

## Message #11

## Hosea 9:1-17

One of the debates that exists in the world of theology is the debate about whether or not God can do anything. Can God do anything? The answer to that question is “no.” God cannot do anything that is contrary to Himself and His Perfect Character. For example, God cannot lie. It is impossible for God to lie. His own nature and His character make lying an impossibility. God cannot sin. There is not one bit of unrighteousness with God ever. His character is pure and holy and righteous all of the time. God cannot sin; it is impossible. So the fact is there are some things God cannot do. **There are also some things God will not do.** God will not ever tempt someone to do evil. We may be tempted by our own flesh or by the world or by the Devil; but God cannot and will not ever tempt someone to do evil.

Now there is another principle that we need to grasp about God. **God will not ever bless His people if they persist in living their lives in rebellion against Him.** God’s people need to know this critical point regardless of the dispensation—God cannot and will not allow His people to plunge into deep depravity without causing some very bad, negative things to happen to His people. God will never let His people get away with a life of total depravity. Now when a believer fails, we have a marvelous grace provision called “confession.” If we go to God and confess our sin, He is faithful and He is just and He will forgive it. However, if a believer says I am going to live my life my way and pursue sinful things, God will intervene and specifically cause negative things to hit. That is very clear from Hosea 9. What we see here is this:

**WHEN GOD’S PEOPLE ARE LIVING A LIFE OF DEEP DEPRAVITY, THEIR WORLD WILL EVENTUALLY FALL COMPLETELY APART AS A DIRECT PUNISHMENT AND JUDGMENT OF GOD.**

Jonathan Edwards used to use an illustration that I like to borrow. He used to say that the anger and wrath of God against someone is like water that is dammed up at the present time. The people keep sinning and the water level rises higher and higher with every sin. The more the sin is not faced, the more the anger of God is stored up and eventually when the water reaches a certain level God will open the door and the water will gush forth and destroy the people.

If you want a chapter of the Bible that clearly teaches this point, it is right here in Hosea 9. God will cause terrible things to happen to His own people if they persist in their depravity. There will be direct judgments from Him. When God’s people plunge into deep depravity there are six results:

**RESULT #1 – God will not allow His people to have joy. 9:1-6**

Some of the most miserable people you will ever see are people of God who have no joy. The reason they have no joy is because God will not let them have it because they are out of step with Him. Look at Israel today; do they look like a happy people? They always look worried and sad. They don’t realize part of the reason is because they are not right with God. I want you to notice what God says His people do not have in these verses. There are four realities:

**Reality #1** - They are not able to rejoice. **9:1**

Specifically what is stated here is that God has kept the record of their harlotry and immorality and it is not going to lead them to a happy ever after conclusion. When Hosea uses the word “harlot” this is, as Derek Kidner said, “no exaggeration.” This is not some metaphorical symbolism, this was real. God’s own people were involved in sexual immorality. They forsake God and His Word to pursue their immorality. Now the nations that don’t know God pursue immorality and don’t see much wrong with it. It is just part of their lifestyle.

But for those who know God, sexual immorality is not acceptable and God will not bless one who is in it. **Don’t ever forget this point—sexual immorality will never ultimately make you happy.** As a pastor, I have actually known of people who were suicidal because they had pursued an immoral lifestyle. It is just like this verse says, “Do not rejoice.” Because this will never lead to happiness, but to the judgment of God.

**Reality #2** - They do not have prosperity and provisions. **9:2**

The description here is that God’s people are producing their food and wine, but are not able to enjoy them because someone else is taking it from them. God says because you want to persist in your depraved lifestyle, I will just start taking things away from you. God says I will take away your ability to prosper. God says I will take away your provisions.

Hosea is saying that God is actually involved in our own personal economic situation. If His people start drifting away from Him, He can make the economic situation a disaster.

**Reality #3** - They do not remain in their land. **9:3**

The Promised Land is “the LORD’s land.” It is a land that belongs to Israel. Israel’s great desire is to live in her Promised Land. But even to this day she has not been able to do it. The reason is right here. She forgot her God and pursued things she should not have pursued and, as a result, God would not let them live in their land. God says I will cause Israel to be taken captive by the Assyrians. It will be like it was back when the Egyptians had them captive. They will be forced to eat non-kosher food.

There will come a day, however, when God will put this nation in her land. He will lead her back there and give her every bit of her land.

I want to make an application from all of this. When we believe on Jesus Christ we are guaranteed heaven. But if we are not putting the Lord first, we can miss out on some wonderful blessings before we get there. God can actually sovereignly allow us to be taken captive by various things and never have victory.

**Reality #4** - They cannot worship and please God. **9:4**

God's own people will not be able to offer God acceptable offerings and one reason why is because they will be removed from even being able to worship at the Temple. Furthermore, their offerings don't even please God because they are living such corrupt lives.

In **verse 5** God says what are you going to do on appointed festival days, because you will not even be in the land able to celebrate them because I am geographically taking you captive out of here.

In **verse 6** God says you will be gone and this sacred place will be nothing but weeds and thorns.

Hosea says you will lose your land and your tent/homes because you are so depraved. This is all a judgment from God against His own people.

