

Program: SS Panel 2026 2 Q

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Quarterly author: Nina Atcheson

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Day Title: Wednesday - A Wandering Child

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First and Last Name 2026 Q2 L# Title of your days lesson

John Dinzey 2026 Q2 L01 A Wandering Child

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Question:

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READ

NIL: Not in Lesson

Growing in a Relationship With God
by Nina Atcheson

April, May, June
2026

WEDNESDAY

June 17

A Wandering Child

Many know firsthand the pain and heartache of having a child who—despite the strong, spiritual home they were raised in—has chosen to walk away from a relationship with the Lord.

Ephraim, God's chosen nation, strayed from the Lord. What do Hosea 4:17 and Hosea 7 tell us about the sins of Ephraim?

REF:>> Of Ephraim the prophet testified, “Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knoweth it not: yea, gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not.” [The prophet Hosea often referred to Ephraim, a leader in apostasy among the tribes of Israel, as a symbol of the apostate nation.] “Israel hath cast off the thing that is good.” “Broken in judgment,” unable to discern the disastrous outcome of their evil course, the ten tribes were soon to be “wanderers among the nations.” Hosea 7:9; 8:3; 5:11; 9:17. PK 280.1

Hosea 4:17 “Ephraim is joined to idols, Let him alone.

From SDA BC

Hosea 4:17. Ephraim was the principal tribe of the northern kingdom, and the name was frequently applied to the entire kingdom (see on Jer. 7:15). Similarly the name Judah was applied to the southern kingdom.

From SDA BC

Jeremiah 7:15 **Ephraim**. A term often used to designate the northern tribes (see Isa. 7:2; Hosea 4:17; 5:9; 12:1; cf. Ps. 78:67, 68). The tribe of Ephraim had been the most numerous and powerful in the north. Also from that tribe Jeroboam, the first king of the northern kingdom, had come. Hence the term “Ephraim” came to be applied to the whole kingdom.

From: Jamiesson-Fausset-Brown

Jeremiah 7:15 **whole seed of Ephraim** — They were superior to you in numbers and power: they were *ten* tribes: ye but *two*. “Ephraim,” as the leading tribe, **stands for the whole ten tribes** ([2Ki 17:23](#); [Psa 78:67](#), [Psa 78:68](#)).

Hosea 7:1-4 1“**When I would have healed Israel, Then the iniquity of Ephraim was uncovered,** And the wickedness of Samaria. For they have committed fraud; A thief comes in; A band of robbers takes spoil outside.

2 They do not consider in their hearts *That I remember all their wickedness; Now their own deeds have surrounded them;* They are before My face.

3 They make a king glad with their wickedness, *And princes with their lies.*

4 “*They are all adulterers.* Like an oven heated by a baker— He ceases stirring the fire after kneading the dough, Until it is leavened.

Hosea 7:8-9 8 “Ephraim has mixed himself among the peoples; Ephraim is a cake unturned.

From SDA BC *A cake Unturned.*

Cake Heb. ‘*ugah*, a circular, thin layer of bread, which was quickly baked upon ashes or heated stones (see 1 Kings 19:6). It in no way resembled the modern sweet cake; it was more like a pancake. The ‘*ugah* needed to be quickly turned, else it would be burned on one side and be moist dough on the other; ruined by heat because not penetrated by heat. This is a graphic figure of spiritual inconsistency and inconstancy. The Israelites were worshipers of the Lord by profession, but engaged in the idolatries of the heathen.

The Lord chose Abraham and his descendants to be a holy nation unto Himself, for His own possession; and so He ordained that they should be, as Balaam prophesied, **a people that “shall dwell alone”** (Num. 23:9; see Ex. 19:4–6; Deut 14:2; 26:16–19; Ps. 135:4). **Israel refused to follow this divine order, but mingled with the surrounding peoples**, and so became a religious hybrid, as it were.” **SDA BC Hosea 7:8**

Hosea 7:9 Aliens have devoured his strength, *But he does not know it;* Yes, gray hairs are here and there on him, *Yet he does not know it.*

*****READ*****

Furthermore, we read that Rachel, the grandmother of Ephraim, metaphorically weeps because Ephraim has walked away from a relationship with the Lord (*Jer. 31:15*). The Lord responds to her great sadness with these words in *Jeremiah 31:16, 17*: “ ‘Refrain your voice from weeping, and your eyes from tears; for your work shall be rewarded, says the LORD, and they shall come back from the land of the enemy. There is hope in your future, says the LORD, that your children shall come back to their own border’ ” (*NKJV*).

