

HOSEA 9: 1 Don't rejoice, Israel, to jubilation like the nations; for you were unfaithful to your God. You love the wages of a prostitute at every grain threshing floor.

The prophet reproves the Israelites for their sacrifices and rejoicings on their corn-floors, by which they ascribed to idols, as the heathen did, the praise of all their plenty, Hos 9:1. For which reason they are threatened with famine and exile, Hos 9:2, Hos 9:3, in a land where they should be polluted, and want the means of worshipping the God of their fathers, or observing the solemnities of his appointment, Hos 9:4, Hos 9:5. Nay more; they shall speedily fall before the destroyer, be buried in Egypt, and leave their own pleasant places desolate, Hos 9:6-9. God is then introduced declaring his early favor for his people, and the delight he took in their obedience; but now they had so deeply revolted, all their glory will take wing, God will forsake them, and their offspring be devoted to destruction, Hos 9:10-16.

Verse 1

Rejoice not - Do not imitate the heathens, nor serve their idols. Do not prostitute thy soul and body in practicing their impurities. Hitherto thou hast acted as a common harlot, who goes even to the common threshing places; connects herself with the meanest, in order to get a hire even of the grain there threshed out.

HOSEA 9: 2 The threshing floor and the wine press won't feed them, and the new wine will fail her.

HOSEA 9: 3 They won't dwell in the LORD's land; but Ephraim will return to Egypt, and they will eat unclean food in Assyria.

Verse 3

But Ephraim shall return to Egypt - See on Hos 8:12 (note).

HOSEA 9: 4 They won't pour out wine offerings to the LORD, neither will they be pleasing to him. Their sacrifices will be to them like the bread of mourners; all who eat of it will be polluted; for their bread will be for their appetite. It will not come into the LORD's house.

Verse 4

As the bread of mourners - By the law, a dead body, and every thing that related to it, the house where it lay, and the persons who touched it, were all polluted and unclean, and whatever they touched was considered as defiled. See Deu 26:14; Num 19:11, Num 19:13, Num 19:14.

For their bread for their soul - The bread for the common support of life shall not be sanctified to them by having the first-fruits presented at the temple.

HOSEA 9: 5 What will you do in the day of solemn assembly, and in the day of the feast of the LORD?

Verse 5

What will ye do in the solemn day - When ye shall be despoiled of every thing by the Assyrians; for the Israelites who remained in the land after its subjection to the Assyrians did worship the true God, and offer unto him the sacrifices appointed by the law, though in an imperfect and schismatic manner; and it was a great mortification to them to be deprived of their religious festivals in a land of strangers. See Calmet.

HOSEA 9: 6 For, behold, they have gone away from destruction. Egypt will gather them up. Memphis will bury them. Nettles will possess their pleasant things of silver. Thorns will be in their tents.

Verse 6

For, lo, they are gone - Many of them fled to Egypt to avoid the destruction; but they went there only to die.

Memphis - Now Cairo, or Kahira, found them graves.

The pleasant places for their silver - The fine estates or villas which they had purchased by their money, being now neglected and uninhabited, are covered with nettles; and even in their tabernacles, thorns and brambles of different kinds grow. These are the fullest marks of utter desolation.

HOSEA 9: 7 The days of visitation have come. The days of reckoning have come. Israel will consider the prophet to be a fool, and the man who is inspired to be insane, because of the abundance of your sins, and because your hostility is great.

Verse 7

The days of visitation - Of punishment are come.

The prophet is a fool - Who has pretended to foretell, on Divine authority, peace and plenty; for behold all is desolation.

The spiritual man - *יש הרוח* ish haruach, the man of spirit, who was ever pretending to be under a Divine afflatus.

Is mad - He is now enraged to see every thing falling out contrary to his prediction.

HOSEA 9: 8 A prophet watches over Ephraim with my God. A fowler's snare is on all of his paths, and hostility in the house of his God.

Verse 8

The watchman of Ephraim - The true prophet, was with - faithful to, God.

The prophet - The false prophet is the snare of a fowler; is continually deceiving the people, and leading them into snares, and infusing into their hearts deep hatred against God and his worship.

HOSEA 9: 9 They have deeply corrupted themselves, as in the days of Gibeah. He will remember their iniquity. He will punish them for their sins.

Verse 9

They have deeply corrupted themselves, as in the days of Gibeah - This relates to that shocking rape and murder of the Levite's wife, mentioned Jdg 19:16, etc.

HOSEA 9: 10 I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness. I saw your fathers as the first ripe in the fig tree at its first season; but they came to Baal Peor, and consecrated themselves to the shameful thing, and became abominable like that which they loved.

Verse 10

I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness - While they were faithful, they were as acceptable to me as ripe grapes would be to a thirsty traveler in the desert.

