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**C1004 – January 27, 2010 – Hosea 9:6-17 – Population Decimation**

Turn to Hosea 9. Hosea seems to repeats himself over and over and over so tonight we are faced with much the same message. These are disciplinary truths and the people under the discipline need to hear the message over and over and over because they've grown spiritually insensitive. Sin has hardened them up and they've got calloused hearts. And you have to remember that the Holy Spirit wrote this, not man, and that if He wrote it this way it must mean that people in rebellion against God need to hear the truth over and over or they don't get it. They may not want to hear but they need to hear.

Hosea is one of the classical *nabiim*, one of the prophets. And Hosea is showing that God reacts very personally and very violently toward His own people when they get out of it. Hosea corrects the notion that God is like a Greek statue in the sky who just sits there unmoved and unmovable. He's not like that at all. God is immutable, true, His character never changes, but that doesn't mean that His response is just a mechanical, computer-generated response. His response is very personal because He is responding to people. And people aren't statues; people are made in God's image so there's personal interaction. Hosea is a very personally written book; it shows God's personal nature very well. So when you see how God acts and reacts to His people, understand that His reaction is there because He loves you, He loves you so much He's going to do something about you to get you into shape. He's not going to just let you continue in your sin forever, he's going to shock you and shock you and shock you until He blasts you out of it. And we can learn by Hosea's repetitive warnings of discipline that God is going to shock the nation with to get out of carnality and back in fellowship.

Last time we ended with Hosea 9:5. The nation was going to go into Exile. It was going to be a bitter time out in the kingdom of man. But this is the fifth

degree of divine discipline under the cursings of Lev 26 and Deut 28, so it should have come with no surprise. Yet it did come with surprise because they had neglected the word of God, they hadn't paid attention to the true prophets and so this downfall shocked the nation.

Let's pick up in verse 6, **For behold, they will go because of destruction; Egypt will gather them up, Memphis will bury them. Weeds will take over their treasures of silver; Thorns *will be* in their tents.** Now this is a prophetic picture of the implementation of cursings and simultaneously the removal of blessing. And you can see at the beginning of the verse Hosea is having a hard time getting their attention. He says **behold** and that's the word you would use in the streets to get everyone's attention. So apparently they're not too interested in Hosea's message. They're interested in other things, they're interested in the economy, they're interested in their agriculture, but they're not interested in the message of cursing. Notice the message; this is the prophetic perfect again; not **they will go** but "they have gone." Hosea looks at it as an already accomplished fact, it hasn't actually happened yet but it's going to happen. Remember, they're still living during the final days of the northern kingdom. After Jeroboam II reigned they had a series of unauthorized kings, one would replace the other, there were a number of assassinations, and it was a period of political conspiracy and intrigue. This is the period Hosea ministers to the nation. So they're still a number of years from their Exile in 722BC. But even though they still have time, nevertheless, there is a past tense to the verb in verse 6, and the reason for this past tense is to say that there's a point that when reached discipline becomes unavoidable. There's a point when God said to the nation, that's it, you've crossed the line and no matter what you do the fifth degree of divine discipline is coming and you are going into Exile. There is no question about it, the only question is when? In the NT we see the same truth applied to believers in 1 John 5:16-17 and the issue of the sin unto death. Apparently there is such a thing as a sin unto death. In one sense all sin can be put in two categories; sins that are not unto death, and we mean physical death, and sins that are sins unto death, that is, they cross the line and God says when you see a brother commit a sin that crosses the line don't even pray for him. That's the kind of situation of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5. Those two believers decided they were going to plot to get all kinds of brownie points with man and so they pull off a slick deal down at the real estate auction where we're going to give all our money to the church and they make

a big deal out of we're giving it all, all the proceeds are for the Lord. But all the proceeds weren't for the Lord. It was a scam, it was a popularity contest they were trying to win by outdoing Barnabas. And the Lord said, I'm not going to have that in My Church and the husband and wife fell over dead. Now God had made the decision to kill those believers. And therefore there's nothing anyone can do about it, God is not going to change His mind so don't try to change His mind.

