

Title: Destroyed For Lack Of Knowledge

Text: Hosea 4:1-10

Main Idea: Those who reject the knowledge of God suffer disaster upon disaster.

Division Statements:

1. Those without knowledge of God are under His condemnation (v. 1).

In verse one, God brings a threefold “charge” or indictment, against the nation through His prophet Hosea. He says that there is no truth (אֱמוּנָה (*emeth*) - faithfulness, a steadfast faith and trust in God), no mercy (חֶסֶד (*chesed*) - loving kindness, a steadfast love of God), or knowledge (דַּעַת (*daath*) - not “knowledge” in the sense of intimacy, but bare knowledge and discernment. This is a scathing indictment for the nation, and to be indicted by God is to stand condemned, for He is perfect in both knowledge and judgment.

2. Those without knowledge of God break all moral restraint (v. 2).

Verse two gives a list of sins that the people commit, showing in particular violations of the second table of the ten commandments. - The first table has already been touched on at length through the image of spiritual adultery. - They “break all restraint” or “break through” so that, literally in the Hebrew, “bloody deed touches bloody deed.” In other words, one thing follows another in a perpetual river of “bloody deeds” before the eyes of God.

3. Those without knowledge of God have no true hope (vv. 3-5).

Verse three pictures a devastating drought upon the land that will come as a judgment for their lack of knowledge. However, according to verse four, this should be no cause for finger pointing or accusations against one another throughout the land, because all the people are like those who contend with “the priest.” In other words, their all worthless and correction from any authority simply goes unheeded (e.g. Is. 1:5-6).

Verse five then shows the spiritual parallel to the physical disaster of verse three. Because of the heart attitude of the people they will “stumble” and the prophets with them “by night” meaning a failure of visions and a famine of the word of God or possibly “overnight” meaning suddenly. “Mother” refers to the nation (2:2-5), which will be “destroyed.” Thus, these verses signal the end of hope, physically, and even more importantly, spiritually.

4. Those without knowledge of God lose all purpose for themselves and their children (v. 6b).

Verse six is the heart of the passage and truly frightful in its implications. God says that because the people had rejected the knowledge of Him, He would reject them from being “priest for Me.” In other words, the people would lose their purpose, the reason for their existence, to mediate the word of God to the nations. Then, if this weren’t bad enough, the verse ends, “I also will forget your children.” The consequence of the people’s sin would flow down to the generations that followed, and indeed, this is exactly what happened to the unfaithful of the northern kingdom.

5. Those without knowledge of God live in dissatisfaction (vv. 7-10).

These verses describe the ongoing dissatisfaction that would gnaw at the people. Verse 8, says “they eat up the sin of My people” meaning that they actually relished wickedness and fed on it. Their “desire” was set on iniquity. When verse 9 says, “it shall be: like people, like price,” it means that they shall all share in the punishment that was coming, because they were all equally bad. Verse 10 is the climax of dissatisfaction, “They shall eat, but not have enough; They shall commit harlotry, but not increase.” They would go hungry and all of their shameless indulgence in ritualist prostitution and worship of the Canaanite fertility gods would come to nothing.

6. Those without knowledge of God are destroyed (v. 6a).

Moving back to the first part of verse 6 for the final and ultimate consequence we see that the people are “destroyed for lack of knowledge.” “Destroyed” - **דָּמָה** (damâ), cease, cut off, destroy, perish.

Bridging From Text To Sermon

Textual Idea: Hosea describes the wretched circumstances of Israel because they had rejected the knowledge of God.

Sermon Proposition: Those who reject the knowledge of God suffer disaster upon disaster.

Interrogative: What are traumatic circumstances of those who reject the knowledge of God?

Transition: The text gives us six consequences of rejecting the knowledge of God.

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