

God Lays the Charges Against Israel Hosea 4:2-19 (NKJV)

As we continue our study of Hosea this morning we only began this passage in which God bring charges against Israel for her sin.

Primarily it is the sin of spiritual adultery or harlotry as we see in our text.

What Gomer had done to Hosea Israel had done to their God.

The nation has deserted their God because the people had deserted their God.

And God has given them time to repent, 200 years.

He has sent numerous prophets to give them a message of repentance.

Even great men like Elijah and Elisha who worked so many miracles but yet the people kept going astray.

But they have come to the end. Within a few years they will be gone as a people and as a nation.

God will bring the terrible Assyrians against them, who will have no mercy on them.

But before He does God sends Hosea with a final warning.

Hosea 4:1 (NKJV)

1 Hear the word of the LORD, You children of Israel, For the LORD brings a charge against the inhabitants of the land: "There is no truth or mercy Or knowledge of God in the land.

I. 2 By swearing and lying, Killing and stealing and committing adultery, They break all restraint, With bloodshed upon bloodshed. 3 Therefore the land will mourn; And everyone who dwells there will waste away With the beasts of the field And the birds of the air; Even the fish of the sea will be taken away.

A. Here the Lord brings out specifics of His charges and judgment.

1. Swearing

a. The first, "cursing," is related to the Third Commandment. The word means to "swear or to bring down a curse on someone in the name of a god. *Duane A. Garrett, Hosea, Joel, vol. 19A, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1997), 111.*

2. Lying

3. Killing

4. Stealing

5. Committing adultery
 6. No restraint
 - a. Means to break forth or to burst
 7. A land filled with bloodshed
- B. The results
1. The land mourns.
 - a. It becomes a place where only the powerful survive.
 - b. Eventually you have the haves and the have nots.
 - c. It becomes a place of sheep and those who eat the sheep.
 2. The people waste away without hope.
 3. Even the whole creation is affected.
- II. 4 "Now let no man contend, or rebuke another; For your people are like those who contend with the priest.
- A. There is a great deal of confusion as to the meaning here.
- B. I think this is both a condition of the nation and a curse from God.
1. Judges 17:6 (NKJV)
 - a. 6 In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.
 2. Psalm 141:5 (NKJV)
 - a. 5 Let the righteous strike me; It shall be a kindness. And let him rebuke me; It shall be as excellent oil; Let my head not refuse it. For still my prayer is against the deeds of the wicked.
 3. This verse describes all that is wrong with the nation.
 4. Some want freedom to do what ever they want.
 5. But a society where no one is there to rebuke another is a society on the verge of anarchy.
- C. If no one is there to point out the injustice then there is no stopping it.
- D. And the problem is that someday you will have to answer to God for breaking His will.
- III. 5 Therefore you shall stumble in the day; The prophet also shall stumble with you in the night; And I will destroy your mother.

- A. To stumble is to fall to fail to move toward ruination.
 - B. The prophet and the religious leaders are in the same boat.
 - C. They can no longer be depended upon to speak for God.
 - 1. Instead they speak what people want to hear.
 - 2. It is a dangerous situation. Matthew 18:6 (NKJV)
 - a. 6 “Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea.
 - 3. Paul described the people having itching ears.
 - a. 2 Timothy 4:2–4 (NKJV)
 - (1) 2 Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; 4 and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.
- IV. 6 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; Because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.
- A. Here then is the result of the clergy (priests) not proclaiming the truth of God’s Word.
 - B. The people do not know what is truth and what is error.
 - 1. 2 Chronicles 15:3–4 (NKJV)
 - a. 3 For a long time Israel has been without the true God, without a teaching priest, and without law; 4 but when in their trouble they turned to the LORD God of Israel, and sought Him, He was found by them.
 - C. And the nation is ruined.
 - 1. Hosea 6:6 (NKJV)
 - a. 6 For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, And the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.
 - D. Therefore God will forget the children.
 - 1. The children in this nation have been lied to for so long that they think

they are right but are totally in falsehood.