Now God had decided at this point in the nation Israel to send them into Exile. Hosea says, **Egypt will gather them up, Memphis will bury them.** **Egypt** we said last time was a code word for the kingdom of man. Anytime the nation Israel is under a Gentile power she's under the principles of the kingdom of man. Actually she's going to go into Assyria, but the imagery here is that she will be out in the kingdom of man and you'll have mass slaughterings and mass burials. If you've seen footage of the mass slaughterings and burials of the Holocaust then you've seen the imagery of this verse. The Jews are going to be gathered up, hundreds and hundreds of Jewish refugees, they'll be killed and then put in a ditch. And this will go on and on for centuries, this kind of treatment of the Jew. What did we say a few weeks ago about Gentile treatment of the Jew? The Jew would be the Gentile toilet bowl and that's what this is describing, mass slaughter, mass burial - the horror of the Jewish history the last 2700 years being under the political power of the pagan kingdom of man.

Continue verse 6, while this is happening outside in the kingdom of man the rest of the verse describes what's happening inside the kingdom of God, inside the land. **Weeds will take over their treasures of silver, Thorns will be in their tents.** Weeds and thorns: when you see that imagery it's referring to the Fall of Gen 3. When man sinned God cursed nature so that once productive trees and plants are no longer productive. Thorns and weeds are a picture of inefficiency. They are lost produce. They are pictures of what sin causes. The basic problem of man is sin. The basic problem is not the economy, it's not government, the basic problem is man. Man is a sinner and desperately wicked.

Now the other thing about Gen 3 that this verse shows is that man has to work to keep nature from being taken over by weeds and thorns. In other words, here's the effect of sin upon nature, nature fails to produce, and it's

inefficient. So to get productivity, to increase efficiency man has to be involved. It's the environmentalist today who says the problem is man's involvement. What this verse is picturing is what happens when man isn't involved. Take man out of the equation and just let nature return to itself and before long it will be covered with weeds and thorns. Man's involvement is required to get productivity out of the earth. Man is the decorator of nature, his labor brings it to fruition, his work beautifies creation.

And so now that they're deported from the land, there are no human beings to beautify the land and their beautiful palatial dwellings will be taken over by **Weeds and thorns**. And so it shows that Israel had failed to subdue properly, she had failed in God's goal for her life which was to have dominion in the land.

Now Hosea 9:7-8 together give a characteristic of Israel at this point in history in which we have religious apostasy. Religious apostasy becomes popular when the whole population is on negative volition, or at least a majority on negative volition. When that occurs religious apostasy is great. And it is often done by very well-meaning individuals, very sincere about their ministry, but still apostate.

Hos 9:7-8, **The days of punishment have come, The days of retribution have come; Let Israel know *this!* The prophet is a fool, The inspired man is demented, Because of the grossness of your iniquity, And *because* your hostility is so great. <sup>8</sup>Ephraim *was* a watchman with my God, a prophet; *Yet* the snare of a bird catcher is in all his ways, *And* there is *only* hostility in the house of his God.** Now again we have the past tense in the phrase **The days of punishment have come, The days of retribution have come**, in reality they had not **come** but it is so certain the prophet speaks of it in the past tense. They have crossed the line and the judgment will come. **Let Israel know this**, and literally this is not the past tense, this is the future tense, "Israel will know it." The implication is that they didn't know it yet. Even though the days were coming, even though they were decided in God's mind, the nation hadn't really woken up to that fact yet. They are going to know it, Hosea says, they're going to know it when it comes, and they are going to know it too late, but they will know it. Now this may raise the question, why hasn't the nation found out? What's been going wrong, what's the matter with the communication system, what's the matter

