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Hosea 9

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Hosea 9.

Topics.

- Israel has played the whore.
- Israel's holy days mean nothing to God.
- Israel flees from Assyria to Egypt.
- Prophets are fools and the man of the Spirit is mad.
- The prophets are full of hatred in the house of God
- Woe to Israel when the LORD departs from them.
- Ephraim was like a palm, but will lead his children to slaughter.
- Ephraim root is dried up they will be wanderers among the nations.

INTRODUCTION: Hosea has been called the "death-bed prophet of Israel" because he was the last to prophesy before the Northern Kingdom fell to Assyria (about 722 B.C.). His ministry followed a golden age in the Northern Kingdom, with a peace and prosperity not seen since the days of Solomon. Unfortunately, this prosperity led to moral decay, and Israel forsook God to worship idols. So God instructed Hosea to marry a prostitute, whose unfaithfulness to her husband would serve as an example of Israel's unfaithfulness to God. Hosea then explained God's complaint against Israel and warned of the punishment that would come unless the people returned to the LORD and remained faithful to him. The book shows the depth of God's love for his people, a love that tolerates no rivals.

FOR INFORMATION: concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

HOSEA 9:1-3

Israel has Played the Whore.

- **Hosea 9:1-3:** Rejoice not, O Israel! Exult not like the peoples; for you have played the whore, forsaking your God. You have loved a prostitute's wages on all threshing floors.
²Threshing floor and wine vat shall not feed them, and the new wine shall fail them.
³They shall not remain in the land of the LORD, but Ephraim shall return to Egypt, and they shall eat unclean food in Assyria.

Ephraim: became such a leader in the new northern kingdom (the ten tribes in the land of Samaria) that in addition to their more common name Israel, the kingdom is also called Ephraim. The Canaanites of Gezer lived in the midst of the ten tribes, because Israel did not drive them out of the land. Ephraim's territory included worship centers at Bethel and Shiloh. At this time in history Israel is so far fallen they have forsaken God and turned to idols and the Baal's and the men are paying to have prostitutes at their places of work.

They will not remain in the land of the LORD: God fulfilled these words by using Assyria to invade Israel, multitudes were scattered throughout the surrounding nations, others fled to Egypt, but most were taken captive into Assyria.

They shall eat unclean food in Assyria: means while they were held captive, they were forced to eat foods that under the Levitical Law were declared unclean.

Israel's Holy Days mean nothing to God.

- **Hosea 9:4-5:** They shall not pour drink offerings of wine to the LORD, and their sacrifices shall not please him. It shall be like mourners' bread to them; all who eat of it shall be defiled; for their bread shall be for their hunger only; it shall not come to the house of the LORD. ⁵What will you do on the day of the appointed festival, and on the day of the feast of the LORD?

Hosea is seeing into the future, and telling Israel a day is coming when they will not be able to take their food and wine offerings to the Temple of the LORD and that they will not be able to keep their holy days or their feasts and whatever they do sacrifice will mean nothing to God other than food for those who eat it.

HOSEA 9:6

Israel flees from Assyria to Egypt.

- **Hosea 9:6:** For behold, they are going away from destruction; but Egypt shall gather them; Memphis shall bury them. Nettles shall possess their precious things of silver; thorns shall be in their tents.

Memphis: was the first capital of united Egypt. Multitudes will flee to Egypt for shelter and protection from Assyria's impending destruction, but it will not save them because Egypt was also conquered by the Assyrians.

HOSEA 9:7-9

Prophets are Fools and the Man of the Spirit is Mad.

- **Hosea 9:7-9:** The days of punishment have come; the days of recompense have come; Israel shall know it. The prophet is a fool; the man of the spirit is mad, because of your great iniquity and great hatred. ⁸The prophet is the watchman of Ephraim with my God; yet a fowler's snare is on all his ways, and hatred in the house of his God. ⁹They have deeply corrupted themselves as in the days of Gibeah: he will remember their iniquity; he will punish their sins.

Gibeah: from the days of Gibeah the sins of Israel had been remembered for centuries (Hos. 5:8) (Hos. 9:9) (Hos. 10:9), the days of Israel's punishment have come means they are near and certain. The Prophets and the men of the Spirit were meant to be the watchmen over God's people, but they are corrupt and full of gross iniquity themselves so instead of leading the people toward God they led them to destruction.

The Prophets are full of hatred in the House of God: refers to all the faithful prophets God sent to warn Israel to return to the LORD and turn from their wicked ways or doom and destruction will come upon them. The priests in the Temple of God and the rulers set their hearts diamond hard against these faithful prophets of God and hated their messages.

HOSEA 9:10-12

Woe to Israel when the LORD departs from them.

- **Hosea 9:10-12:** Like grapes in the wilderness, I found Israel. Like the first fruit on the fig tree in its first season, I saw your fathers. But they came to Baal-peor and consecrated themselves to the thing of shame, and became detestable like the thing they loved.

¹¹Ephraim's glory shall fly away like a bird—no birth, no pregnancy, no conception!

¹²Even if they bring up children, I will bereave them till none is left. Woe to them when I depart from them!

Baal-peor: was a high point in Moab where Balak took Balaam to curse Israel, later the Israelites worshiped at Baal of Peor.

