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**C0931 – August 19, 2009 – Hosea 2:6-13 – The Judgments For  
Prostitutions**

Tonight if you'd open your Bible to Hosea chapter 2. We've been working through chapters 1-3. If you've been with us you're well aware that in this section God establishes an historical parallel between His relationship with Israel and Hosea's relationship with his wife. Hosea was told to marry a prostitute. You want to pay attention to this because everyone claims to have a prophetic word today. God spoke to me and this and that. Everybody wants to be a prophet until you read something like Hosea and you see what the Lord put him through. This man suffered tremendously being married to Gomer, a well-known prostitute. Which is precisely the point; God suffered tremendously by analogy, being married to Israel, a prostitute nation.

Now the question is why did God use Hosea's marriage to a prostitute as an illustration? What's the connection between promiscuous sex and idolatrous worship? There are two connections. First, the second divine institution: marriage. God built into the created order this structure of one man and one woman in a contract. One of the things being radically undermined in our day is the necessity of a contract. People want to just live together for awhile and try it out, we'll have sex and see if we're compatible or not. And this is paganism. The Bible says no woman, woman, you do not give that kind of sexual love, in the Hebrew *dod*, to a man you're not married too. A man is supposed to initiate first with *ahavah* love, a willful love, a commitment type of love. He has to commit himself to you in the form of a contract and inside that arrangement you exercise sexual love. Now that institution is fundamental to understanding the Book of Hosea because both Hosea and God are married to unfaithful spouses. And faithfulness is the fundamental term in the marriage contract.

Now God has made the man and God has made the woman in His image. All men and all women share His image. This means we're like Him. This means there's an analog between us and Him. But God has made man and woman distinct in role. And this is very crucial to grasp in our day when the differences are being played down in favor of trying to unite the sexes. Everywhere we see this, whether it be clothing, hairstyle, marriage arrangement, it doesn't matter; there's an attack on this institution, this original structure God built into the human race. And the divine institutions are saying it doesn't matter who you are, what language you speak, what continent you live on, the form of marriage in Genesis is true for all men. And when Genesis is violated there's a price to pay. Hosea and Gomer are in a marriage contract. God said, Go marry a prostitute. And Hosea did. So now they are in a marriage contract and Gomer is Hosea's right woman and Hosea is Gomer's right man. Hosea is going to provide for this woman. He's the provider. And if you're a man here tonight and you're not providing for your wife and kids the NT says you're worse than an unbeliever. Why does it say that? Because you're not fulfilling you're most basic and fundamental role, you're in rebellion against God who made you. Now the woman was made to be the responder. She has this response mechanism built into her. All women do. And Gomer is going to respond to a man, the man she thinks provides for her. The man she's supposed to respond to is Hosea and Hosea alone, that's covenant loyalty, that's faithfulness to the contract. But she's gone on negative volition to Hosea and she's left the house and gone back to serving other customers. She's responding to other men, she's a prostitute and an adulterer. Now, she can't help the response, it's built into her to respond to a man. The problem is they're the wrong men. And she's intensely pursuing them.

Now, the parallel is the nation Israel is in a contract. God married the nation Israel at Mt Sinai. And in the same way God made woman to respond to man He made man in general to respond to God. This is part of the image of God in man. And man, distinct from the animal has built into him the need to respond to God. This is very crucial to grasp today because people will say I'm not religious, I'm an atheist, I don't worship. And that's a load of bull. All men worship, they can't stop being men and men were made to worship. It's who they are as made in the image of God. So we have the nation Israel and they're to worship God, God entered into a marriage contract with them at Mt Sinai and there are certain terms to that contract. And they've gone on

negative volition to the God of the contract, they've rebelled against God and just like all men do, when they go on negative volition to God they begin to worship something else. The nation Israel began to worship Baal and other Canaanite deities. It's a response man cannot turn off. If you reject worshipping the Creator God you will re-locate your allegiance to something in creation. You cannot turn off who you are, you will respond, you will worship and they're worshipping alright. It's an intense desire of all men to worship.