with the intelligence system, why didn't they know this was coming to pass, and that's why verse 7 ends the way it does. Verse 7 ends to show us why it is that the nation, in fact, does not know. It says **The prophet is a fool, The inspired man is demented, Because of the grossness of your iniquity, And because your hostility is so great.** <sup>8</sup>**Ephraim was a watchman with my God, a prophet; Yet the snare of a bird catcher is in all his ways,** Now there are many principles that we can apply as Christians found in vv 7-8 but first let's interpret it in light of the historic context and then look and see if we can take these principles over to our lives. **The prophet is a fool**, and in the Hebrew **fool** it is the word *ewil* and it refers not to someone who's stupid but to someone who's morally perverse, this would be someone who has been on negative volition for years and years and now is a morally despicable person. Now there are two kinds of people that are *ewil*. One is simply an unbeliever who never gets with it and he suppresses the truth until he goes through all six stages in our downward spiral into deep, deep carnality and when he reaches the end of that process chaos reigns supreme in his heart. That's one kind of **fool**. The other kind of fool is even worse off because this is a believer who has come to know the truth and he's advanced in the truth and then after he knows all this truth then he suppresses the truth and decays through the six stages till chaos reigns in his heart. He goes apostate.

And the **prophet** here is this second kind of **fool**, and notice he's saying that the most apostate people in the country are the clergy. He picks them out in verse 7, the **prophet**, he says, is the *ewil* not the average person on the street but the **prophet**. The **prophet** was the closest to God and yet he's gone the furthest away from God, relatively. Then he mentions **the inspired man**, he's **demented**, literally this says "the spirit man" or "the man of the spirit is gone mad," now just because he uses the word spirit doesn't mean this is a man of the Holy Spirit. This is a man with a demonic spirit. And this is not a different man from the foolish **prophet**, they're one and the same man. And what it's saying by calling him the spirit man is that his ideas, his thoughts and his teachings are demonic in origin. And so he's **demented**, the word means he's so distraught that he's screaming; going out of his mind; we would say this person is mentally ill. And the only reason for mental illness is spiritual rebellion, he's gone so far into sin that he's attracting all sorts of demonic activity, which brings us back to our doctrine of deep, deep carnality.

You'll see our scheme of the six steps down really heavily tonight as we go through this.

What did we say in our six steps down into deep carnality? We said the demons don't come in till step three. Step one is suppression of known truth, you're suppressing the truth in unrighteousness, that means it's sinful what you're doing. You know God is the Creator and you know you're responsible to Him and what you do rather than fess up and face Him is you run from Him. And the way you run from Him is you erect all kinds of alternate interpretations of creation. It could be anything, it could be from random chance, but all of creation couldn't possibly have come from Him. Step two is the mind is darkened; it's not that you become stupid - intelligence quotient isn't the issue, organizing principle is the issue. Is the data being arranged according to the finite intellect of autonomous man or the infinite intellect of God? After this darkening of the mind we come to step three, demonic infiltration. So the prophet is well on his way down into deep carnality and the end of the verse tells us why.

**Because of the grossness of your iniquity, And because your hostility is so great.** Now this is the reason the prophet is going crazy. He's demented because of his iniquity, because of his hostility to God. Well, you said it was the demons. It is the demons. But watch how it's the demons. Demons don't just attack anyone. Demons attack people who invite. And the invitation is sin. If you have a lot of sin in your life it's just an open invitation to demons. And demons are attracted to sin. Just as in the physical realm germs are attracted to dirt so in the spiritual realm demons are attracted to sin. This is why in the NT Satan is called "Beelzebul," lord of the flies. Now why is he called "lord of the flies?" Because it's stating what his nature is attracted to. If you had lived in the early NT when the Messiah was being preached you would know exactly what Jesus was saying about Satan, he's attracted to crud. And if you walked down first century streets you saw a lot of crud and flies attracted to the crud and that's how Satan got the name "lord of the flies." He's attracted to crud in your life and that's the picture here. These prophets have piles of crud in their life and it had built up to the point that the demonic powers just like flies are attracted to him. So if that's the case the inspired man is under powerful demonic forces and that's why the man of the spirit is going crazy, he's going crazy because of the mental agitation resulting from his sin, because he's suppressed the truth in unrighteousness,

knowingly he suppressed the truth, his mind was darkened and this in turn invited and activated demonic infiltration.

