



## EXPLORE THE BIBLE.

Session 8: The Hollow Promises  
Suggested Week of Use: October 23, 2022  
Core Passage: Hosea 6:1—7:2

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### News Story Summary

Reports of infidelity rocked the news again. This time, the accusations focused on cheating at a game, rather than cheating on another person.

Recently, Magnus Carlsen, chess grandmaster and the top player in the world, accused Hans Niemann, a 19-year-old challenger, of cheating in recent matches. A report from Chess.com, the largest chess community on the internet, also stated that Niemann has cheated more than he has admitted in the past, leading the organization to ban him from a prestigious tournament this fall. In a previous interview, Niemann said he cheated twice in the past—once as a 12-year-old and once as a 16-year-old. When Chess.com said it had detailed evidence of Niemann cheating in more than 100 matches, he accused the site of trying to damage his chess career.

Fans of both Niemann and Carlsen have taken to social media to express their differing beliefs. Some are convinced that Niemann finally got caught, while others claim a conspiracy to keep Carlsen as the world champion and No. 1 player in the world.

All of this controversy took place just before the much-anticipated U.S. Chess Championship started on October 4 in St. Louis. Multiple security measures were in place at the event, including metal detectors, a non-linear junction detector to find illegal electronics, and a radio frequency machine to identify infrared signals to and from players. The grand prize for the event was \$250,000.

For more about this story, search “Chess cheating scandal.”

### Focus Attention

To supplement the Focus Attention activity, tape a large sheet of paper to a focal wall. As adults arrive, direct them to list types of cheating. (*Examples: on a test, at a fishing tournament, in gambling, and so forth*) After several minutes, point out the kinds of cheating listed on the paper. Tell the story of the current cheating scandal in the world of chess. (Note: You might be able to find a video clip that summarizes the story.) Point out that when a person commits adultery, it is sometimes called “cheating.” Ask: *Why do you think we use “cheating” to describe adultery? What are the similarities between cheating in a game and being unfaithful in a marriage?* (**Note: Be sensitive to adults who may have been the victims of adultery in the past.**) Explain that this week’s session focuses on the actions of Gomer, who was unfaithful in her relationship with the prophet Hosea and what that meant for the people of Israel.

## Summarize and Challenge

To supplement Summarize and Challenge, review the story of the cheating scandal in chess. Ask: *What emotions do you think competitors would feel if they found out an opponent was cheating in chess? Do you think there are different kinds of emotional responses for different kinds of cheating? Why?* Discuss responses. Summarize the connection between Gomer's cheating against Hosea and the spiritual adultery being committed in Israel. Ask: *What emotions would you feel if your spouse was unfaithful to you? How might these emotions be similar or different than how God feels when people are unfaithful to Him?* **Again, be sensitive to adults who have experienced adultery.** Allow the group time to reflect on their own faithfulness to God. Close in prayer, asking God to lead the group toward deeper fidelity to Him.