It is getting harder and harder to find a church to worship God that is very serious about carefully and accurately understanding the Word of God. What most people don't realize is that this is a judgment of God. God is in the process of taking away the potential of true reverent worship. Paul predicted that as we near the end of the Church Age that "the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but wanting their ears tickled they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance with their own desires" (II Tim. 4:3). This is a serious judgment of God.

**RESULT #2** – God will punish His people and bring retribution against His people. **9:7-9**

Now God warns that His punishment and His retribution would come against His own people. In fact, God says twice in **verse 7** "the days have come." We need to grasp this point. If God's people pursue evil depraved things, there will come a day when God will bring an end to it. He will pour out His judgment.

Now God states some reasons why His punishment is coming:

**Reason #1** - They viewed men who preached God's Word as foolish and demented. **9:7a**

These people did not want the Word of God. In fact, they called the prophet a fool and one who spoke inspired truth as being demented or mad.

It is pretty clear from this that Hosea, as a prophet, was not highly esteemed by the people. When he started proclaiming the truth of God, many people said he is out of his mind. In fact, the Hebrew words indicate that the people were saying that men who proclaimed God's Word were silly and idiotic. They were viewed as foolish men who were talking out of their minds.

Have we not seen that reaction? Most people who contact churches want to know about the music, the programs and the activities. If you tell people the primary focus of the church is to teach you and your family the Word of God, most will look at you like you are out of your mind.

**Reason #2** - They were involved in gross, perverse iniquity. **9:7b**

The words here describe the grossest forms of immoral, perverse evil. God's own people were involved in gross perverted things. God says you want to know why I am going to punish you, take a good look at your own life and what you are doing.

**Reason #3** - They were greatly hostile to God and His Word. **9:7c-8**

One commentator observed if you are not making great friends and great enemies when you preach God's Word, then you really aren't preaching God's Word. God's Word is not designed to tickle ears; it is explosive to the soul.

If we preach God's Word accurately it will offend some people. Most people don't love the Word of God and don't want it preached. Noah preached for 120 years and only won eight souls. Jeremiah preached for 40 years and hardly won anyone. Daniel ministered the Word of God for many years and very few were won. Isaiah was told that only one tenth of the people would listen to him. Ezekiel was told people will not respond to you or your message. Let's face it, the math is that most people who claim to be right with God don't want the Word and don't like the Word.

**Reason #4** - They were deep in depravity. **9:9**

It is very clear from these verses that there are different degrees of sin. There are different levels of depravity. All depravity starts by getting away from God; but not all depravity ends at the same level. Get away from the Word of God and you can fall deep into depravity.

Now the reference here is to a depravity that was like the depravity in Gibeah. Hosea refers to that again in chapter 10 (10:9). It has been a while since we studied the book of Judges, but the depravity of Gibeah was found in Judges 19-21. The depravity in Gibeah was evil. It featured homosexuality, gang rape, cutting up a human body, kidnapping, murder and civil war.

God says my people are doing depraved things just like that and therefore I will punish them. God says I will remember their iniquity and I will punish their sins. Notice the noun sins in plural. These were God's people involved in all kinds of evil and perverse sins.

**RESULT #3** – God will cause His glory to fly away. **9:10-14**

God says I am the One who “found Israel.” Israel did not find God. God saved her and cared for her, but even the forefathers did not get this point. God says I am taking away your glory as My nation.

**Reason #1** - Because My people are doing shameful things. **9:10a**

**Reason #2** - Because My people are doing detestable things. **9:10b**

These people devoted themselves to immoral Baal worship. The reason why Hosea brings up Ephraim (v. 13) is because this was the epitome of the people of God who had been “deceived by prosperity.” In fact, “Tyre” was the great commercial, plush city that had not yet been destroyed by God. God says I will not cause you to prosper in any way. I will destroy you and your children and literally allow them to be slaughtered. God’s own people will not be fruitful but barren.

I can almost guarantee you this; most of God’s own people are far more interested every day in the stock markets rather than the Scriptures. That was the mindset of Ephraim. God says I will take it all away.

**RESULT #4** – God will hate His own people. **9:15**

Not long ago I read a list of things that you should never say to your children if you want them to grow up with healthy self-esteem. Now of course this was from a purely secular perspective, which did not appear to me to be interested in children being right with God. Some of the things this article suggested that you should never say were:

- 1) Don’t cry.
- 2) Why can’t you be more like so and so.
- 3) You are an idiot.
- 4) There is no reason to be afraid.
- 5) I hope you have kids that turn out just like you.
- 6) Shut up.
- 7) I hate you.

One of the things that this article said a parent should never say to a child is “I hate you.” Well apparently God doesn’t quite agree with this because not only does He tell His children “I hate you,” but He also qualifies it by saying, “I will love them no more.”

Now God has a perfect nature and so He does not just emotionally fly off the handle and say things; but when He reaches this point He is perfectly justified.

People don’t want to think that God could hate; but note what is said here. He hates His own people because of their wickedness. He will literally drive them out of His house and will no longer love them. All of their leaders are rebels. What we will learn is that His hatred is temporal and His love is eternal.

**RESULT #5** – God will cause His own people to be fruitless. **9:16**

God says not only will my people bear no fruit, if they do bear fruit I will slay it.

**RESULT #6** – God will cast away His own people. **9:17**

God says your depravity has caused me to cast you away from the land and you will wander among the nations. This is the history of Israel to this very hour.

If you are a child of God, this chapter warns us to turn from depravity and turn to God.