

<sup>ESV</sup> **Exodus 34:12** Take care, lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land to which you go, lest it become a snare in your midst. <sup>13</sup> You shall tear down their altars and break their pillars and cut down their Asherim <sup>14</sup> (for you shall worship no other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God), <sup>15</sup> lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and when they whore after their gods and sacrifice to their gods and you are invited, you eat of his sacrifice, <sup>16</sup> and you take of their daughters for your sons, and their daughters whore after their gods and make your sons whore after their gods.

## Who is Israel?

### In relation to humanity

<sup>ESV</sup> **Deuteronomy 7:6** "For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. <sup>7</sup> It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the LORD set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples, <sup>8</sup> but it is because the LORD loves you and is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers, that the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt."

### In relation to the LORD God

<sup>ESV</sup> **Deuteronomy 12:2** "You shall surely destroy all the places where the nations whom you shall dispossess served their gods, on the high mountains and on the hills and under every green tree. <sup>3</sup> You shall tear down their altars and dash in pieces their pillars and burn their Asherim with fire. You shall chop down the carved images of their gods and destroy their name out of that place. <sup>4</sup> You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way.... <sup>8</sup> "You shall not do according to all that we are doing here today, everyone doing whatever is right in his own eyes, <sup>9</sup> for you have not as yet come to the rest and to the inheritance that the LORD your God is giving you.... <sup>28</sup> Be careful to obey all these words that I command you, that it may go well with you and with your children after you forever, when you do what is good and right in the sight of the LORD your God."

### In relation to the gods

(See 2 Kings 17:7-18)

They did *not* do what the LORD commanded...  
They *did* do what the LORD prohibited...

— religiously  
— politically  
— teleologically  
— practically

How does all of this matter? (See Romans 1-3)

- There is only one God who rightly deserves (and demands) to be worshiped by all created things, as the creator of that is.
- Though designed to worship the one God exclusively, as sinners we all default to refusing to worship him as he is due while running after the worship of something else which was created by him.
- If we do not repent of our disobedience (and desertion) and turn to the one God for forgiveness and true deliverance, we will incur his righteous wrath and will not achieve the good end for which we were created.

Sunday, February 08, 2026  
Danny Capon, *Pastor*

**Hosea—Faithless People Faithful God**

No. 9 | Excursus

What did it mean for Israel to deal faithlessly with God?

## Selected Scriptures

### Excursus | What did it mean for Israel to deal faithlessly with God?

What do we see in the book of Hosea?



**deal faithlessly** = "(This) verb...means to act or deal treacherously and is used, e.g., of a wife deceiving her husband (cf. Jer 3:20). In 6:7 the action is explicitly related to transgressing a covenant. Hence, with Yahweh as an object, the verb means that they have, by their actions, deceived him and broken their close relationship with him." (Macintosh, p. 189)

Why even ask what it meant for Israel to deal faithlessly with God?

A Different Time (c. 750 BC) and People (Israel, God's People)

<sup>ESV</sup> **Hosea 9:1** Rejoice not, O Israel! Exult not like the peoples; for you have played the whore, forsaking your God. You have loved a prostitute's wages on all threshing floors.

A Different Religious Context and Practices

<sup>ESV</sup> **Hosea 11:2** The more they were called, the more they went away; they kept sacrificing to the **Baals** and burning offerings to **idols**.

**Baal** = "Baal...was the storm-god, and his consort Anath was the goddess of love and war. Baal's adversary was Mot, who was the god of death and the underworld.

Baal's father was Dagon, the god of agriculture....In some of the Ugaritic writings...the god Baal seems to have superseded El as the most powerful and central god of the pantheon." (John Currid, *Against the Gods*)

**Idolatry** = "The idol is whatever claims to the loyalty that belongs to God alone (Brian Rosner).'...The word *idolatry* can refer to the worship of other gods besides the true God, or the reverence of images. According to both the ancient Near East and the Old Testament, an idol or image contained a god's presence, though that presence was not limited to the image" (G. K. Beale, *We Become What We Worship*)

What larger themes are related to understanding this?

## Who is the LORD God?

In relation to Himself

ESV **Exodus 3:14** God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And he said, "Say this to the people of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'" <sup>15</sup> God also said to Moses, "Say this to the people of Israel, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.' This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations.

ESV **Hebrews 11:6** And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

In relation to all of creation

ESV **Psalms 146:5** Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD his God, <sup>6</sup> who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, who keeps faith forever.

ESV **Isaiah 37:16** "O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, who is enthroned above the cherubim, you are the God, you alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; you have made heaven and earth.

The LORD God is he who **creates** (Gen 2:4), **commands** (Gen 2:15-17), **covers** (Gen 3:21), and **covenants** (Gen 17:7-8).

In relation to the gods

ESV **Deuteronomy 4:35** To you it was shown, that you might know that the LORD is God; there is no other besides him.... <sup>39</sup> know therefore today, and lay it to your heart, that the LORD is God in heaven above and on the earth beneath; there is no other.

ESV **Deuteronomy 32:39** "See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god beside me; I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand.... <sup>43</sup> "Rejoice with him, O heavens; bow down to him, all gods, for he avenges the blood of his children and takes vengeance on his adversaries. He repays those who hate him and cleanses his people's land."

## Who are the gods?

In relation to reality

ESV **Exodus 12:12** For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the LORD.

ESV **2 Kings 17:29** But every nation still made gods of its own and put them in the shrines of the high places that the Samaritans had made, every nation in the cities in which they lived.

"If the gods are not *God in the way Yahweh alone is God* and yet exist as something, what are they? ...Idols and gods may be (1) objects within the visible creation, (2) demons, and (3) the product of human hands." (Christopher Wright, *Here Are Your Gods*)

ESV **1 Corinthians 8:5** For although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth- as indeed there are many "gods" and many "lords"- <sup>6</sup> yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

ESV **1 Corinthians 10:20** No, I imply that what pagans sacrifice they offer to demons and not to God. I do not want you to be participants with demons. <sup>21</sup> You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons.

In relation to humans

ESV **Deuteronomy 10:12** "And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, <sup>13</sup> and to keep the commandments and statutes of the LORD, which I am commanding you today for your good? <sup>14</sup> Behold, to the LORD your God belong heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth with all that is in it.... <sup>20</sup> You shall fear the LORD your God. You shall serve him and hold fast to him, and by his name you shall swear. <sup>21</sup> He is your praise. He is your God, who has done for you these great and terrifying things that your eyes have seen.

ESV **Isaiah 44:14** He cuts down cedars, or he chooses a cypress tree or an oak and lets it grow strong among the trees of the forest. He plants a cedar and the rain nourishes it. <sup>15</sup> Then it becomes fuel for a man. He takes a part of it and warms himself; he kindles a fire and bakes bread. Also he makes a god and worships it; he makes it an idol and falls down before it. <sup>16</sup> Half of it he burns in the fire. Over the half he eats meat; he roasts it and is satisfied. Also he warms himself and says, "Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire!" <sup>17</sup> And the rest of it he makes into a god, his idol, and falls down to it and worships it. He prays to it and says, "Deliver me, for you are my god!"

In relation to the LORD God

ESV **Exodus 20:1** And God spoke all these words, saying, <sup>2</sup> "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. <sup>3</sup> "You shall have no other gods before me. <sup>4</sup> "You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. <sup>5</sup> You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, <sup>6</sup> but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.