

Prayer and the Sovereignty of God – Hosea 9:7-14

What do we do when bad things happen?

- Are we quick to assign blame?
- Do we just assume that it's bad luck?
- Do we trust in a good & sovereign God who loves us?

How/if we pray reveals much about what we believe & how we will respond

- If our default response is not to pray, then we probably don't believe in a good & sovereign God who loves us!
- If our default response is to pray, but our prayer is for God to change our circumstances & take away the things that are causing us pain, then we probably don't trust God & His purposes in our lives!
- If our default response is to pray & to ask God for His Will to be done & for His purposes to be accomplished in our lives, for His glory & our good, then maybe we can trust the goodness of God even in our pain.

"The days of punishment have come; the days of recompense have come; Israel shall know it." – Hosea 9:7

Israel is about to have a very bad day/700yrs, & Hosea knew it was coming because God had said it was coming. What was Hosea's response/prayer?

Some important details to consider before looking at Hosea's prayer:

- Hosea had warned Israel many times about this coming disaster, but they paid no mind! His prayer could have been accusatory!
- Hosea had been the target of many accusations, even hatred (vs 7b-8) at the hands of the people. His prayer could have been one of vindication!
- Hosea was an Israelite as well, so whatever fate Israel faced, it would be his fate as well. His prayer could have been one of begging God to change His mind, if for no other reason than to spare Hosea's life!

Hosea's response/prayer was something far different however!

It started off with, ***"Give them, O Lord..."*** as if implying that Hosea at first had a prayer in mind but then stopped mid-sentence to reconsider!

Hosea could have prayed any of the prayers already mentioned, but instead he pauses & goes in a different direction that reveals the depth of His faith.

He prays, ***"what will you give?"*** as if to say, "What is most important God, is what You see as what's best for Your people, not me!"

It was a prayer of "Thy will be done", not Hosea's, not Israel's, but God's!

Surely Hosea didn't understand it all, how what God declared in vs. 11-13 could come from a good & loving God, or how God's promises and covenant with His people could be carried out if this is what truly will transpire.

But Hosea knew that God's purpose for His people would be far better than any plan that he himself could've come up with, even if it does include destruction.

God knows what is needed, & what it will take for that need to be realized in the lives of His people. And for Israel, He had already declared it!

So Hosea defaults to praying a prayer that proclaims that which he knows to be true of God, & His plan, & if it means destruction is coming, so be it.

Do we pray prayers like that? Can you come up with any examples?

Hosea prays a prayer of faith – declaring back to God what He knows to be true of Him – He is God, He is sovereign, His ways are good, & He is merciful!

And the last line recorded for us in Hosea's prayer reveals this - ***"Give them a miscarrying womb & dry breasts." - Vs. 14***

Does this sound like a prayer to a sovereign, good, merciful & loving God?

For God to inhibit the birth of children in Israel, from now until the day the destruction comes, would be a display of mercy & love despite His wrath!

Because there would be a far less burden of sorrow and grief in Israel, over the loss of life, if it didn't include the loss of their own nursing children!

Hosea sees the hope in that, and that's what He focuses in on in his prayer!

When we face the darkest of days, what will we focus in on in our prayers?

Why not choose to focus in on our God who did not inhibit the suffering & death of His own Son, for the sake of showing us/His people the full extent of His love, goodness, grace and mercy despite their sinfulness!

Our belief in God's sovereignty is revealed when we choose to trust what we know to be true about God, in the midst of all that we don't fully understand!

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