

חֲסֵי

Hosea, chapter 12, verse 13 to chapter 14, verse 10

Introduction

Connection of haftarah and sidra:

The weekly sidra tells of Jacob's sojourn in Aram, and the first two verses of the haftarah recall that event. Otherwise, the content of the prophecy that follows has little to do with the tale of Jacob.¹

The setting:

Hosea lived in the 8th century B.C.E., and was a contemporary of Amos. He resided and preached in the Northern Kingdom, which bore the name of Israel. However, Hosea calls it Ephraim, because its first king, Jeroboam (who had seceded from the united monarchy after Solomon's death) had belonged to the tribe of Ephraim. Hosea addresses himself unsparingly to the social and religious ills of his society, though in the end he holds out God's forgiveness if the people will mend their ways.

For more on Hosea and his time, see our *General Introduction*.

The message:

1. A historical note about Jacob and Moses. (12:13-14)
2. The sinfulness of Ephraim. (12:15-13:3)
3. God's past problems with Israel. (13:4-13)
4. The destruction that lies ahead for an unrepentant nation. (13:14-14:1)
5. A repentant Israel will enjoy God's favor once again. (14:2-10) This section of the prophecy forms also the bulk of the haftarah for the Shabbat between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur (Shabbat Shuvah).

The text of the haftarah consists of different thoughts whose meaning is often unclear, and its meaning is often unclear.