



## [Hosea 4:1-2](#)

(1) Hear the word of the LORD, you Israelites, because the LORD has a charge to bring against you who live in the land: "There is no faithfulness, no love, no acknowledgment of God in the land. (2) There is only cursing, lying and murder, stealing and adultery; they break all bounds, and bloodshed follows bloodshed.

## [Hosea 4:11-12](#)

(11) to prostitution, to old wine and new, which take away the understanding (12) of my people. They consult a wooden idol and are answered by a stick of wood. A spirit of prostitution leads them astray; they are unfaithful to their God.

*New International Version*

The Hebrew word *zanah*, translated as "harlotry," is not the word used to indicate a single act of [adultery](#). Instead, it means "sexually wanton," meaning something done repeatedly as a way of life. Ultimately, it is understood spiritually to signify [idolatry](#). [Hosea 4:11-12](#) defines it in this manner: "Harlotry, wine, and new wine enslave the heart. My people ask counsel from the wooden idols, and their staff informs them. For the spirit of harlotry has caused them to stray, and they have played the harlot against their God."

By linking *zanah*, harlotry, with wine and new wine, [God](#) is showing that this spiritual harlotry has addictive power. "Enslave the heart" illustrates that this faithless spirit

The Berean: Daily Verse and Commentary for Hosea 4:1-2 (<http://www.theberean.org>) bends the heart to obey its desires, and in the process, it destroys discretion and understanding. Recall that Psalm 119 repeatedly states that meditating on God's Word and obeying His commandments give understanding, indicating a major way in which we come to know God. However, if a person practices faithlessness, loss of understanding results. No constructive [wisdom](#) ever results from breaking any of God's commands.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

**To learn more, see:**  
[The Seventh Commandment](#)

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