Now, if you say, well, they may have been worshipping nature but I don't see anyone doing that today. I don't see anyone saying, I worship creation. Friend, you see it all over the place. When you hear someone say the source of life is in the earth, mother earth and we better care for mother earth because mother earth provides the oil we need to generate energy, mother earth's precipitation cycles provide for our crops, mother earth's soil provides nutrients for our plants, mother earth provides. Now that is all idolatrous language. Mother earth is ultimate and mother earth provides for all our needs. So it is going on all the time, most of the world is saying this and it's nothing more than the Continuity of Being all over again.

Now today we're going to continue chapter 2 and see more of this kind of thinking in the northern kingdom of Israel. If we outline the chapter it works like this. Chapter 2:2-13 is dealing with the historic situation of Israel leading up to 721BC. By 721BC they're going to be history as far as any kind of viable national entity is concerned. Chapter 2:14-23 is dealing with the future situation of Israel, still future with respect to today, a situation that leads to Israel's final restoration in her kingdom. So there's a big space of time between v 13 and v 14. V 13 is a picture of final defeat, it's the height of God's anger, it's when Israel has forgotten her God. But v 14 is a picture of God wooing her back to Himself, it's the height of God's love, it's when Israel remembers her God. And so the chapter naturally divides into these two parts.

Last week we covered 2:2-5 and in this section we have the command to stop, stop the prostitutions. In v 2 the children are to "contend" with their mother and we said that's lawsuit language. Why is a lawsuit being drawn up against her? Because she's violated the marriage contract and by parallel the nation Israel had violated the Mosaic contract. And we said it's very vivid

when it says “let her put away her harlotry from her face.” That, we said, is Gomer in the middle of sex act with one of her customers and she’s to push him away, push him off, right in the act, and just stop it right then and there. Her kids are standing in the doorway, stop it mom, quit, and let’s go home to dad. And by way of parallel the nation Israel is in the middle of a spiritual sex act with Baal and she’s to put that away and return to God. Now some people don’t like that the Bible talks this way and they think we’re offensive to bring out this kind of language. They think the Bible should be written all prim and proper and when they find out the Bible speaks in this rough language of the street they get offended. But the Bible is not interested in prim and proper speech. The Bible is interested in communicating. And if this is what it takes to communicate then this is what God uses. So don’t get upset, realize from the language that God is very upset about what His people are doing. They’re violating the contract and this is just as offensive as a married woman selling her body to other men. Now it’s hard to imagine what Hosea must have felt. Its inner turmoil sitting around hour after hour knowing what you’re wife is out there doing. So transfer that idea over to God when we commit spiritual prostitution. That’s the point we’re supposed to be learning here. We’re to learn about the personality of God. That God looks down at His people and God looks down here at you and me and He wants us to respond to Him. Respond to My love, respond to the My grace. And since we’re made to respond we’re going to respond but the question is who are we responding to? When I sit in the classroom and I do my math and I do it without any reference to Him then I operate as if these laws are just there and they uphold the universe and I’ve got my formulas and I plug my numbers I and spit out the answer. I’ve got math and math is great, my math formulas are the same yesterday, today and forever. That’s spiritual harlotry. That’s adultery. You mean the way I do math can be adultery? You mean God gets mad at me for that? Absolutely that’s what we’re saying. Math isn’t math whether or not God is there. Math only works because God is constantly sustaining the universe. He’s the God of the formula’s, He’s the God of order and stability and my formulas are simply finite representations of His word at that time and He’s perfectly free to change those anytime He wishes. The real stability isn’t in the universe; it’s outside the universe in God. And this is precisely the element that’s left out in every mathematics course. But to leave it out trains people in idolatrous thought patterns. Or maybe you practice law and you go do your law and you have to deal with case x, y, z and all the while the mind thinks that these decisions come down from man, man is

ultimate, man is the lawmaker, man is supreme and what man spews out are the standards of right and wrong. Again, spiritual harlotry. You've shifted your loyalty. Man isn't the source of law. God is the source of law. Man's laws can only approximate God's law. So, this is the kind of thing you need to be aware of - idolatry starts when you begin to think in some area independent of God and you begin to re-locate the absolutes in the created order. When that has happened your allegiance shifts to the created order and what you're responding to is ultimately something finite, some finite representation in your mind. And it's spiritual idolatry.

