**Hosea 10**

Lesson 25 Destruction of Idolatrous Cultic Objects

*The word “cult” has a variety of connotations and meanings. In theology, the word cult is a reference to rituals and ceremonies associated with religious celebration and worship. “Cultic,” therefore refers to* ***practices or objects*** *used in those religious rituals.*

1. **When did you feel closest to God this week? Was there a particular verse or lesson in our study of Hosea this week that you found inspiring in some way?**
2. **Reflection: In verse 1, Israel is described as a vineyard or a vine. This is a metaphor used frequently in the Bible. What does it mean to say that Israel is a vine? What attributes of a vineyard or vine can be applied to Israel as a people or nation? See also Psalm 80:8-13**

**Hosea 10:1-4** Israel is a luxuriant vine whose fruit matches its growth.
The more abundant his fruit, the more altars he built; the more productive his land, the more sacred pillars he set up. **2**Their heart is false! Now they will pay for their guilt: God will break down their altars and destroy their sacred pillars.**3**For now they will say, “We have no king! Since we do not fear the Lord, the king—what could he do for us?”**4**They make promises, swear false oaths, and make covenants,
While lawsuits sprout like poisonous weeds in the furrows of a field!

**Psalm 80:8-13**

O God of hosts, restore us; light up your face and we shall be saved. **9**You brought a vine out of Egypt; you drove out nations and planted it. **10**You cleared out what was before it; it took deep root and filled the land. **11**The mountains were covered by its shadow, the cedars of God by its branches.**12**It sent out its boughs as far as the sea, its shoots as far as the river. **13**Why have you broken down its walls, so that all who pass along the way pluck its fruit?

1. **Read Isaiah 5:1-7**. **How is this similar to the sentiment of Israel as a vine and the message of Hosea that we have read so far in our study of Hosea?**

**Isaiah 5: 1-7**

Now let me sing of my friend, my beloved’s song about his vineyard. My friend had a vineyard on a fertile hillside; **2**He spaded it, cleared it of stones, and planted the choicest vines;
Within it he built a watchtower, and hewed out a wine press. Then he waited for the crop of grapes, but it yielded **rotten grapes**. **3**Now, inhabitants of Jerusalem, people of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard: **4*What more could be done for my vineyard that I did not do?*** ***Why, when I waited for the crop of grapes, did it yield rotten grapes?*** **5**Now, I will let you know what I am going to do to my vineyard: Take away its hedge, give it to grazing, break through its wall, let it be trampled!
**6**Yes, I will make it a ruin: it shall not be pruned or hoed, but will be overgrown with thorns and briers;
I will command the clouds not to rain upon it. **7**The vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel,
    the people of Judah, his cherished plant; He waited for judgment, but see, bloodshed!
    for justice, but hark, the outcry!

1. **What is meant by “rotten grapes” in Isaiah 5:2 above?**

**Who is asking the questions in verse 4?**

1. **Check footnotes in your bible for the meaning of “sacred pillars” in Hosea 10:1 and 2.**
2. **Reflection: How could abundant crops and harvests contribute to “false hearts” noted in verse 2, or a loss of faith in YHWH?**
3. **The city of Gibeah is mentioned here again. Recall in Hosea Chapter 9 that it was referred to as a place where the Israelites deeply corrupted themselves. What is the “double iniquity” or “two crimes” mentioned in verse 10? Check footnotes for an explanation.**

**Hosea 10:9-10**

***Since the days of Gibeah you have sinned***, ***Israel***.
There they took their stand; will war not reach them in Gibeah?
Against a perverse people, **10**I came and I chastised them;
Peoples will be gathered against them when I bind them to their two crimes.

1. **Again, a metaphor of a vineyard is used for Israel, Ephraim and Judah. What is it they are expected to sow, according to the LORD? See verses 11-12.**

**Hosea 10:11-12**

Ephraim was a trained heifer, that loved to thresh; I myself laid a yoke upon her beautiful neck;
I will make Ephraim break ground, Judah must plow, Jacob must harrow for himself:
**12**“Sow for yourselves justice, reap the reward of loyalty; Break up for yourselves a new field, for it is time to seek the Lord,  till he comes and rains justice upon you.”

1. **The definition of justice, according to Thomas Aquinas is “giving each his due.”**

**If the LORD were to “rain justice” upon Ephraim or Israel at the time of Hosea, what would justice look like? What did Israel deserve at this point according to the prophecy of Hosea? See verse 12 above and verses 13-15 below.**

**Hosea 10:13-15**

But you have plowed wickedness, reaped perversity, and eaten the fruit of falsehood.
Because you have trusted in your own power, and in your many warriors,
**14**The clamor of war shall break out among your people and all your fortresses shall be ravaged
As Salman ravaged Beth-arbel on the day of war, smashing mothers along with their children.
**15**So it will be done to you, Bethel, because of your utter wickedness, At dawn[[i](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+10&version=NABRE" \l "fen-NABRE-26560i" \o "See footnote i)] the king of Israel
    will utterly disappear.