

11 When Israel was a child, I
loved him,

and out of Egypt I called my son.
2The more I called them,
the more they went from me;
they kept sacrificing to the Baals,
and offering incense to idols.

3Yet it was I who taught Ephraim
to walk,

I took them up in my arms;
but they did not know that I
healed them.

4I led them with cords of human
kindness,
with bands of love.

I was to them like those
who lift infants to their cheeks.
I bent down to them and
fed them.

5They shall return to the land of
Egypt,
and Assyria shall be their king,
because they have refused to
return to me.

6The sword rages in their cities,
it consumes their oracle-priests,
and devours because of their
schemes.

7My people are bent on turning
away from me.

To the Most High they call,
but he does not raise them up
at all.

8How can I give you up, Ephraim?
How can I hand you over,
O Israel?

How can I make you like Admah?
How can I treat you like
Zeboiim?

My heart recoils within me;
my compassion grows warm
and tender.

9I will not execute my fierce anger;
I will not again destroy Ephraim;
for I am God and no mortal,
the Holy One in your midst,
and I will not come in wrath.

10They shall go after the Lord,
who roars like a lion;
when he roars,
his children shall come trembling
from the west.

11They shall come trembling like
birds from Egypt,
and like doves from the land of
Assyria;
and I will return them to their
homes, says the Lord.

12Ephraim has surrounded me
with lies,
and the house of Israel with
deceit;
but Judah is still known by God,
And is faithful the Holy One.

Hosea 11: The Mystery of God's Wrath

1. If this chapter is about the wrath of God, how might, in human terms, this wrath feel to God himself?
2. What other feelings do you detect in this chapter from Hosea?
3. Why is anger a deadly sin for humans but apparently not for God?
4. Which answers seem most correct?
 - a. God changed between the Old and New Testament and has sworn off all the rage and violence we see in the Old Testament.
 - b. People's understanding of God has matured and we perceive him more accurately. Since New Testament times we realize that we've been projecting our own immaturity on God which we've stopped doing.
 - c. God has not changed and the Old and New Testament versions of God are equivalent.
 - d. God's anger in the New Testament is a quality of God the Father and is moderated by the character of the Son, Jesus, who serves as a mediating go-between between people and their God.
 - e. The prophet is angry and projects this emotion upon God.
5. Consider the lyrics of the well-known hymn:

*Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
Almighty, victorious, Thy great Name we praise.*

*Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,
Nor wanting, nor wasting, Thou rulest in might;
Thy justice, like mountains, high soaring above
Thy clouds, which are fountains of goodness and love.*

*To all, life Thou givest, to both great and small;
In all life Thou livest, the true life of all;
We blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree,
And wither and perish—but naught changeth Thee.*

The God of the prophets seems much more wrapped up in human affairs and emotional about it. How do you account for the difference

in the nature of God in the hymn as opposed to this chapter in Hosea?

6. Surely there is wrath in this scene? Is the wrath God's wrath? Who's angry?



7. Where do we experience the anger, which the prophets are talking about in our lives and time? What can we do to avert it?