

Hosea

GOD'S FAITHFUL LOVE
FOR HIS FAITHLESS PEOPLE

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Pastor Ben Hicks

The Grace of Judgment Hosea 9:1-7

This sermon of Hosea was likely written delivered during one of Israel's feast holidays (9:1-2, 5). God continues warning his people about the penalty of their sin, even as they celebrate one of his festivals. Here God tells them to stop rejoicing, because their celebration is hypocritical to the core. He then goes on to warn them that everything that they love and are holding on to will be taken away from them because of their iniquity. Little by little, God will up the punishment until it exacts an incredible price. We see from this passage that...

Since God's discipline escalates, return now!

I. The sins we need to return from.

A. Israel engaged in worldly worship (v 1).

Israel's religious practices had become a mixture of the pagan practices of their neighbors, possibly even including sacred prostitution, and the worship of God.

B. Israel engaged in religious externalism (vv 4-5).

Israel was going through all the motions and was quite comfortable with her practice of worship. But God saw that her religion was devoid of an actual relationship with him.

C. Israel practiced immorality (vv 1, 9).

Unfortunately, many people ignore God not because of any logical reason but because they want the freedom to live how they want.

D. Israel lived for stuff (vv 1-2), cf 2:5, 12-13; 3:1; 7:14).

This theme shows up repeatedly throughout the book. Israel viewed God as a way to get what they wanted. God wanted Israel to want him.

E. Israel rejected God's warnings (9:7).

II. The grace that compels us to return.

Let no one ever say that God is sadistic, that he loves to punish, or that he is a cruel and merciless being. God's goodness is seen in his patience and reluctance to bring misery until absolutely necessary.

A. God's grace is seen in his persistent warning.

1. God sent multiple messengers (v 7, cf 6:5).
2. God gave a clear message (vv 7, 9).

B. God's grace is seen in his increasing judgment.

1. God brings failure to Israel's idolatrous pursuits (v 2).
2. God brings disaster to Israel's national life (vv 3, 6).
3. God brings an end to Israel's false worship (vv 4-6).

Hosea is often a dark book. The message of God's impending judgment on a rebellious people can at times be crushing and depressing. But God included this book in your Bible to give you hope (Romans 15:4). How does this give hope? Because it shows the character of a God who is reluctant to judge, who yearns for reconciliation, yet won't tolerate sin. It shows us a holy yet loving God. A God who deals with our sin all the while caring for us personally. And that should give us hope.