Now in Hosea 9:8 he goes on to describe the outcome of the demonic prophet. He says, **Ephraim was a watchman with my God, a prophet;** actually reads, A prophet of Ephraim was a watchman with my God. In other words here you have these prophets, their position is to watch over the spiritual well-being of the northern kingdom of Ephraim, they should have been watching but instead...they became **the snare of a bird catcher**. They've captured the nation, just like Satan does. Satan ensnares. He lures you into the trap and ensnares you. And there we see again, a phrase used many times by the prophets, you see it in the Psalms, a **snare** is a **bird** trap, the **bird** is used because the **bird** was seen as the freest of all creatures, they could move in three dimensions rather than only two dimensions. And so the bird becomes a symbol in Scripture of freedom. And so what is **the snare** a symbol of? Destruction of freedom. A trap restricts motion, it restricts movement. And so the demonic prophet has entrapped the nation; rather than setting the nation free he has destroyed their freedom. And now they're not free any more, they're not free to enjoy life, they're not free to worship, not free to do many things. And so the Christian who is under discipline, who is caught in Satan's snare, is not free any longer, he's trapped mentally. We don't mean physically, we mean mentally the mind gets captured by demonic strongholds; you can't think correctly anymore and you become enslaved to poor thinking. The NT says that it's truth that sets you free, therefore by implication non-truth enslaves. It's not true what the quote "free-thinker" even thinks of himself. He's not free at all in his thought. He's enslaved to demons. He's brought every thought captive to autonomous man and the demons. He's not free at all, he's deceived into thinking he's free in his thought, but actually he's enslaved. And so the false prophet of Ephraim has become a snare. **And there is only hostility in the house of his God,** which means there is rebellion in the northern kingdom. God wanted to dwell among His people but there was only rebellion against Him.

Now this introduces a theme in Hosea which was very prevalent in Hosea's day and very prevalent in our day, the theme of the false prophet. And it is often times done by very sincere people. I'll mention two people who are false prophets. Not to attack the people of course, both of them probably think they

are involved in legitimate ministries but both of them are sincerely wrong and both are apostate when it comes to the standard of the word of God.

The first one I'll use, just to show you the false prophet is alive and well, is Mike Murdock. Murdock is one of those preachers who absolutely has no shame in asking for your money, he's one of those if you give me money you'll get it back 30, 60, 100-fold. Here's a quote and we could list similar quotes all night long from his ministry. He says, "It would astound you if I kept every single letter...recorded every single testimony...that has occurred because of the seed of \$58..." By seed he means, the \$58 dollars you give him is going to grow into a great plant of prosperity, you're going to get it back a 100-fold. According to an article in the Star-Telegram written by Darren Barbee, March 4, 2003 the figure of \$58 is because Mike Murdock has discerned 58 blessings in the Bible. "...I do believe that any miracle you ever receive from God will require an act of faith on your part. I also believe that you will have to believe some man or woman of God...somewhere...sometime...before God ever releases a miracle toward you." And his theology there, quite blatantly and repeatedly in his messages is that you have to believe in a person of God before God will do a miracle for you. And what he's saying is that you have to believe in me to get to God. That's the whole point. Believe in Mike Murdock. Give me your money and most of it is small money, somewhere between \$58 and \$1000. He runs these share-athon things to get money to poor people. So this is all for the poor right. In 2000, according to the IRS the ministry received 3.9million dollars. They gave \$2,056 on needy families and benevolence. While they spent \$65,000 on flowers and gifts, mainly to their friends in the ministry. His salary through the 90's averaged \$250,000/year and by 2003 it was \$440,000/year. So it's this kind of a smooth operator preaching the health and prosperity gospel that pull the wool over people's eyes. He's not leading anyone to prosperity, except himself and his friends, yet people flock to these characters. And the really sad thing is that mostly he's taking money from the poor. It's the poor people he schemes off of because they think that just maybe if I try this gimmick I can get out of this hole in the wall I'm living in and so they give \$58.

