

## Hosea 9:10-17

### Introduction

There is no greater tragedy than the story of Israel. Yet for all the blessings of their covenant relationship with the Lord, Israel rebelled in order to serve idols. Consequently, God's judgment fell on Israel until they were destroyed as a nation and scattered as a people throughout the world. Israel had sworn fidelity to the Lord's covenant at Mount Sinai (**Exod 24:3**), yet they failed in this pledge because the unregenerate people still possessed hearts that were inclined to sin (cf **Rom 9:6-7**).

### Summary

**In Hosea 9:10-17, we see that despite all the blessings that Israel received, their national heritage could not take the place of a new heart that is joined to Christ by faith.**

#### 1. Soured Relationship vs. 10

Previously, God had delighted in his redeemed nation; Israel was a rare pleasure (**Hos 9:10**). Hence the Lord says, that "I saw your fathers". It did not take long, however, for this relationship to turn sour (c.f. Israel's infidelity at Baal-peor). This infidelity changed the Lord's relationship with Israel (**Hos. 9:10**). The episode at Baal-peor reminds Christians that as well as persecution, the world also has the tactic of seduction, which usually poses a far greater threat.

#### 2. Departed Glory vv. 11-14

God's judgment on idolatry typically has the effect of exposing the idols as false and reversing the blessings that they are supposed to provide. Hosea spoke during the days when the idolatry of Israel would receive God's final response of punishment (**Hos. 9:11**). The picture is that of a bird, perched on a branch, that suddenly takes to flight and is gone; so will be the glory of God's people. "Ephraim's glory" refers to the presence of the Lord Himself (c.f. **1 Sam. 4:21; Ezek 10:4**). Now, in Hosea's time, the same would take place in the northern kingdom. The prosperity of the first half of the eighth century B.C. had caused a population boom in Israel, together with increased prosperity. To expose the vanity of their idolatry the Lord would take away the children in whom Israel gloried (**Hos. 9:11-12a; c.f. Deut. 28:18; 41**). The lesson is that without God's presence and blessing, every other blessing is lost (**Hos. 9:12b**). The original Hebrew of **Hosea 9:13**: "Ephraim, as I have seen, was like Tyre, planted in a meadow."

God had given blessing to many different nations, and just as these peoples would lose their identity in judgment, so also would Israel (**Hos. 9:13**).

Following the Lord's condemnation of his people, the prophet prays in agreement with God's judgment on sin (**Hos. 9:14**).

### 3. Divine Expulsion vv. 15-17

God's people would be driven out from the Lord's house and away from His grace (**Hos. 9:15**). Gilgal was a place associated with great infidelity (**1 Sam. 8:5; 11:15**) and also had become a center of idol-worship mixed with worship of the Lord. God's statement of growing hatred shows his indignation over his people's forsaking Him for other gods (**Hos 9:15**). Behind this calamity, Hosea sees the wicked political leadership that so hastened the people's corruption. How many people just want the God of heaven to leave them alone. They want to be their own gods, not realizing that they are enslaved in their idolatry (**Psalms 16:11; Hos. 9:16**).

Do you think it a small matter to spurn God's commands, refuse him worship, and even scorn the gospel message of his salvation in Jesus Christ? Not only are you rejecting the one and only true God, the sovereign ruler of heaven and earth but "My God will reject them because they have not listened to him" (**Hos. 9:17**). The outcome of such rejection could only be the experience of Israel: "they shall be wanderers among the nations" (**Hos. 9:17**). Jesus spoke in dreadful, but true, terms of those who persist in rejecting God and suffer his wrath: they are cast "into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (**Matt. 25:30**).

### 4. Merciful Reconciliation

Hosea chapter 9 shows the Lord and His unfaithful spouse, Israel.

Reporting and entering into God's message of rejection, was the prophet Hosea, who knew the same experience of betrayal.

Hosea had prayed: "Give them, O Lord-what will you give?" (**Hos. 9:14**), having nothing to add but his consent to Israel's rejection.

The good news is that the Lord did not need the prophet in order to show mercy. He sent another messenger to his wayward people. One who could offer a better and more effectual prayer for salvation. Hosea could not plead for mercy, possessing nothing in himself that might turn aside God's wrath.

Jesus Christ, God's Son, possessed the words that the earlier prophet lacked. He cried from the cross with the plea of saving compassion: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (**Luke 23:41**).

Jesus presented an offering that would gain the forgiveness for which He prayed: his own holy, spotless life, offered as a sacrifice for sins.