

Hosea 4

Chapter 4 of 14 · 19 Verses · Authorized King James Version

The Charge Against Israel

- ¹ Hear the word of the LORD, ye children of Israel: for the LORD hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land.
 - ² By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood.
 - ³ Therefore shall the land mourn, and every one that dwelleth therein shall languish, with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven; yea, the fishes of the sea also shall be taken away.
 - ⁴ Yet let no man strive, nor reprove another: for thy people are as they that strive with the priest.
 - ⁵ Therefore shalt thou fall in the day, and the prophet also shall fall with thee in the night, and I will destroy thy mother.
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- ⁶ My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.
 - ⁷ As they were increased, so they sinned against me: therefore will I change their glory into shame.
 - ⁸ They eat up the sin of my people, and they set their heart on their iniquity.
 - ⁹ And there shall be, like people, like priest: and I will punish them for their ways, and reward them their doings.

10 For they shall eat, and not have enough: they shall commit whoredom, and shall not increase: because they have left off to take heed to the LORD.

11 Whoredom and wine and new wine take away the heart.

12 My people ask counsel at their stocks, and their staff declareth unto them: for the spirit of whoredoms hath caused them to err, and they have gone a whoring from under their God.

13 They sacrifice upon the tops of the mountains, and burn incense upon the hills, under oaks and poplars and elms, because the shadow thereof is good: therefore your daughters shall commit whoredom, and your spouses shall commit adultery.

14 I will not punish your daughters when they commit whoredom, nor your spouses when they commit adultery: for themselves are separated with whores, and they sacrifice with harlots: therefore the people that doth not understand shall fall.

15 Though thou, Israel, play the harlot, yet let not Judah offend; and come not ye unto Gilgal, neither go ye up to Beth-aven, nor swear, The LORD liveth.

16 For Israel slideth back as a backsliding heifer: now the LORD will feed them as a lamb in a large place.

17 Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone.

18 Their drink is sour: they have committed whoredom continually: her rulers with shame do love, Give ye.

19 The wind hath bound her up in her wings, and they shall be ashamed because of their sacrifices.

HEBREW & GREEK WORD STUDIES

Blood — דָּם (Dam)

Blood

The Hebrew **dam** (דָּם) means blood—representing life itself. 'The life of the flesh is in the blood' (Leviticus 17:11), and blood was required for atonement, foreshadowing Christ's sacrifice.

Iniquity — עָוֹן (Avon)

Iniquity, guilt, punishment

The Hebrew **avon** (עָוֹן) encompasses iniquity, guilt, and its punishment—the twisted nature of sin. 'The LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all' (Isaiah 53:6), Christ bearing our guilt and penalty.

Glory — כְּבוֹד (Kavod)

Glory, weight, honor

The Hebrew **kavod** (כְּבוֹד) literally means 'weight' or 'heaviness,' metaphorically denoting glory, honor, or majesty. God's glory (Shekinah) filled the tabernacle (Exodus 40:34) and temple (1 Kings 8:11).

Lamb — שֶׁה / קֶבֶשׁ (Seh / Kebes)

Lamb, young sheep

The Hebrew **seh** (שֶׁה) denotes a lamb—central to Israel's sacrificial system. The Passover lamb's blood protected Israel from judgment (Exodus 12), and Isaiah prophesied the Servant would be 'brought as a lamb to the slaughter' (Isaiah 53:7).

God — אֱלֹהִים (Elohim)

God (plural of majesty)

The Hebrew **Elohim** (אֱלֹהִים) is a plural form denoting majesty and fullness of deity. Though grammatically plural, it takes singular verbs when referring to the one true God, suggesting the Trinity's plurality within unity.

Law — תּוֹרָה (Torah)

Law, instruction

The Hebrew **Torah** (תּוֹרָה) means law or instruction—God's revealed will for His people. The Law includes moral, civil, and ceremonial commandments, revealing God's character and humanity's need for a Savior.

Heaven — שָׁמַיִם (Shamayim)

Heaven, sky

The Hebrew **shamayim** (שָׁמַיִם) means heaven or sky—God's dwelling place and the realm above earth. 'The heaven, even the heavens, are the LORD's' (Psalm 115:16), yet 'the heaven of heavens cannot contain Him' (1 Kings 8:27).

Lord — יְהוָה / אֲדֹנָי (YHWH / Adonai)

The LORD / Lord

When 'LORD' appears in small capitals, it represents the Tetragrammaton **YHWH** (יְהוָה), God's personal covenant name meaning 'I AM.' When 'Lord' appears normally, it's **Adonai** (אֲדֹנָי), meaning 'my Lord,' emphasizing sovereignty.

