

LIFE CYCLE OF THE CHURCH One Nation Under God Hosea 4:1-19 (NLT)

- 1 Hear the word of the LORD, O people of Israel! The LORD has brought charges against you, saying: “There is no faithfulness, no kindness, no knowledge of God in your land.
- 2 You make vows and break them; you kill and steal and commit adultery. There is violence everywhere— one murder after another.
- 3 That is why your land is in mourning, and everyone is wasting away. Even the wild animals, the birds of the sky, and the fish of the sea are disappearing.
- 4 “Don’t point your finger at someone else and try to pass the blame! My complaint, you priests, is with you.
- 5 So you will stumble in broad daylight, and your false prophets will fall with you in the night. And I will destroy Israel, your mother.
- 6 My people are being destroyed because they don’t know me. Since you priests refuse to know me, I refuse to recognize you as my priests. Since you have forgotten the laws of your God, I will forget to bless your children.
- 7 The more priests there are, the more they sin against me. They have exchanged the glory of God for the shame of idols.
- 8 “When the people bring their sin offerings, the priests get fed. So the priests are glad when the people sin!
- 9 ‘And what the priests do, the people also do.’ So now I will punish both priests and people for their wicked deeds.
- 10 They will eat and still be hungry. They will play the prostitute and gain nothing from it, for they have deserted the LORD
- 11 to worship other gods. *“Wine has robbed my people of their understanding.
- 12 They ask a piece of wood for advice! They think a stick can tell them the future! Longing after idols has made them foolish. They have played the prostitute, serving other gods and deserting their God.
- 13 They offer sacrifices to idols on the mountaintops. They go up into the hills to burn incense in the pleasant shade of oaks, poplars, and terebinth trees. *“That is why your daughters turn to prostitution, and your daughters-in-law commit adultery.
- 14 But why should I punish them for their prostitution and adultery? For your men are doing the same thing, sinning with whores and shrine prostitutes. O foolish people! You refuse to understand, so you will be destroyed.
- 15 “Though you, Israel, are a prostitute, may Judah avoid such guilt. Do not join the false worship at Gilgal or Beth-aven, even though they take oaths there in the LORD’s name.
- 16 Israel is stubborn, like a stubborn heifer. So should the LORD feed her like a lamb in a lush pasture?
- 17 Leave Israel alone, because she is married to idolatry.
- 18 When the rulers of Israel finish their drinking, off they go to find some prostitutes. They love shame more than honor.
- 19 So a mighty wind will sweep them away. Their sacrifices to idols will bring them shame.