Now, if 2:2-5 is a period of grace giving time to repent and correct their idolatry then by v 6 time has run out and it's time for judgment. God always follows this procedure of grace before judgment. So in vv 2-5 we're dealing with the historic situation where Hosea was still giving warning to Gomer and by parallel God was still giving warning to the nation Israel. Stop your spiritual harlotries. But in vv 6-13 time has run out and Hosea is no longer giving warning to Gomer, he's pouring out judgment and God is pouring out judgment on the nation Israel. So we pick up in 2:6 and continue the parallel.

V 6, **Therefore**, for this reason, for this reason that Gomer and the nation Israel have broken the covenant, both of them were in covenant violation, **Therefore, behold, I will hedge up her way with thorns**, obviously some kind of a thorny barrier is going to be put up. See the word **thorns**? When you see the word **thorns** you should immediately think of the curse upon nature in Gen 3. Thorns in Scripture are always associated with the curse of sin and its effects on nature. There were certain deleterious effects we know because of sin on both man and nature. And one of the effects on the plant kingdom was thorns. Thorns weren't originally produced by plants. We don't know all the mechanics of how the change took place, but obviously some genetic manipulation was involved such that whatever the plant originally produced it no longer produces. And now in place of its original produce we have thorns. Thorns are a reminder that the kind of production we had before the Fall we no longer enjoy. So after the Fall there are plants that produce thorns and that's a reminder of inefficiency, lost produce, the world we live in now is not the original world. So when he says **I will hedge up her way with thorns** He's saying I will now let sin's effect upon nature run its course. Israel has enjoyed agricultural blessing, economic blessing, land blessing and now God is saying I'm going to take that away, I'm going to remove My hand

of grace and I'm going to let the effects of sin on nature run their course. God, like a good husband has provided and provided and provided for them, but they haven't given thanks to Him, they haven't responded to Him. They've given thanks to Baal, they've responded to Baal. And so God says, fine you don't want to respond to your God, I'll remove My hand of blessing.

Now, let's think about what this is saying. At the Fall when sin entered there were certain malfunctions that entered as a result. Both man and nature experience these malfunctions. So both physically and spiritually man is affected by sin. Sin affected us physiologically, whether you realize it or not. Before the Fall Adam never sweat a single drop, he could work all day out in the sun and never once get overheated. After the Fall something happened such that now man sweats and now if man doesn't sweat he can't cool himself down and he'll be like an overheated car. That's a tremendous physiological change in man all as a result of sin's damage to man's physiology. Now with nature it's the same way. Both the animal and plant kingdom are affected negatively by the Fall. We already said that before the Fall the plants didn't produce thorns, what a waste of time to produce a thorn. What good is a thorn? Incidentally, where do you see the thorn crop up in the NT gospels? On the crown of Christ. What's that saying? The crown itself points back to Gen 3. And now the curse started by Adam in that Garden is being borne by Christ on the Cross. He's the one who will resolve the negative effects of sin. So thorns aren't good, they're a symbol of the curse. But here's the thing we want to say about this. When man sinned and all this damage entered He put a restraint on the damage. In other words He put limits on how much damage was inflicted. So on a graph, we're in World 1 and in World 1 God set the limits at a certain point. But what if He'd decided on World 2 and in World 2 He set the limits higher.. That would be the maximum suffering and, of course, if that were the case then God would have immediately taken Adam and Eve's physical life and cast them in the lake of fire. And that would be the end of the human race. But God didn't do that. He restrained the effects of sin on man. And so we experience this level down here and we get all bent out of shape because we face this suffering and we say, "Why God did you let this happen to me? This is terrible." Yes, it is terrible, but the question we should be asking is, "Why aren't we getting more suffering? Why did you put the limits where you did God?" And that's a function of His grace. Because if He set it higher, say in World 3, just imagine what the world would be like. It would be something like every kid that's born has a

