

# Eagles and Wild Donkeys

Hosea 8

Read Hosea 8:1-4.

**Trumpet** – horn, mostly as used in war

**Eagle** – vulture, griffon-vulture, flying swiftly to prey, especially of Babylonian and Assyrian invaders

**Transgressed** – pass over, cross, overstep covenant, command, etc. (usually divine)

**Trespassed** – to rebel, transgress, revolt against God

God has presented His evidence; the trial is over, and the time for sentencing has arrived.

1. Rewrite verse 1 with the definitions substituted for *trumpet*, *eagle*, *transgressed*, and *trespassed*.

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2. To whom does the pronoun *they* refer in verse 1? \_\_\_\_\_  
Based on everything you have studied so far, to whom does the House of the Lord refer? \_\_\_\_\_

3. **THINK:** What comes to mind when you think of an eagle or a vulture coming after their prey?

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4. **THINK HARDER:** What do you think God was trying to depict with this imagery concerning Israel and Assyria?

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5. Using the map at the front of this book and the verses provided, summarize Assyria's campaign against Israel.

1 Chronicles 5:26 (740 BC) \_\_\_\_\_

2 Kings 17:1-3 (722 BC) \_\_\_\_\_

2 Kings 17:5-6 \_\_\_\_\_

6. Read the following verses and answer the questions.

2 Kings 17:9-12 Summarize Israel's sins against God. \_\_\_\_\_

2 Kings 17:13 How did the Lord respond? \_\_\_\_\_

2 Kings 17:14-17 What did Israel do instead? \_\_\_\_\_

2 Kings 17:22-23 What was the outcome for Israel? \_\_\_\_\_

7. How will Israel respond as its sentencing begins to unfold? (Hosea 8:2)

The word for God in this verse is Elohim. It is a generic name for God. It can refer to rulers, angels, or gods, or to the one true God. However, God's covenant name with Israel, which was given to Moses, was YHWH (LORD). It is the closest personal name we know for God.

**Know** – know a person, be acquainted with

8. **THINK:** Why do you think it might be significant that Israel used the name Elohim in verse 2?

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9. **THINK HARDER:** How could truly knowing YHWH have made a difference in their lives?

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10. How can truly knowing YHWH make a difference in your life?

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11. What steps can you take to know Him better, and how will you implement these steps into your day-to-day life?

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12. Israel may have cried out, “Elohim, we know you,” but what was the truth? (v. 3a)

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**Rejected** – to cast off, reject, spurn

**Good** – a good thing, benefit, welfare, moral good

When we choose to sin, we reject or cast off the good.

It is important to recognize that we do not just fall into sin without warning or without a way out. In order to sin, we first have to cast off what is good. This is the moment we

need to train ourselves to be more aware of – that still small voice of God calling out to us.

13. Read the following verses and think about the good that each person had to cast off before they sinned.

Adam and Eve (Genesis 2-3) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

King David (2 Samuel 11-12) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Judas (Matthew 26-27) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

14. **THINK:** What good do you reject or cast off when you decide to sin? If you have a particular area in which you struggle, be specific about that area of sin.

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15. Read the following verses and record what is good in the life of a believer when it comes to overcoming sin.

John 17:17 \_\_\_\_\_

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Romans 8:11 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

1 Corinthians 10:13 \_\_\_\_\_

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Hebrews 13:20-21 \_\_\_\_\_

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1 John 2:1 \_\_\_\_\_

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16. What is the devastating reality of casting off what is Good (Luke 18:19)? (Hosea 8:3b)

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17. In verse 4, God cites two things that carried Israel further and further into sin. Record what they did, then consider how this led them further away from God.

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Israel’s legitimate line of kings descended from King David. Solomon was David’s son, and Rehoboam was Solomon’s son. When Israel and Judah split, Israel made Jeroboam, one of Solomon’s officials, their king. Jeroboam’s son would be the last of Jeroboam’s line to reign in Israel, as self-appointed princes took the throne through any means necessary.

How do you think this contributed to Israel’s downfall? \_\_\_\_\_

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#2 \_\_\_\_\_

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How do you think this contributed to Israel’s downfall? \_\_\_\_\_

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18. **THINK:** What do you think is especially sad about the phrase “from **their** silver and gold...”?

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Read Hosea 8:5-6.

19. **THINK:** The word **rejected** in verse 5 is the same word used in verse 3. What point do you think God was trying to make by using the same word?

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**Attain** – able to gain, accomplish

**Innocence** – freedom from punishment

The idolatry of Israel went on and on. Old Testament prophets often asked God how long His judgment would last, but here God asks how long it will take for Israel to be freed from punishment. It recalls His weary questions in chapter 6, “What shall I do to you...?”

20. In verse 6, their Heavenly Father had trouble wrapping His mind around the fact that Israel, His special treasure, had done what?

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Israel rejected YHWH, cast Him off. They deserved to be left to their gods.

