

Hosea 10:12-14 + 14:1-7

As the haftarah for Deuteronomy 24-25, these passages are paired with the commandment to not go back to reap a forgotten sheaf. Here Israel is sowing and reaping iniquity.

Hosea 10:12 - "Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you."

The Targum: "O house of Israel, do for yourselves good works; walk in the way of truth; establish for yourselves the doctrine of the law; behold, at all times the prophets say to you, return to the fear of the Lord; now shall he be revealed, and bring righteousness to you."

- **Galatians 6:7-9** - "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

"break up your fallow ground" -

- **Jeremiah 4:3** - "For thus saith the LORD to the men of Judah and Jerusalem, Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns. Circumcise yourselves to the LORD And remove the foreskins of your heart, Men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, Or else My wrath will go forth like fire And burn with none to quench it, Because of the evil of your deeds."

- **Deuteronomy 10:16** - "Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no longer stubborn."

- **Colossians 2:11-12** - "In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, having been buried with him in baptism"

Hosea 10:13 - "Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity; ye have eaten the fruit of lies: because thou didst trust in thy way, in the multitude of thy mighty men."

Rashi - You have received the retribution for your deeds.

The prophet says, 'Ye have done the opposite of that which I commanded you, when I said, Sow to yourselves in righteousness.'"

"Thy way" — By a slight change of the Hebrew word it can mean "thy chariots," a reading followed by the LXX.

Israel had sought an alliance with Egypt, counting on its army and chariots to protect

them.

See **Psalm 118:8** - "It is better to trust in the LORD Than to put confidence in man."

Hosea 10:14 - "Therefore shall a tumult arise among thy people, and all thy fortresses shall be spoiled, as Shalman spoiled Betharbel in the day of battle: the mother was dashed in pieces upon her children."

Scholars differ on the what battle this describes, but the prophecy was that this would happen to Israel.

(See notes on **Psalm 137:8-9** which is also read with this week's Torah portion- "...Happy shall he be, that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones.")

Hosea 10:15 - "So shall Bethel do unto you because of your great wickedness: in a morning shall the king of Israel utterly be cut off."

Or better, "So shall He do to you at Bethel."

It was at Bethel where the idolatrous calf was set up.

Promise to Sinners Who Repent

Hosea 14:1 - "O Israel, return unto the LORD thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity."

"Great is repentance, for it brings a man to the throne of glory" -Babylonian Talmud, Yoma, fol. 86. 1.

Hosea 14:2 - "Take with you words, and turn to the LORD: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves or bulls of our lips."

Targum: "words of confession" In other words, render confession as the "calves" (sacrifices) of your lips.

Confession with your whole hearts, and not with your lips only.

This refers to the times of Messiah, when all sacrifices will cease.

Hosea 14:3 - "Asshur shall not save us; we will not ride upon horses: neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, Ye are our gods: for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy."

Ephraim, the Northern Kingdom, often sought alliances with Assyria.

"A horse is a vain thing for safety, neither shall he deliver any by his great strength" (**Psalm 33:17**)

Hosea 14:4 - "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him."

"Healing" is the proper word because our rebellion and sin is our disease, and most of the situations where God heals refer to spiritual sickness. Christ is the only Physician, who heals all the diseases of sin.

Rashi explains the verse: "After they have thus spoken before me: I will heal them of their apostasy, and love them of my own free will; although they themselves are not worthy of love, yet will I love them freely, for mine anger has turned away from them."

Hosea 14:5 - "I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon."

Rashi - The dew shall strike it roots and cause them to prosper, like the roots of the trees of Lebanon, which are large.

- **Colossians 2:6-7** - "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving."

The root of the lily lies buried in the earth a long time, when it seems as if it was dead; but suddenly it springs out of the earth, and grows up to a great height, and becomes very flourishing; which is not owing to itself, it "toils not"; but to the dew of heaven. - *Gill's Exposition*

Targum: "they shall shine as the lily"

Hosea 14:6 - "His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon."

"His branches" - "saplings" - the same word as in **Isaiah 53:2** - "For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him."

"Lebanon" usually pointed to the Temple, which was built with cedars of Lebanon.

Rashi - Their beauty shall be like the beauty of the menorah of the Temple, and their fragrance like the fragrance of the incense.

Hosea 14:7 - "They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon."

Targum: "and they shall be gathered out of the midst of their captivity, they shall dwell under the shadow of their Messiah"