deformity and we all walk around with deformities; one guy doesn't have an eye, another guy doesn't have any arms, another guy has three legs. In World 3, a kid born normally would be a miracle. Now, I show you that to put our suffering in perspective and we ought to be thankful that God said, I allow the sin damage to go this far, but no further. That's the grace of God.

So what is being said here is God is going to lift the restraints on sin and let it run its course. They're going to face increased distress, increased suffering. But the strange thing about it is this word **hedge**, behold **I hedge up her way with thorns**. You say that's not a very nice thing to do. Actually, every use of the word **hedge up** is in a positive context, it's looked upon as a good thing (Job 1:10; 10:11-12). Now how could increased suffering be a good thing? Think about that question. How can suffering more have a positive effect? Because of the goal it's intended to produce in man. See man takes God's grace for granted. Ah yes, we enjoy this blessing and we enjoy that blessing and the danger is when we conclude it's all because of what we did; look at what our hands have done. Then God says, alright, I'm removing grace and you start to say, what's wrong, what happened to my greatness? It wasn't your greatness all along. It was God's greatness and you didn't give thanks so now He's removed His hand of grace. Intended goal? What's God trying to do? Wake us up to Him. So what's done here looks mean but the goal of it is to get them to turn back to Him.

And what else is said? V 6, **And I will build a wall against her so that she cannot find her paths**. Now **her paths** are her course of life, the way she is going in life. Gomer's course of life is to get up every morning and start getting customers, she's going to chase after them, and we can see that clearly from v 7. Now there's a problem we see right off. Why is the woman chasing after her lovers? If the woman was created to do the responding why is she doing the initiating? She's not supposed to go after men. The man is to go after the woman. So we see role reversal. This woman is chasing after all her lovers because she thinks they provide all her needs. Now transfer to the nation Israel. Who are they chasing? They're chasing Baal because they think Baal provides all their needs.

So when it says **I will build a wall against her so she can't find her paths** it means God's going to stop providing all their needs. Let's make it practical. God's going to stop providing material blessing. He's going to stop

providing agricultural prosperity, He's going to stop providing economic stability. And they're going to go looking for Baal, they're going to pray to Baal: give us rain Baal, you're the storm god, give us rain for our crops so we can rebuild our economy and, of course, they're not going to get any because Baal doesn't exist. Baal is just a figment of their imagination. And slowly this is designed so they'll realize it was YHWH who does all this; it's YHWH who provides all our needs, not Baal

We come to verse 7 and watch what happens, **So she will pursue her lovers but she will not overtake them; And she will seek them, but will not find them.** The first thing we see here is the word **lovers**. In context it's used of fleshly desire, carnal desire; this is what her sin nature desires. Gomer, who's operating by the flesh is searching for her customers, she wants gratification and for Israel in parallel she's searching for Baal, where are you Baal, are you there? I'm calling out to you, I'm standing at your altar, where are you, answer me. See, when the sin nature gets stuck in idolatry it's misplaced it's allegiance, it's responding toward the wrong object and it thinks that to get satisfied I've got to have this object and I've just got to have it and if I don't have it I'm just going to die. That's the way the sin nature works: it just feeds and feeds and feeds off these idols and so here you can see her, and this is the second thing, she's pursuing them but she can't get satisfaction. It's all in the *piel* stem, very intensive search, all I can liken it to is when you've lost something that is extremely valuable and you start getting frantic, that's the picture of this woman and the nation Israel. It's a picture of desperation, she's coming apart at the seams because she thinks my lovers provided all my needs and now I can't find them. And your sin nature will always react like this when it gets cut off from what you think is providing all your needs. This is the picture of every one of us when we have misplaced our allegiance.