Read Hosea 8:7-10.

21. This section of Scripture incorporates very descriptive language. Consider each description and record what you think it is meant to depict. (The Amplified version of the Bible would be a good resource for this exercise.)

*Israel* sows “the wind and reaps the whirlwind.”

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“The stalk has no bud; it shall never produce meal.”

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“If it should produce, aliens would swallow it up.”

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“Israel is swallowed up; now they are among the Gentiles like a vessel in which is no pleasure.”

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“For they have gone up to Assyria, like a wild donkey alone by itself.”

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“Ephraim has hired lovers.”

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“Now I will gather them, and they shall sorrow a little,”

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Most of us have grown up understanding the concept of reaping what you sow. If you plant a flower seed, you will reap a flower. If you are kind, people will be kind to you. Israel had sown all kinds of evil behavior, and now they would reap what they had sown in the form of destruction.

22. Israel also sought to make alliances with foreign nations. What are some examples of where people might seek protection from places other than God?

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23. What are some of the potential dangers of seeking protection and security outside of what God provides?

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Israel had a unique privilege of being in a covenant relationship with the One True God, yet they walked around like a donkey belonging to no one, forced to go it alone in the world. All the while, God was calling out to them – return to Me!

If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from Heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

- 2 Chronicles 7:14

24. **THINK:** What do you think causes someone who is loved and adored to wander around like a wild donkey, convinced that they are on their own, when God is calling out to them to repent and return to Him?

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Read Hosea 8:11-14.

Israel had literally built the altar used for sacrificing sin offerings, and now they built altars where they committed sin.

25. How can religious rituals turn from being acts of worship to opportunities for sin?

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God communicated directly with Israel by giving His law to guide them in holiness and to set them apart as God's chosen people. Now they regarded it as something strange. They had become so distant from God's commands that they no longer recognized them.

26. What are some modern-day examples of the church becoming so distant from particular parts of Scripture that they no longer recognize them?

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Israel hadn't set aside their feasts and acts of sacrifice, but they had turned them into empty rituals that meant nothing to the Lord. Through their choices to cast off what was good for idolatry and foreign alliances, they had returned to the bondage of Egypt (sin) from which God had delivered them.

27. What was at the root of Israel's sin? (v. 14) \_\_\_\_\_

28. Take some time to remember your Maker today. Consider any altars you have made for sinning, or areas of Scripture that you have considered to be strange and irrelevant to you, and decide how you will move forward.

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# A Closer Look at The Name of God

YHWH

As we already discussed, when Israel cried out to God (claiming to know Him) in verse 2, they used the word Elohim, a general name for God, rather than His covenant name with Israel, YHWH. This revealed a shallow understanding of who God truly is.

We must know God for all that He truly is. Let's explore the amazing name of God, YHWH (Yahweh), so that we can know Him more deeply.

29. Read Exodus 3:1-14.

Summarize verses 1-6 \_\_\_\_\_

What did God ask Moses to do? (vv. 7-12) \_\_\_\_\_

What did Moses ask God? (v. 13) \_\_\_\_\_

What did God say His name is? (v. 14) \_\_\_\_\_

**I Am** is the Hebrew verb *ehyeh*, which means: I WILL BE. It signifies that He is the one who is and who will be. He simply IS. He depends on no one.

Read Exodus 3:15. Notice the word LORD is in all caps (or it should be). This is the translated word for YAHWEH, the ancient form of the Hebrew verb HE WILL BE. It is the personal name of the God of Israel, which appears over 6,000 times in the Old Testament. But the word means more than what we see in our limited English language. While it means to be, therefore to exist, it is more than that; it also means to be active, to express oneself in active being. In the name YAHWEH and I AM, God made Himself known as a present being.

God (YHWH) is! This truth is incredible. He is not just the God of the Old Testament or of ancient Israel. He is present. Here. Now.

30. Knowing this truth should bring incredible comfort. Ponder the LORD God as a present being and describe the peace this knowledge brings.

31. What do the following verses teach you about the presence of God?

Psalm 46:1

Psalm 139:7-10

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Joshua 1:9

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32. What do Deuteronomy 28:58, Isaiah 42:8, Hosea 12:5 and Amos 5:8 teach you about the name of YHWH? With this knowledge, how is He to be honored?

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The name YHWH is not limited to God the Father. It is also the name of God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

33. Read Luke 4:17-18 and record where you see the Holy Spirit as YHWH.

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34. Read John 8:48-58. You will recognize that Jesus uses the name I Am. What was He proclaiming to the religious leaders of His day?

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35. Using the definition of I Am on the previous page, what does this teach you about Jesus? How does this bring you comfort? (See Matthew 28:20)

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Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

- Hebrews 13:8

36. Our LORD (YHWH) is so personal! We should never refer to Him as a god or an indifferent being. He is LORD — and He is here, with you — and there is none like Him. He will never change — and He loves you. Finish your lesson thanking Him for who He is.

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