The second one I'll mention is Todd Bentley. Bentley became popular in 2008 back at a so-called revival in Lakeland, Florida. It was less a revival and more what I would call Christianity on Speed. But in any case these so-called revivals got national attention. Bentley claims he's had all kinds of visions



and he's explained hundreds of them. How he was caught up in fire and taken to the third heaven and he even claimed that when he was in heaven he discovered who the author of Hebrews was, it was Abraham. This kind of thing, of course, there's no authentication of the thing, it's just self-authenticating, I experienced it. Well, at the Lakeland event he was leading a so-called healing ministry in the typical shotgun approach, you know the drill, I'm sensing that someone has an ache on their left side, it's cancer and if you come down you'll be healed of your cancer. During the event Bentley forcefully kicked people; hit people, smacked them and knocked them down. In one incident, a man was knocked over and lost a tooth. In another, an elderly woman was intentionally kicked in the face. And Bentley said the Holy Spirit led him to do it. See, that's the kind of thing the Holy Spirit is associated with by these fakes, violence. You never see Jesus kick anyone in the face, you never see the apostles knock people down. Of course, he said, I never do anything like that unless I ask the person if I can do it first. And that's the kind of thing Christianity gets associated with. It was more like WWF wrestling with Todd Bentley as the main event. Of course, investigative reports couldn't get a single confirmation of any healing from any participant. Bentley went on to be questioned even by his fellow comrades who anointed him an apostle. And he fell into disrepute because he got involved with a female member of his staff while he was still married. He divorced his wife and married this other girl. And that's the kind of chaos in the heart that reigns when a person is involved in all kinds of demonic activity.

Now both of these men have terrible theology. Anyone that knows how to read and reads the Bible can tell that these men are completely out to lunch. Yet millions and millions of so-called Christians followed after these false prophets. And it's very dangerous to get involved in these kinds of religious circles because when you go in there are all these people who say, I saw this, I saw that, I felt this, I felt that. And I felt so good that night. And what's happening is feelings are becoming the authenticator of truth. We live in a very touchy-feely generation. Just listen sometime to how people talk and I guarantee you'll hear a lot of people saying, I felt this way, I felt that way and that's all justification for their beliefs. Now if I went on the basis of my feelings I wouldn't get very far. Jesus would have never made it to the cross on the basis of his feelings. How do you think he felt in the Garden of Gethsemane? How do you think he felt on the cross? He felt pain. And yet we

have these people who are basing their faith on feelings and convincing other people to feel along with them, and that's exactly the point; it is one mass of subjectivism and emotionalism, and this has become a substitute in our day for study of the word of God and its right application.

**Hosea 9:9 They have gone deep in depravity As in the days of Gibeah; He will remember their iniquity, He will punish their sins.** This is our doctrine of deep, deep carnality. There it is by name, **They have gone deep in depravity** and what it refers to is the sixth and final step, social chaos is breaking out en masse. He likens it to **the days of Gibeah**. Now what are the **the days of Gibeah**. We won't take the time to turn there but it's found in Jud 19-21 and I'll summarize it for you. Gibeah was a Hebrew city in the tribe of Benjamin. There was a Levite priest and his concubine that were traveling along and they had a choice of stopping in **Gibeah**, which was a Hebrew city, or one of the Canaanite cities that had not yet been conquered. The Levite, following the Torah that told him to be separate, said okay, rather than lodge in this Gentile city that has not yet been conquered I will demonstrate my loyalty to the Torah and I'll stay in Gibeah. So he stayed in Gibeah and he was invited to have supper in this man's home and after supper a bunch of homosexuals started banging on the door. And they wanted to rape this Levite.