So in Hosea 2:7b she comes to the end of her rope. **Then she will say, 'I will go back to my first husband, For it was better for me then than now!'** Now that is a prediction of the return of Israel that has not yet occurred. Israel will go into exile in 721 BC, in a total disaster. She's going to be scattered among the nations and she's going to suffer. The Jews are going to suffer under the Assyrians, the Persians, they're going to suffer during the Crusades of the Middle Ages; everywhere they try to settle they're going to have problems. They can never integrate. The history of the Jews is the most



shocking story of all history. They thought that after Napoleon, because he was pro-Israel, France might be the place, but a century later with the Dreyfus Affair and a Jewish officer who had executed his duty to the "t" in the French army still it was the Jews fault. The Jews are always the problem and as Theodore Herzl watched this in the court, to know his fellow Jew was innocent and still the injustice reigned in France, he said that's it and so we have the rise of the Zionist party in Switzerland. We have Jews moving back to the Land of Israel, we have 1947 the UN Resolution and finally 1948 the establishment of the State of Israel and that's the first hard evidence of an eventual return. And that's a stepping stone toward this statement **I will go back to my first husband**. When the nation Israel finally realizes that Jesus is the Messiah, when the blinders are lifted and they come to their senses and say, you know, why can't we get the nations off our back, why can't we get rid of all the Hitler's, why won't they just leave us alone, we have to fight and fight and fight, it's a constant battle on every side and finally realize we're getting cursed because we're not right with our God, so they'll say **I'll go back to my first husband**, they'll get right with God. But they have to reach the absolute bottom of the barrel to get it. Only then will they say this.

Verse 8 returns to the theme of God's judgment. Verse 7 we got a glimpse of God's grace and the final restoration of the nation but very quickly it returns to the judgment leading up to 721BC and this shows you what sin does to the mentality of a person. **For she does not know that it was I who gave her the grain, the new wine and the oil, And lavished on her silver and gold**, now look, here's all this material blessing **Which they used for Baal**. Here's one of the symptoms when you see someone in deep depression or they're going frantic, they are at the end of their rope.. And that's that yes, God is there but He doesn't supply all my needs, He's not answering my prayers, I don't have any sense that He's near to me, He seems distant. But the distance, if we read verse 8 correctly is actually brought on by the person himself, not God. God hasn't pulled away from them; they've pulled away from God. And so what has happened is these people have gone negative volition and when that happens the mind is darkened and you're not allowing God the Spirit to work in your life. The mind is darkened and you begin to suck in gobs of human view point and you begin to hate God in your inner being; he doesn't supply all my needs, nature forces supply all my needs and

therefore you're an idolater, you've begun to worship nature, the Continuity of Being is ultimate in your mind.

And so one of the signs you want to look for, just a sign of good spiritual health is the thankfulness barometer. Are you thankful for your life? If you're thankful to God everything's probably alright, but if you're having real trouble being thankful that's a sign something is wrong. One of the first things to go in spiritual difficulty is thankfulness.

So when it says **For she does not know that it was I who gave** it doesn't mean Israel didn't know God intellectually... oh yeah, yeah, yeah, I believe YHWH exists, blah, blah, blah. They gave lip service to the existence of God. It's just that they don't acknowledge His intimate involvement in providing the blessing. The verb **know** there is a verb of intimacy. It's a verb used of Adam knowing his wife Eve, *yada*. It's the verb of when they sexually unite to conceive their first son, Cain, and so obviously it's a verb of intimacy, intimate knowledge. But they don't have that because their minds have been darkened by sin and therefore there's no thankfulness for all God provided.

