

## **Hosea: The Husband and the Harlot**

### **Exclusive Worship**

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*God has always required exclusive devotion, not portfolio worship...*

*“I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me.” (Exod. 20:2-3)*

*Hosea 13 highlights Israel’s problem with worship disease...*

*When Ephraim spoke, men trembled; he was exalted in Israel. But he became guilty of Baal worship and died. (Hosea 13:1)*

- **Right devotion, wrong object** – “Now they sin more and more; they make idols for themselves from their silver, cleverly fashioned images, all of them the work of craftsmen. It is said of these people, ‘They offer human sacrifice and kiss the calf-idols.’” (Hosea 13:2)

☛ **Idol danger: what is supposed to bring life actually causes death** – “Therefore they will be like the morning mist, like the early dew that disappears, like chaff swirling from a threshing floor, like smoke escaping through a window.” (Hosea 13:3)

**Worship 101: That which God redeems, God owns** – “But I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt. You shall acknowledge no God but me, no Savior except me.” (Hosea 13:4)

*You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body. (1 Cor. 6:19b-20)*

*The sequence of worship atrophy...*

- **Blessing/provision leads to satisfaction** – “I cared for you in the desert, in the land of the burning heat. When I fed them they were satisfied...” (Hosea 13:5-6a)
- **Satisfaction leads to pride and ingratitude** – “...when they were satisfied, they became proud...” (Hosea 13:6b)
- **Pride/ingratitude leads to self-reliance** – “...then they forgot me.” (Hosea 13:6b)

*The counter to worship atrophy then is humility, gratitude and trust...*

*Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our “God is a consuming fire.” (Heb. 12:28)*