

HOSEA: LOOKING BEYOND JUDGMENT TO RESTORATION

XI: God's Indictment For Israel's Turning From Him

(Hosea 7:13-16)

I. Introduction

- A. God's punishment is very painful, but afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness, Hebrews 12:11.
- B. This was the theme of Hosea, the "death-bed prophet of Israel" and the last prophet to the Northern Kingdom of Israel before it fell to Assyria in divine judgment. (ESV Introduction to Hosea)
- C. Hosea 7:13-16 describes God's indictment of Israel for her turning from Him and we view it for our insight, application and edification (as follows):

II. God's Indictment For Israel's Turning From Him, Hosea 7:13-16.

- A. The Lord announced a "Woe" of impending doom on Israel because (1) she had strayed from following Him like sheep who fail to follow their shepherd and because (2) she had rebelled against Him, Hosea 7:13a,b ESV.
- B. God had wanted to redeem and save His people from His punishment of them, but the people had spoken lies against Him in the sense that they had denied God's ability to deliver them from their enemies by their seeking national security through alliances with Gentile nations, Hosea 7:13c; Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1396.
- C. Then, instead of crying unto the Lord from the heart over their crop failures due to God's discipline for sin in accord with the Mosaic Covenant at Deuteronomy 28:15-18, the people wailed on their beds, and for grain and new wine they gashed themselves like pagans in rebellion against God by utilizing the practices of Baal worshipers in spiritual compromise for agricultural bounty, Hosea 7:14; *Ibid.* (cf. also 1 Kings 18:27-28)
- D. Though God had provided military might for Israel, training and strengthening the arms of her soldiers for battle, they had instead devised evil against Him, treating Him like the enemy, departing from Him, Hos. 7:15.
- E. Instead of returning to the Most High God, Israel's people were like a treacherous bow, an unreliable weapon in the hand of an archer in combat that fails to respond well to his efforts to use it, creating trouble for its warrior in combat when he needed the weapon to work well for him, Hosea 7:16a.
- F. Accordingly, Israel's leaders would fall by the sword because of their proud words, for their efforts to form alliances with Gentile nations for national security instead of turning to the Lord was likened to God as a stinging verbal reproach against Him, Hosea 7:16b; *Ibid.*
- G. Indeed, the Egyptians to whom they had looked for their national security would mock them when God's punishment had fallen on the nation in the end, Hosea 7:16c; *Ibid.*

Lesson: *God indicted Israel and promised to punish her for turning from Him in committing four key sins: (1) She had strayed from following Him as her spiritual Shepherd, (2) she had rebelled against His authority as expressed in His written Word, (3) she had formed errant alliances with pagan nations for national security and (4) she had turned to unbiblical beliefs and rituals to address her livelihood needs.*

Application: *(1) May we watch that we not stray from following the Lord as our Spiritual Shepherd, that we closely heed His directives in Scripture instead of doing what we want to do or what other people direct us to do that violates God's leading. We must recall that we are but sheep who need the Lord as our Shepherd, that we dare not branch off into some direction in life of either our own choosing or the choice of someone else, but follow where God Himself has clearly led us. (cf. 1 Timothy 4:1-3, 13-16) (2) May we watch that we not rebel against God's authority, that we submit to the truth of His written Word, believing and obeying it instead of heeding any other authority even if that authority is another believer! We must recall that we can be swayed by strong human personalities even in religious circles that do not hold to God's will, that we must pay attention to God's Word above even strong human personalities to the contrary! (cf. 1 Timothy 1:3-4, 18-20) (3) May we watch that we not make errant alliances with parties in this world for purposes of blessing, but that we retain undivided devotion to fellowship with the Lord. We must recall that apostates who reject Christ outright are not our associates in Christ, that we have no spiritual fellowship with them, that we must thus not make alliances with them, cf. Ephesians 5:11-12. In addition, we must not fellowship with errant fellow believers, but withdraw from their fellowship as a corrective measure for them, 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15. (4) May we watch that we not submit to unbiblical beliefs or practices in worship or in ministry, or look to false crutches in place of the Lord to see that our livelihood needs are met. Matthew 6:31-34 calls us to give no worrisome thought to addressing our livelihood needs, for God knows all about such needs. Rather, we must seek as our first priority the kingdom of God and His righteousness and God will address all of our livelihood needs.*