Instead of weeping over her wayward child, Rachel is told to have hope. What else does this chapter tell us? Read Jeremiah 31:18, 19.

Jeremiah 31:18-20 18 “I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself: ‘You have chastised me, and I was chastised, Like an untrained bull; **Restore me, and I will return, For You are the Lord my God.**

19 Surely, after my turning, I repented; And after I was instructed, I struck myself on the thigh; I was ashamed, yes, even humiliated, Because I bore the reproach of my youth.’

20 *Is Ephraim My dear son? Is he a pleasant child?* For though I spoke against him, I earnestly remember him still; Therefore My heart yearns for him; I will surely have mercy on him, says the Lord.

I drew them with gentle cords,

Hosea 11:3 3 “I taught Ephraim to walk, Taking them by their arms; But they did not know that I healed them.

4 I drew them with gentle cords, With bands of love, And I was to them as those who take the yoke from their neck. I stooped *and* fed them.

How can I give you up, Ephraim?

Hosea 11:8 “How can I give you up, Ephraim? *How* can I hand you over, Israel? How can I make you like Admah? *How* can I set you like Zeboiim? My heart churns within Me; My sympathy is stirred.

Isa 1:18 Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

Through these stories, we learn that there is always hope (as there was for Ephraim and Gomer), because God doesn’t give up. Although God rebukes His wayward people time and time again, God’s compassion never fails, and His message in this chapter continues (see Jer. 31:20).

We might feel great pain, frustration, and discouragement, or even speak negatively of those who are close to us who have walked away from a relationship with God. Yet God reminds us here that He has not forgotten the wayward child—not at all! God’s thoughts for such a person are not fleeting but instead are heartfelt and sincere. In fact, God says that His heart yearns for such individuals. He longs for them to return to Him, and His mercy is great.

How does knowing that this is God's response to Rachel's pain over Ephraim's waywardness make you feel about those you know who have walked away from a relationship with the Lord? How does this challenge or encourage you?

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Additional Notes

Hosea 7:1 1“When I would have healed Israel, Then the iniquity of Ephraim was uncovered, And the wickedness of Samaria. For they have committed fraud; A thief comes in; A band of robbers takes spoil outside.

2 They do not consider in their hearts *That* I remember all their wickedness; **Now their own deeds have surrounded them;** They are before My face.

3 They make a king glad with their wickedness, And princes with their lies.

4 “They *are* all adulterers. Like an oven heated by a baker— He ceases stirring *the fire* after kneading the dough, Until it is leavened.

5 In the day of our king Princes have made *him* sick, inflamed with wine; He stretched out his hand with scoffers.

6 They prepare their heart like an oven, While they lie in wait; Their baker sleeps all night; In the morning it burns like a flaming fire.

7 They are all hot, like an oven, And have devoured their judges; All their kings have fallen. None among them calls upon Me.

8 “Ephraim has mixed himself among the peoples; Ephraim is a cake unturned.

9 Aliens have devoured his strength, **But he does not know it;** Yes, gray hairs are here and there on him, **Yet he does not know it.**

10 And the pride of Israel testifies to his face, But they do not return to the Lord their God, Nor seek Him for all this.

11 “Ephraim also is like a silly dove, without sense— They call to Egypt, They go to Assyria.

12 Wherever they go, I will spread My net on them; I will bring them down like birds of the air; **I will chastise them According to what their congregation has heard.**

13 “Woe to them, for they have fled from Me! Destruction to them, Because they have transgressed against Me! Though I redeemed them, Yet they have spoken lies against Me.

14 They did not cry out to Me with their heart When they wailed upon their beds. **“They assemble together for grain and new wine, They rebel against Me;**

15 **Though I disciplined *and* strengthened their arms, Yet they devise evil against Me;**

16 They return, *but* not to the Most High; They are like a treacherous bow. Their princes shall fall by the sword For the cursings of their tongue. This *shall be* their derision in the land of Egypt.