



HOSEA

BIBLE TEXT | HOSEA 12:1-6

1 Ephraim feeds on the wind and pursues the east wind all day long; they multiply falsehood and violence; they make a covenant with Assyria, and oil is carried to Egypt. **2** The Lord has an indictment against Judah and will punish Jacob according to his ways; he will repay him according to his deeds. **3** In the womb he took his brother by the heel, and in his manhood he strove with God. **4** He strove with the angel and prevailed; he wept and sought his favor. He met God at Bethel, and there God spoke with us— **5** the Lord, the God of hosts, he Lord is his memorial name: **6** "So you, by the help of your God, return, hold fast to love and justice, and wait continually for your God."

DEVOTIONAL FOR HOSEA 12:1-6

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God looked back at the patriarch Jacob and remembered how Israel was just like their forefather Jacob in the days of Genesis. Jacob's birth gave a hint of the kind of person he would become. In ancient Israel, a "heel-grabber" meant one would go behind another's back in order to deceive or trick to achieve their goals. We need to ask ourselves, "am I a heel-grabber?" Jacob, through deceit, stole the blessings from his brother, Esau at the time of their father, Isaac's, death (Gen.27:22-29).

Have you ever been guilty of coveting or having such a strong desire to have something, that you would go to great lengths to get it, even if it involved evil or ill intent? Have you ever followed after vain, unprofitable things? When we seek to please ourselves and our flesh, we will refuse Godly counsel and walk in ways that are unprofitable. Such choices are like feeding on the wind. All our activities will be futile and destructive. Israel was in a similar place, and The Lord had a charge against Judah. He was ready to punish Ephraim for their evil ways, and their attitude of sin and rebellion against God.



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In similar fashion, Paul warns us to not live lives of futility, but instead, he encourages us with these words: "Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God; this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the patterns of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds." (Rom.12:1-2)

Jacob's struggle with God reinforces a point already clear in Gen. 32:24-30. Jacob wrestled with God, and he came to the place where he knew he was no match for the Lord, but he hung on to God and pleaded for a blessing. In Jacob's encounter with the Lord, it is important to know that he wept, because it helps us understand how desperate and broken Jacob was as he clung to the Lord. The way Jacob clung to the Lord reminds me of pivotal moments in my life that have forever changed me for my good and God's glory. I am sure you have similar moments.

In this study of Hosea I have learned three major truths: 1) God suffers when His people are unfaithful to Him; 2) God cannot and will not condone sin; 3) God will never cease to love His own, and He seeks to restore and reconcile those who forsake Him.

Questions:

1. Are you content with being one who says you know the Lord, but not following His commands?
2. Israel was guilty of offering God empty worship and vain lifestyles. In what ways do you find yourself in this same pattern?
3. Are you having struggles today? Are you clinging to God and His Word? Do you have a plan for repentance? Confess that to your Journey Group. If you are not in a Journey Group, please reach out to pastoroffice@stonepointchurch.com.