Love — אַהֲבָה / חֶסֶד (Ahavah / Chesed)

Love / Loyal-love

Hebrew uses **ahavah** (אַהֲבָה) for love generally, but the covenant term **chesed** (חֶסֶד) describes God's steadfast, loyal love—faithful covenant commitment beyond mere emotion.

Priest — כֹּהֵן (Kohen)

Priest

The Hebrew **kohen** (כֹּהֵן) denotes a priest—one who mediates between God and people through sacrifices and intercession. Aaron and his descendants served as Israel's priests, foreshadowing Christ the Great High Priest.

Prophet — נָבִיא (Navi)

Prophet, spokesman

The Hebrew **navi** (נָבִיא) means prophet—one who speaks God's word to the people. Prophets received divine revelation and declared God's message, often calling Israel to repentance and foretelling future events.

Sacrifice — זֶבַח (Zevach)

Sacrifice, offering

The Hebrew **zevach** (זֶבַח) denotes a sacrifice or offering—an animal slaughtered for worship. Old Testament sacrifices foreshadowed Christ, 'the Lamb of God' (John 1:29).

Sin — חַטָּאת (Chatta'ah)

Sin, missing the mark

The Hebrew **chatta'ah** (חַטָּאת) means sin—missing the mark of God's standard. It encompasses rebellion, transgression, and falling short of divine holiness.

Spirit — רוּחַ (Ruach)

Spirit, wind, breath

The Hebrew **ruach** (רוּחַ) means spirit, wind, or breath—invisible but powerful. It describes both the Holy Spirit and the human spirit. God's Spirit gives life and empowers His people.

Word — דָּבָר (Davar)

Word, thing, matter

The Hebrew **davar** (דָּבָר) means word, thing, or matter—God's creative and authoritative speech. 'By the word of the LORD were the heavens made' (Psalm 33:6).

CROSS REFERENCES

Hosea 4:1 **Parallel theme:** Isaiah 34:1; Jeremiah 4:22. **References Lord:** Hosea 12:2; Isaiah 1:18; Micah 6:2. **Word:** Jeremiah 25:31. **References God:** Jeremiah 5:4; Romans 1:28; 1 Corinthians 15:34

Hosea 4:2 **Parallel theme:** Hosea 6:9; 7:1; Jeremiah 6:7. **Blood:** Micah 7:2

Hosea 4:3 **Parallel theme:** Jeremiah 4:25; 12:4; Ezekiel 38:20; Amos 5:16; Nahum 1:4; Zephaniah 1:3

Hosea 4:4 **Parallel theme:** Hosea 4:17; Deuteronomy 17:12; Amos 5:13

Hosea 4:5 **Parallel theme:** Hosea 2:2; Jeremiah 15:8; Galatians 4:26

Hosea 4:6 **Parallel theme:** Hosea 8:14; 13:6; Proverbs 19:2; Isaiah 5:13; Matthew 15:8.

References God: Hosea 6:6; Isaiah 17:10. **Word:** Hosea 4:1; 2 Chronicles 15:3; Jeremiah 2:8

Hosea 4:7 **Parallel theme:** Hosea 4:10; 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 13:6; 1 Samuel 2:30; Malachi 2:9.

Glory: Habakkuk 2:16; Philippians 3:19. **Sin:** Ezra 9:7

Hosea 4:8 **Parallel theme:** 1 Samuel 2:29; Psalms 24:4; Isaiah 56:11; Micah 3:11; Malachi 1:10; Romans 16:18; Titus 1:11. **Sin:** Leviticus 6:26

Hosea 4:9 **Parallel theme:** Isaiah 24:2; Jeremiah 5:31; Matthew 15:14

Hosea 4:10 **Parallel theme:** Leviticus 26:26; Micah 6:14; Haggai 1:6

Hosea 4:11 **Parallel theme:** Proverbs 20:1; Isaiah 28:7; Luke 21:34

Hosea 4:12 **Parallel theme:** Numbers 15:39; Jeremiah 2:27; Habakkuk 2:19. **Spirit:** Hosea 5:4. **References God:** Deuteronomy 31:16

Hosea 4:13 **Parallel theme:** Isaiah 1:29; Jeremiah 3:6; Amos 7:17. **Sacrifice:** Ezekiel 6:13

Hosea 4:14 **Parallel theme:** Hosea 4:1

Hosea 4:15 **Parallel theme:** Hosea 5:8; 9:15; 10:5; 12:11; Amos 4:4; 5:5; 8:14. **References Lord:** Jeremiah 5:2. **References Israel:** Hosea 10:8

Hosea 4:17 **Parallel theme:** Hosea 4:4; 13:2; Psalms 81:12; Matthew 15:14

Hosea 4:18 **Parallel theme:** Micah 3:11

Hosea 4:19 **Parallel theme:** Hosea 13:15; Isaiah 1:29; Jeremiah 51:1