

PENITENT ISRAEL'S PRAYER.

Say, " Removing our errors, have mercy,
 For we offer the fruits of our lips ;—
 For Ashur shall not be our Saviour,—
 And on horses no more will we ride,— 4
 No more will we call those our gods,
 That we, ourselves, made by our hands ;
 Only You for the orphaned have pity."

THE LORD'S REPLY.

- 5 " I will nurse those returning, and love !
 For My anger has vanished from them ;—
 6 And to Israel I will be like the dew,—
 And he like the lily shall bloom ;
 And like Lebanon send out his roots ;
 7 Like a bright Olive spread out his boughs,
 And Lebanon's fragrance be his,
 8 And those passing shall rest in his shade.
 He shall live like the corn, and spread out like the vine
 With a scent such as Lebanon's wine ! "
- 9 " What, Ephraim, to Me were your Idols ?
 I depressed you—but now will endow,—
 I am like to a flourishing pine tree ;—
 Your fruit shall be found upon Me. "

Hosea's Final Appeal to Israel.

- 10 Who is wise and can comprehend these ?
 Will reflect, and endeavour to learn
 That the paths of the LORD are direct,
 And in them the Righteous can travel ;
 But the wicked will stumble on them ?

END OF THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET HOSEA.