

# Hosea 11:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Ephraim compasseth me about with lies, and the house of Israel with deceit: but Judah yet ruleth with God, and is faithful with the saints.

## Analysis

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Ephraim compasseth me about with lies, and the house of Israel with deceit: but Judah yet ruleth with God, and is faithful with the saints. Israel surrounds God with lies and deceit - comprehensive falsehood in relationship. Judah contrasted as still ruling (rad, possibly wanders or still) with God and faithful (or faithful to, or against) saints. The Hebrew is difficult, but contrasts Israel's total falsehood with Judah's partial faithfulness. Yet later context shows Judah also fails. This teaches even relative faithfulness doesn't save; only absolute righteousness (found in Christ alone) suffices. All have sinned (Romans 3:23); Christ's righteousness alone justifies.

## Historical Context

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At Hosea's time, Judah hadn't fallen as deeply into apostasy as Israel - they maintained Davidic kingship, Jerusalem temple, and periodic reforms (under Hezekiah). Thus relative faithfulness compared to northern apostasy. Yet later prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah) showed Judah's corruption requiring judgment. The comparison teaches: degrees of unfaithfulness exist, but none meet God's standard. Only Christ's perfect righteousness satisfies divine justice. Relative morality or religious heritage doesn't save; absolute righteousness through Christ alone justifies.

## Related Passages

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

## **Hebrews 11:1 – Definition of faith**

## Study Questions

1. How does comparing Israel's lies with Judah's partial faithfulness warn against measuring righteousness relatively rather than absolutely?
2. What does even Judah's failure (despite relative advantage) teach about universal need for Christ's imputed righteousness?

## Interlinear Text

סְבִבָּנִי	בְּכָחָשׁ	אַפְכָּם יִם	וּבְמִרְמָה הִ	בֵּית	אִשְׁרָאָל
<b>compasseth</b>	<b>me about with lies</b>	<b>Ephraim</b>	<b>with deceit</b>	<b>and the house</b>	<b>of Israel</b>
H5437	H3585	H669	H4820	H1004	H3478
הַיְהוּדָה	עַד	בְּקָדְשׁ	אֶל	קָדְשָׁם	נָאָמָן
<b>but Judah</b>	<b>H5750</b>	<b>yet ruleth</b>	<b>H5973</b>	<b>with God</b>	<b>H5973</b>
H3063	H7300	H410	H5973	<b>with the saints</b>	<b>H6918</b>
					H539

## Additional Cross-References

**Revelation 3:21** (Parallel theme): To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne

**Isaiah 44:20** (Parallel theme): He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?

**Hosea 12:7** (Parallel theme): He is a merchant, the balances of deceit are in his hand; he loveth to oppress.