2. What could be more dangerous than for a people to take medicine that kills them but they think that it does them good.

V. 7 "The more they increased, The more they sinned against Me; I will change their glory into shame. 8 They eat up the sin of My people; They set their heart on their iniquity. 9 And it shall be: like people, like priest. So I will punish them for their ways, And reward them for their deeds.

A. Prosperity does not tend a people toward God but for themselves.

1. Instead of thanking and blessing God for all the prosperity they had in Hosea's day, they forgot God altogether.
2. We are in the process of rewriting God completely out of our history books.
3. That is why I collect old histories, so I can read about what really happened.

B. God will take their glory gotten through their riches and turn it into shame.

1. There are so many people that their success was their downfall.
2. They would have been better off to live a simple humble life.

C. Sinning is not something that they fall into but they follow after it.

1. They pursue sin, and more and more.
2. And the priests and the people are the same.
3. Their may be a cultural difference but they behave the same.
4. And they will be punished the same.

VI. 10 For they shall eat, but not have enough; They shall commit harlotry, but not increase; Because they have ceased obeying the LORD. 11 "Harlotry, wine, and new wine enslave the heart.

A. The problem is that even tremendous blessings can be taken away by the one who gave them.

B. Because they have ceased obeying the LORD.

1. How long will the Lord allow that to continue.
2. For Israel it was about 200 hundred years.
3. For Babylon it was only 70 years.

C. Pleasure enslaves the heart.

1. We have become a pleasure palace.
 2. Why don't they have Pinocchio on TV more.
 - a. Because it teaches a moral lesson and we know how dangerous those are.
 - b. Legalized gambling, prostitution, drug use, what a wonderful place.
 3. But they all enslave the heart.
 - a. For you can never get enough.
 - b. That is why in 2018 there were over a half a million prescriptions for Nalozone or Narcan.
 - c. Why are there so many overdoses because all illicit pleasure will only enslave us.
- VII. 12 My people ask counsel from their wooden idols, And their staff informs them. For the spirit of harlotry has caused them to stray, And they have played the harlot against their God.
- A. I know we think how simple these people must have been to worship idols and use divination to guide their lives.
 1. But are we much better than they.
 2. How many people use Psychics to guide their lives.
 3. But worse yet some people depend upon the TV.
 - B. Playing the harlot against God has to do with spiritual harlotry.
 1. They were bound to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
 2. But they have like Gomer left the true for the false.
- VIII. 13 They offer sacrifices on the mountaintops, And burn incense on the hills, Under oaks, poplars, and terebinths, Because their shade is good. Therefore your daughters commit harlotry, And your brides commit adultery. 14 "I will not punish your daughters when they commit harlotry, Nor your brides when they commit adultery; For the men themselves go apart with harlots, And offer sacrifices with a ritual harlot. Therefore people who do not understand will be trampled.
- A. Notice another judgment from God.
 1. They have pursued these false gods in every way and place possible.
 2. And temple prostitution was one of the wicked things that were involved.
 3. Because the men of the country use harlots therefore God will not rebuke their own daughters and wives for their harlotry.

B. In Romans chapter 1 Paul describes what happens to a people when they forsake the true God.

1. Romans 1:1-32 (NKJV)

a. 18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, 19 because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, 21 because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Professing to be wise, they became fools, 23 and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man--and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. 24 Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, 25 who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. 26 For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. 27 Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due. 28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; 29 being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, 30 backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, 31 undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; 32 who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.

IX. 15 "Though you, Israel, play the harlot, Let not Judah offend. Do not come up to Gilgal, Nor go up to Beth Aven, Nor swear an oath, saying, 'As the LORD lives'--

A. Hosea takes time to warn Judah not to follow Israel into these sinful ways.

X. 16 "For Israel is stubborn Like a stubborn calf; Now the LORD will let them forage Like a lamb in open country. 17 "Ephraim is joined to idols, Let him alone. 18 Their drink is rebellion, They commit harlotry continually. Her rulers dearly love dishonor. 19 The

wind has wrapped her up in its wings, And they shall be ashamed because of their sacrifices.