

## LIFE CYCLE OF THE CHURCH

One Nation Under God

Hosea 14:1-9 (NKJV)

**Of all the nations that have ever laid claim to the phrase “one nation under God,” Israel is the first nation for which the phrase was theologically appropriate. Indeed, as we walk through the book of Hosea, we will find ourselves challenged personally and collectively regarding our understanding genuine surrender to God, be it our territory or nation at large.**

To appreciate the times that Hosea lived in, here are a few facts concerning his day:

1. Hosea lived during a time of the nation’s greatest boundary expansions since Kings David and Solomon. The military had recovered from past years of crippling losses, with a slow but steady build-up of military personnel, resources and victories. Thus, there was a general sense of national peace and prosperity.

2. There was a flourishing agriculture industry, and growing personal wealth, along with more common luxuries. Building trades were very active, along with a widespread sense of nation pride. Social and moral conditions, due to prosperity, were developing which were wrong and degrading, including wealth alongside extreme poverty. **Dishonest gain and false balances emerged in the markets, which compromised the weak and lead to dishonest courts, injustice, and even slavery involving the poor.**

3. Religious conditions had been compromised for some time, including the influence of Baal worship, such as calf worship, sacred prostitution, which were common in fertility rites of Baal worship, Asherah poles, as well as compromised priests and prophets who failed to speak out against the sins of the people. **Ultimately, the culture of Israel looked no different from the world surrounding it.**

4. The prophet Amos had preceded Hosea in preaching against idolatry and sin, but the people had clearly paid little attention. Now it was Hosea’s turn.