

Hosea 8:1-14

From the beginning, the house of Jeroboam and the northern kingdom became illegitimate before the Lord (**1 Kings 12:28-29**); not a single king in all its history would walk in faith.

This happened because of the sinful human tendency to self-reliance.

Summary

In Hosea 8:1-14, the prophet explains the ruin of Israel in terms of three sins that would bring a storm of judgment that would blow the nation away.

1. Self-reliant Government & Diplomacy Revisited vv. 1-10

Hosea begins with a trumpet blast designed to signal imminent danger (**8:1**).

The picture of a circling vulture suggested a looming threat.

The problem was that Israel no longer knew the Lord having forsaken God's Word and so Hosea brings the Lord's message of judgment (**Hos 8:2-3**).

The prophet then outlines the ways in which Israel forsook the Lord.

First; self-reliant government (**8:4-6**). Secondly, self-reliant diplomacy (**8:7-10**).

2. Self-reliant Worship vv. 11-14

The final verses of Hosea 8 speak of the nation's self-reliance in worship (**8:11**).

Israel was covering its bases with religion, without actually trusting the Lord.

As far as Israel was concerned, just getting the ritual right was all one needed to win the Lord's favor. The Lord did not concur, however (**Hos 8:13**).

Simply coming to church, singing the hymns, and going through the motions of the liturgy does nothing to persuade the Lord that a people is truly worshiping Him or turning to Him in true faith.

The Lord proposes a test (**Hosea 8:12**). How would Israel's king respond?

The Lord's laws would be regarded as a strange thing."

Although the Israelites had forgotten God's law, the unchanging Lord would not forget their sins (**Hos. 8:13**). By returning the people "to Egypt," God did not mean a physical relocation to the land of Egypt, but rather a return to the bondage from which he had rescued them through Moses.

The similarity between the Israel of Hosea's day and the church of Laodicea is noteworthy. This comparison warns that the great danger facing the Christian churches in times of trouble comes not from oppressive outsiders but from infidelity to the Lord (**Rev. 3:16**).

What lay behind this tragic folly? **Hos 8:14a** "For Israel has forgotten his Maker."

For Israel, the pushing aside of God led to the building of "palaces," perhaps in order to impress foreign embassies on their visits to the nation's capital. Something similar was happening in the southern kingdom: "Judah has multiplied fortified cities; so I will send a fire upon his cities" (Hos. 8:14). Within a few years, the same army that conquered Israel would descend on Judah, with history recording the overthrow of one fortress after another (**2 Kings 18:13**).

3. Different Perspective

What hope is there for self-reliant sinners?

None in themselves. There is only hope in One who is very different.

In stark contrast to the Israelites of Hosea's day, Jesus Christ is the true, faithful Israelite.

In contrast to self-reliant Government, Jesus is the Lord's installed, anointed king forever (**Psalms 2:6; Heb. 1:8**).

In contrast to self-reliant Diplomacy, Jesus is the Lord's faithful covenant servant (**John 2:23; 4:31; 8:28; 12:27; 12:49**).

In contrast to self-reliant Worship, Jesus, even when tempted with all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, responded: 'Be gone, Satan! For it is written, "You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve"' (**Matt 4:10**) and who responded to the hypocritical Israelites of His own day: 'So for the sake of your tradition you have made void the word of God. You hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy of you, when he said: "This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men"' (**Matt 15:6-9**).

This Jesus calls us to put all our trust in Him and urges an entirely different perspective on life (**Matt 6:19-21**).

What folly it is to set aside the God (**Ps. 31:3**).

Jesus not only calls us to put all our trust in him, He also urges us to an entirely different perspective on life: **Matt 6:19-21** Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.