I saw your fathers - Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, Caleb, Samuel, etc.

As the first ripe - Those grapes, whose bud having come first, and being exposed most to the sun, have been the first ripe upon the tree; which tree was now in the vigor of youth, and bore fruit for the first time. A metaphor of the rising prosperity of the Jewish state.

But they went to Baal-Peor - The same as the Roman Priapus, and worshipped with the most impure rites.

And their abominations were according as they loved - Or, "they became as abominable as the object of their love." So Bp. Newcome. And this was superlatively abominable.

HOSEA 9: 11 As for Ephraim, their glory will fly away like a bird. There will be no birth, no one with child, and no conception.

Verse 11

Their glory shall fly away - It shall suddenly spring away from them, and return no more.

From the birth - "So that there shall be no birth, no carrying in the womb, no conception." - Newcome. They shall cease to glory in their numbers; for no children shall be born, no woman shall be pregnant, for none shall conceive. Here judgment blasts the very germs of population.

HOSEA 9: 12 Though they bring up their children, yet I will bereave them, so that not a man shall be left. Indeed, woe also to them when I depart from them!

Verse 12

Though they bring up their children - And were they even to have children, I would bereave them of them; for, when I depart from them, they shall have all manner of wretchedness and wo.

HOSEA 9: 13 I have seen Ephraim, like Tyre, planted in a pleasant place; but Ephraim will bring out his children to the murderer.

Verse 13

Ephraim, as I saw Tyrus - Tyre was strongly situated on a rock in the sea; Samaria was on a mountain, both strong and pleasant. But the strength and beauty of those cities shall not save them from destruction.

Ephraim shall bring forth his children to the murderer - The people shall be destroyed, or led into captivity by the Assyrians. Of the grandeur, wealth, power, etc., of Tyre, see the notes on Ezekiel 27 (note) and Ezekiel 28 (note).

HOSEA 9: 14 Give them - LORD what will you give? Give them a miscarrying womb and dry breasts.

Verse 14

Give them, O Lord: what wilt thou give? - There is an uncommon beauty in these words. The prophet, seeing the evils that were likely to fall upon his countrymen, begins to make intercession for them; but when he had formed the first part of his petition, "Give them, O Lord!" the prophetic light discovered to him that the petition would not be answered and that God was about to give them something widely different. Then changing his petition, which the Divine Spirit had interrupted, by signifying that he must not proceed in his request, he asks the question, then, "What wilt thou give them?" and the answer is, "Give them a miscarrying womb, and dry breasts." And this he is commanded to announce. It is probable that the Israelites had prided themselves in the fruitfulness of their families, and the numerous population of their country. God now tells them that this shall be no more; their wives shall be barren, and their land cursed.

HOSEA 9: 15 "All their wickedness is in Gilgal; for there I hated them. Because of the wickedness of their deeds I will drive them out of my house! I will love them no more. All their princes are rebels.

Verse 15

All their wickedness is in Gilgal - Though we are not directly informed of the fact, yet we have reason to believe they had been guilty of some scandalous practices of idolatry in Gilgal See Hos 4:15.

For there I hated them - And therefore he determined, "for the wickedness of their doings, to drive them out of his house," so that they should cease to be a part of the heavenly family, either as sons or servants; for he would "love them no more," and bear with them no longer.

HOSEA 9: 16 Ephraim is struck. Their root has dried up. They will bear no fruit. Even though they give birth, yet I will kill the beloved ones of their womb."

Verse 16

Ephraim is smitten - The thing being determined, it is considered as already done.

Their root is dried up - They shall never more be a kingdom. And they never had any political form from their captivity by the Assyrians to the present day.

Yea, though they bring forth - See the note on Hos 9:11-12 (note).

HOSEA 9: 17 My God will cast them away, because they did not listen to him; and they will be wanderers among the nations.

Verse 17

My God will cast them away - Here the prophet seems to apologize for the severity of these denunciations; and to vindicate the Divine justice, from which they proceeded. It is: -

Because they did not hearken unto him - That "my God," the fountain of mercy and kindness, "will cast them away."

And they shall be wanderers among the nations - And where they have wandered to, who can tell? and in what nations to be found, no man knows. Wanderers they are; and perhaps even now unknown to themselves. Some have thought they have found them in one country; some, in another; and a very pious writer, in a book entitled, *The Star in the West*, thinks he has found their descendants in the American Indians; among whom he has discovered many customs, apparently the same with those of the ancient Jews, and commanded in the Law. He even thinks that the word *Je-ho-vah* is found in their solemn festal cry, *Ye-ho-wa-he*. If they be this long lost people, they are utterly unknown to themselves; their origin being lost in a very remote antiquity.