

Hosea

GOD'S FAITHFUL LOVE
FOR HIS FAITHLESS PEOPLE

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The Fury and Mercy of God Hosea 13:9-16

Is God a God of mercy or a God of justice? That's how we tend to think of the question. We tend to pit these two attributes of God against each other, so that if God is more loving he will be less strict, and if he is stricter he will be less loving. In our minds we tend to choose one or the other, "God is a God of mercy" or "God is a God of justice" and then allow that to shape our thinking, ignoring the passages that contradict our picture of God. But Scripture doesn't choose, it holds to both. In fact, sometimes when it holds to both, it does so in a way that confuses us. You could sum it up this way:

***God's justice far more severe than you could have imagined,
but his grace is so much greater.***

I. God's justice is severe.

A. The offenses that lead to God's severe justice.

1. Israel's offense described.

- "against me" (v 9)
- "unwise" (v 13)
- "guilty" (v 16)
- "rebellion" (v 16)

2. Israel's offense demonstrated.

- Israel demanded a king (v 10)
- Refusing God's chastening (v 13)
- Loving and clinging to idols while worshipping God

B. The results of God's justice.

The very things Israel hoped in and the very things Israel looked to Baal for would end up failing Israel miserably, just as the idols we look to will fail us every time we look to them rather than God.

- 1. God destroyed Israel's kings (v 11).**
- 2. God destroyed Israel's crops (v 15).**
- 3. God destroyed Israel's kids (v 16).**

II. God's grace is great.

A. God refuses to quit on his people.

God's warnings are a sign of hope themselves. God's warnings mean that he is not done yet, and that there is still hope for the future. There is nothing quite as terrifying as the silence of God concerning our sin.

B. God overcomes even the consequences he gives.

God does not relent of the disaster he is about to bring, rather he promises that disaster and death will not have the last word.