What else did God provide? In verse 8b, He **lavished on her silver and gold**. Now how did they get that? God made surrounding nations subservient to them. They entered into international treaties and they were the head so they provided military security and the other nations were the tail so they paid into the Israeli treasury, **silver and gold**. And what do they do with it? **they used it for Baal**. In other words when the offering plate went around they put it in for Baal. They are giving thanks to Baal for all the material blessing. See, this is how it works. For Hosea he was supplying and supplying and supplying Gomer's needs and Gomer says it's my lovers who are supplying all my needs; and so transfer that idea over to God and Israel. God is providing and providing and providing all this material blessing and Israel says, thank you Baal, Baal provides all my material blessing. And here's my thanksgiving Baal, I put my **silver and gold** in your offering plate. You can always tell where you truly worship by where you direct your thanks and you can always tell where you give thanks by where you put your money.

And therefore watch verse 9, result clause, **“Therefore, I will take back My grain at harvest time And My new wine in its season. I will also take away My wool and My flax Given to cover her nakedness.** Now

just look how many times the word **My** is used in v 9? **My grain, My new wine, My wool, My flax.** Four times. Contrast that with the attitude of v 5. Here's Gomer and by parallel the nation Israel. It's my bread, and my water, my wool and my flax, my oil and my drink. And what does God say in v 9? That's not your stuff, that's my stuff. What had they done? They'd attributed all their material blessing, because everything listed there is basically material goods. All this is material prosperity and they said, it's all mine, it's all my stuff to be used as my own private little blessing. And what God says is look, I blessed your climate, I blessed your soil, I blessed your land, your whole economy depends in a cursed fallen world on Me and My restraining grace. I'm the one who holds the reigns of just how far sin effects. It was all grace, despite their sin God showed them grace and He kept blessing their fields and their treasuries and they spurned Him. And so he says, fine **I'll take it back**, I will remove My hand of restraining grace and let sin run its course. I never had to do that in the first place. It was all of grace and you don't appreciate my grace so I take it back.

Verse 10, and now we come to the end of this section that closes in v 13, **And then** and that introduces a final judgment, you should translate it **And now, And now I will uncover** and everything from 10-13 is the judgment concluded in 721BC. **And now I will uncover her lewdness.** Now this means He's going to strip her. He's covered her, now he's going to uncover her; he's going to lay bare her **lewdness**. Now the word **lewdness** means obscenity, she's disgusting, she's a whore and in Gomer's case we'd say she's gone negative volition to her right man over and over and over she's gone to these customers. In the case of Israel she'd gone negative volition to her right God, over and over and over she's gone to Baal to provide her needs. And so here's what happens to the mentality: you go negative volition, you're conscience pricks you, I should confess, but you don't confess and that has a negative effect on the mind, it begins to darken, so now you're one step down from where you were before. Then you go negative volition again and the conscience pricks but it's not as much of a prick, you don't confess again, the mind gets darker. And you go through this procedure again and again and again and again and what you're doing is your desensitizing your conscience, you're forming a callous and the reason you're doing this is because you're trying to shut it up so you can go on doing what satisfies your sin nature and you don't have to hear that voice. And so you go on doing it and you become grosser and grosser, you heap sin on sin, and that's what we call compound

carnality. And when you get into compound carnality you've become spiritually dull and your mind is darkened to the point you can't even see how gross you really are but other people can see it, and now you have this huge pile of sin and that pile of sin is called **lewdness**. It's something like a person that is eternally obscene. Everywhere you see this person around town they're making some obscene gesture and every word they say is foul. And God says, alright, I'm going to uncover all that and she's going to have to face all the consequences. I've restrained and restrained and restrained, now I'm going to let you have it all right **In the sight of her lovers**. In other words, right up there at the altars of Baal something is going to happen that exposes all this mess and it's just going to be a disaster. **And no one will rescue her out of My hand**. That means no god, no man, no army is going to stop God from lifting the restraint on His curse. It's His curse and He controls the effects of the curse so no one can stop Him.

Verse 11, **I will also put an end to all her gaiety**, now when you read **gaiety** that's joy, this is where national Israeli culture enjoyed themselves, **Her feasts, her new moons, her sabbaths And all her festal assemblies**. This is the official annual calendar where the whole nation would gather and celebrate. They'd have dancing and music and food and worship, it was a big party and the Lord says that's it, I put an end to all your joy. These were scheduled in the law but of course they were scheduled down in Jerusalem. They weren't going down to Jerusalem. They weren't going to enjoy the Lord, they were going to enjoy Baal. So He says I'm going to put an end to it all. I'm going to destroy it.