And, of course it was a duplicate situation of Sodom and Gomorrah, and they did the same thing out of self-defense as they did at Sodom and Gomorrah. They opted for the lesser of two evils and they put this man's concubine out the door. If they wanted to rape somebody they could rape her, at least it's heterosexual and not homosexual. So they did all night, and this girl managed to crawl up on the steps as she had been multiply raped and she died. He walked out in the morning and saw what had happened and he cut her body up in twelve pieces and sent them all around to the twelve tribes of Israel and said this happened in the tribe of Benjamin, what are you going to do about it? It was a challenge to war and it was done also in 1 Samuel. It was the old way of challenging the people to go to war. And so every tribe received one of these pieces of this girl and the piece said if you don't fight for justice then let this happen to you; that's the message of the cutting up of the body. So it turned into a big civil war and the tribe of Benjamin was almost eliminated from history. There were no Benjamite women left; they had to get some women from across the Jordan to marry the remaining Benjamin

men just so the tribe could remain in existence. And we know it stayed in existence because Paul the apostle was from the tribe of Benjamin. But in any case **Gibeah** is the incident that Hosea is going to use because it resulted in the physical or near-physical annihilation of a vast population. Benjamin physically was almost annihilated.

So now using the Gibeah imagery of Judges 19-21, God begins to talk. Notice it shifts. In verse 9 to verse 10 you shift from the third person to the first person, now God is talking. **I found Israel** and He talks all the way down to verse 13, then it shifts back to Hosea in verse 14 and then back to God in verse 15-16 and then back to Hosea in verse 17. So this is a little running dialogue.

So Hos 9:10-13 is an address by God Himself, **I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness** and while you read this, may I also suggest that you read this thinking of God as having personality, of not just being a stone-face. A lot of believers have the idea that God is kind of, you know, sitting on His throne forever unconcerned with history, and God just kind of sits there, no motion, no movement, no excitement, and no interest. Now that is not Scriptural. In the Bible God is interested; in Psalm 2 He laughs. Just what is your move here? I'm sitting here in total control and, uh, what are you little pipsqueaks going to do. God has a sense of humor, He has personality, and He can also get angry.

Hos 9:10-13, **I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness; I saw your forefathers as the earliest fruit on the fig tree in its first season. But they came to Baal-peor and devoted themselves to shame, And they became as detestable as that which they loved. <sup>11</sup>As for Ephraim, their glory will fly away like a bird— No birth, no pregnancy and no conception! <sup>12</sup>Though they bring up their children, Yet I will bereave them until not a man is left. Yes, woe to them indeed when I depart from them! <sup>13</sup>Ephraim, as I have seen, Is planted in a pleasant meadow like Tyre; But Ephraim will bring out his children for slaughter. <sup>14</sup>Give them, O LORD—what will You give? Give them a miscarrying womb and dry breasts.** In other words, during this time he will give them negative population growth rate. In the Scriptures population growth rate is always seen as a blessing. Children are seen as a blessing. If you remember the Exodus the whole confrontation between Moses and

Pharaoh started because of population increase. The Hebrews were being blessed by God and they were outnumbering the Egyptians. Now today, if you read Paul Ehrlich and his diatribes against human overpopulation you could be manipulated by his scenario. He's right in one thing; there is a carrying capacity to an environment. You can have vast wide open spaces in a country but if the vast wide open spaces can't produce enough resources to support the people in the country then you will have a problem. But Ehrlich resolution to the problem is to destroy human population, get rid of capitalism, implement socialism. But the biblical answer is that God gave us an environment and God gave us resources in the environment for a purpose, to support human population. But these nitwits have a view of the earth that we're exploiting, we're over-exploiting the earth and we're going to run out of resources, we're going to destroy mother earth. If these dimwits would even think for a moment. What happens as we get more people? We get more explorers. We get more discovery of resources. There are tons of resources out there. But if you make legislation that we can't tap into the resources then, of course, you create a problem. But the problem isn't lack of resources; the problem is your stupid legislation. It's like in Hindu countries where people are starving to death and yet there is a perfectly good meal walking down the street. But they can't eat the cattle; that might be my grandpa or something. It's not that there's no food, it's that it's a stupid religion.