Baal: means Lord, possessor, husband, since the Hebrew husband was regarded as the literal owner of his wife, Baal was the common term for husband. Most often however, the word refers to the Semitic deity or deities called Baal. Baal is not the name of one god, but the name of the presiding deity of any given locality. Because the worship of Baal was much the same everywhere in Canaan, in time Baal came to represent the idea of one god. The Baalim were believed to be the gods of the land, owning and controlling it and the increases of crops, fruits, and cattle was believed to be under their control. The farmer was completely dependent upon the Baalim. Some Baal's were believed to be in control of cities and some were considered greater than others. The struggle between Baalism and Judaism came to a head on Mount Carmel when the Prophet Elijah met the priests of Baal and slew 450 of them. The cult quickly recuperated, however, and prospered until crushed by Jehu, but Jezebel's daughter, Athaliah, the wife of Jehoram, gave the worship of Baal a new impulse. In the worship of Baal, incense and burnt sacrifices were offered to him and on extraordinary occasions the victims were children offered by their parents. Lascivious rites accompanied the worship. Sometimes priests, dancing around the altar in a state of frenzy, slashed themselves with knives. At first the name Baal was used by the Jews for their God without discrimination, but as the struggle between the two religions developed, the name Baal was given up in Judaism as a thing of sham.

HOSEA 9:13-14

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Ephraim was like a Palm, but will Led his Children to Slaughter.

- **Hosea 9:13-14:** Ephraim (Israel), as I (Hosea) have seen, was like a young palm planted in a meadow; but Ephraim must lead his children out to slaughter. ¹⁴Give them, O LORD—what will you give? Give them a miscarrying womb and dry breasts.

Hosea sees in his vision the destruction of Israel, the priests; the rulers and the heads of the tribes of Israel who should have been shepherds and watchmen over the people of the LORD have led the entire nation to slaughter. It is easy to see why the apostle Paul warns Timothy to:

- Study to show yourself approved to God, a workman that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (2 Tim. 2:15).

And why Phillip says:

- Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. (Philip. 2:12).

The practical lesson: in this for us all to learn is that no one should ever exalt another human so much that they blindly accept everything they say. These leaders led an entire nation away from God and to destruction which proves the following truth: just because a religious teaching or doctrine has been embraced by multitudes globally and throughout history is not evidence that the teaching is right or that the doctrine is a true doctrine before God.

Reasoning religious matters: sadly reasoning is a skill that is lacking in many churches today since congregations are not only told what to believe, but also discouraged to even consider another point of view and often if they do try to question something they are verbally condemned or considered a rebel amongst the flock for questioning the authority and in some cases asked to leave the church, but this is not how brothers and

sisters of the early church fellowshiped. They gathered together in their homes and reasoned with each other over the Scriptures to find out if what they had been taught was actually right according to the Scriptures. Remember their churches were made up of Jews who had been steeped in the customs of Moses, Greeks who had been devoted to their pagan gods and leading woman of cities who had authority and influence. Obviously, they had certain teachers, but their teachers taught expecting their listeners to study and question what they had heard and they commended them for doing so. They encouraged their listeners to take the responsibly upon themselves to see if what they were saying was so rather than simply switching off their mind and accepting what they were hearing was absolute truth (Acts 17:11).

Paul and Silas at Berea: on a Sabbath day Paul with Silas went to a Jewish synagogue in Berea and taught Jesus and to Paul's pleasant surprise there is an vast difference between these Jews to those at most other Synagogues he had visited, such a big difference that the Berean Jews are referred to as being more noble than others, meaning honourable, principled, admirable, praiseworthy and upright. The Jews at Berea were called noble by Paul because they received the word with all eagerness, meaning they were excited to hear what Paul and Silas said about the Lord Jesus Christ, but they did not simply believe it because two great men were proclaiming it, they still gathered together in their homes to examine the Scriptures to see what Paul and Silas were saying was true, and for this they were commended by them (Acts 17:11).

NOTICE: even though Paul and Silas knew what they were teaching was the word of the Lord they did not impose or force it on their congregations, rather they encouraged their listeners to hold meetings to examine the Scriptures for themselves. They rested in the fact that the Holy Spirit will reveal the Good News of the Gospel to those who have a right and humble heart and truly desire above all things to know God, and would spiritually blind those whose heart is full of pride and selfish ambition to the beauty of God's grace found in the Lord Jesus Christ. The author of Chronicles wrote:

- The eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to give strong support to those whose heart is blameless toward him (2 Chron. 16:9).

Blameless in this context does not mean without sin, if any of us could attain to that glorious state Christ died for no reason, it refers to a heart that is humble and honest that is seeking God to know Him because He is God, contrasted to a heart that is prideful and hypocritical and seeking God for ones on gain.

HOSEA 9:15-17

Ephraim's Root is Dried Up, they will Wanderer among the Nations.

- **Hosea 9:15-17:** Every evil of theirs is in Gilgal; there I began to hate them. Because of the wickedness of their deeds I will drive them out of my house. I will love them no more; all their princes are rebels. ¹⁶Ephraim (Israel) is stricken; their root is dried up; they shall bear no fruit. Even though they give birth, I will put their beloved children to death. ¹⁷My (Hosea's) God will reject them because they have not listened to him; they shall be wanderers among the nations.

Gilgal: means, circle of stones it was near the northern border of Judah, it was the first camp of Israel after crossing the Jordan. Saul was sent by Samuel to be confirmed as king over Israel at Gilgal. It was in Gilgal that Saul offended the LORD by presuming to act as priest and make his own sacrifice and it is certain that the twelve altar-memorial of stones that Joshua set up at Gilgal as a reminder to the people of Israel that God dried up the Jordan River so the people could cross on dry ground and enter the Promised Land became a pagan shrine of later years against which Hosea and Amos warned the people. (Hosea 4:15) (Amos 4:4). (The story is found in Joshua chapter 4).

They shall be wanderers among the nations: (v17) refers to the Assyrian invasion of Israel and the Babylonian attack on Judah, at which time multitudes of Israelites and Jews fled in fear from their armies and were scattered throughout the surrounding nations.

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.

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