

## Adam Clarke:

## Introduction

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, Hosea 9:1. For which reason they are threatened with famine and exile, Hosea 9:2, Hosea 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, Hosea 9:4, Hosea 9:5. Nay more; they shall speedily fall before the destroyer, be buried in Egypt, and leave their own pleasant places desolate, Hosea 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, Hosea 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.

## Verse 3

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

## 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 Deuteronomy 26:14; Numbers 19:11, Numbers 19:13, Numbers 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.

## 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.

## 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.

## 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 - **ישׁוּעָה** (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.

## 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.

**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 Judges 19:16, etc.

**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.

**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.

**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.

**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).

**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.

**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 Hosea 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.

**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 Hosea 9:11-12 (note).**

**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 "œmy God,"œ the fountain of mercy and kindness, "œwill cast them away.â€œ**

**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.**