Now God is saying to Hosea, Hosea, I'm sorry but the population of your nation is about to go down the tubes. We are going to go down in the same way that the Benjamites almost went down at Gibeah, you are going to see slaughter of the population on a massive scale. You are also going to see Me take their glory away and verse 11, "the glory" is the historical victory of subduing the earth. And "the glory" meant first that you had to have people, and so you had to have a population increase. It goes back to Adam and Eve, they couldn't subdue the whole globe themselves, their job was to have children, and it was through their children that they could subdue the globe.

Now he says, **I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness. I saw your forefathers as the earliest fruit on the fig tree in its first season.** The **grapes** were a rich delicacy in the wasteland; it's a picture of Israel at the very beginning. It was a promising start. But then the last of verse 10, Israel within a short time had degenerated. Why is verse 10 important? Well, like thousands of other verses in the text of Scripture this is a refutation of

evolution. The human race is never viewed as evolving or getting better in history. Biblically the human race is always looked upon as getting worse with time.

And here the nation is viewed as having so much opportunity in the time of the patriarchs, it looks promising, all the possibility for a rich harvest but then the nation turns to idolatry and they blow it, the whole vine of Israel degenerates into a non-productive wasteland.

And then in vv 11, 12 and 13, the **glory**, the departure of the **glory** is the departure of their population; all this is a forecast of the destruction of their population.

Now Hos 9:14, it switches back to Hosea. Vv 10-13 are God speaking to Hosea, now it's switching to Hosea speaking to God. Hosea has some things to say to God. So he asks, verse 14, **Give them, O LORD—what will You give? Give them a miscarrying womb and dry breasts.** Hosea stops, and at this point it looks like Hosea is kind of joining in. Give it to them. He's not, he has seen God forecast a destruction of population, he is also sort of seeing how it's going to happen. It's going to be by military disaster, people are going to get killed by the thousands. And so Hosea, this actually is a petition, it starts off and in the Hebrew it ends right in the middle of a sentence, just so you can feel the translation going on here, "Give them, O LORD—what will you Give them?" And then he makes a suggestion, **Give them a miscarrying womb and dry breasts.** In other words, if our population has to decline, let it be within the family unit. So it's a petition by Hosea in the face of this prophecy of declining population, let it be by childlessness, but let it not be by our enemies coming in and destroying us and pillaging us and raping us, let that not be our destiny O God. That's what he's asking. So he says I know what the discipline has to be, I only petition that the discipline be mercifully applied. So God comes back in verse 15.

Hos 9:15, **All their evil is at Gilgal**, this is one of the places of the northern kingdom's worship, **Indeed, I came to hate them there! Because of the wickedness of their deeds I will drive them out of My house! I will love them no more;** And that is one of the places we've talked about where God comes on real strong in His anger. When you see that you're seeing His holiness, unbrooked expression of His hatred for sin. He says, **All their**

**princes are rebels. Ephraim is stricken, their root is dried up, They will bear no fruit. Even though they bear children, I will slay the precious ones of their womb.** So God is saying okay Hosea, in part the decline in population is going to be due to birth miscarriage, in part to less births, in part to early deaths, but Hosea, the other part is going to be by sending them into the fifth degree. These people are going to have to sit by and watch their homes destroyed, they are going to watch their sons slaughtered on the battlefield, they are going to have to watch their daughters carried off. This is the only way these people will ever learn doctrine. The decimation is determined.

So in Hos 9:17, this is what Hosea does, he submits to God and he says all right, let it be, **My God will cast them away Because they have not listened to Him; And they will be wanderers among the nations.** He submits to the word of God as to how this will take place. They will go into Exile under the fifth degree of discipline.

Now we can sit back as believers and say well now, isn't that nice. That's what happened back in 750BC, but I live in 2010AD, I don't live back then so this doesn't apply. But if God is the same then His reactions to constant rebellion are the same. And we already saw how He can remove a believer from this life if he commits a sin unto death. That's all we have time for tonight.

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