Verse 12, more destruction, **"I will destroy her vines and fig trees**, to sit under your vines and fig trees was to enjoy the work of your hands, so to have your vines and fig trees destroyed was to not enjoy the work of your hands. And the vines and fig trees were not your run of the mill crops. Run of the mill agriculture was sow one season reaping the next. Vine and fig tree groves take years of development; they take a tremendous amount of capital investment up front and then you have to wait years to harvest the produce. What this is saying is I'm not going to take your vines and fig trees while they're under development, I'm going to wait till their in production and then I'm going to wipe them out. And you're going to watch in horror as all your capital disappears overnight.

And why am I going to be so severe with you? Because you've said this, **Of which she said, 'These are my wages Which my lovers have given me.'** Now this is the heart of it all, this is the heresy. See it there in the words **these are my wages.** What are wages? Wages are what is due. I do my work and I earn wages. I went down and I did a little dance for Baal and Baal gave me agricultural blessing. And if I hadn't done the song and dance then Baal never would have been stimulated to give my soil fertility. But I did do the dance. And so what we have here is agricultural success attributed to someone other than the God of the Bible. The essence of idolatry.

And what does God have to say about this? What's the judgment? **I will make them a forest, And the beasts of the field will devour them.** I'm going to let go my restraining hand of grace that limits the effects of the fall upon insects and wild beasts and I'm going to let sin effect more and it's going to turn your land into a wilderness. Your whole investment is going to go right down the drain.

**Verse 13, I will punish her for the days of the Baals When she used to offer sacrifices to them And adorn herself with her earrings and jewelry, And follow her lovers,** and it stops very abruptly here. It's a sign of a tragedy. It's another aspect of what our sin does and how God feels about it, and here it is, **so that she forgot Me," declares the Lord.** Now what is that saying about God? This is that personal dimension of God I try to bring in each week so you learn to recognize it. God is so personal that He can be hurt by your sin. Now you may never have thought about this: the God of the Bible is the infinite, immutable God.. But don't take that to mean He's a statue. He's dynamic in relation to man. And He passionately loves the nation Israel, He passionately loves you and me and when we forget Him that obviously impacts Him. We're not saying we can hurt God, we're saying God has determined that by creating a creature in His image and that creature rebels against Him He's going to be affected. He cares. So when we don't give credit where credit is due then you see God with this response, you **forgot Me.** It's the same as in a marriage, if you're wife is out responding to other men and she forgets you how does that make you feel? It hurts. And God is saying there's something analogous when you give your allegiance to some other god. It hurts. The reason there's this analog is because you're made in the image of God. Animals aren't made in the image of God, they don't experience this, you forgot me and I'm going to go over here and cry. Animals

don't cry, the only species on earth that cries is man. Why does man cry?  
Because man's emotional and spiritual make-up is made in the image of God.

Alright, so tonight we've finished vv 2-13. The big idea in vv 2-5 is that the nation Israel was being given an extended period of grace, time to repent. In vv 6-13 the time for grace had expired and since grace is always followed by judgment, vv 6-13 centers on that bringing us to 721BC. You want to keep in mind these are all violations of the contract and God has been gracious, He's provided all their needs but depravity warps, depravity twists reality and they've gone negative volition to God and the results of that are a seared conscience and spiritual idolatry. That's why the picture of an adulterous prostitute is so *apropos*, it mirrors exactly what the nation Israel had done to God and Hosea had to go through this with his own wife in full view of the nation. Credit was being given where credit wasn't due and so God said, fine, I remove My hand of restraining grace. I am the God of the curse at the Fall and I will decide how much suffering you get. Next time we have the other side so read again chapters 1-3 and work some more through the marriage analogy.

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