

Are You Ready for the Judgment Day?

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[0:00] Please turn now in your Bibles to Hosea 10. Hosea 10, as we continue through this prophet. We'll read all of chapter 10.

! Their heart is deceitful, and now they must bear their guilt.

The Lord will demolish their altars and destroy their sacred stones. Then they will say, We have no king, because we did not revere the king. But even if we had a king, what could he do for us? They make many promises, take false oaths, and make agreements. Therefore, lawsuits spring up like poisonous weeds in a plowed field. The people who live in Samaria fear for the calf idol of Beth-Avon.

Its people will mourn over it, and so will its idolatrous priests, those who had rejoiced over its splendor, because it is taken from them into exile. It will be carried to Assyria as tribute for the great king.

[1:14] Ephraim will be distressed. Israel will be ashamed of its wooden idols. Samaria and its king will float away like a twig on the surface of the waters. The high places of wickedness will be destroyed.

It is the sin of Israel. Thorns and thistles will grow up and cover their altars. Then they will say to the mountains, Cover us, and to the hills fall on us. Since the days of Gibeah you have sinned, O Israel, and there you have remained.

Did not war overtake the evildoers in Gibeah? When I please, I will punish them. Nations will be gathered against them to put them in bonds for their double sin. Ephraim is a trained heifer that loves to thresh.

So I will put a yoke on her fair neck. I will drive Ephraim. Judah must plow and Jacob must break up the ground. Sow for yourselves righteousness. Reap the fruit of unfailing love and break up your unplowed ground, for it is time to seek the Lord until He comes and showers righteousness on you. But you have planted wickedness. You have reaped evil. You have eaten the fruit of deception. Because you have depended on your own strength and on your many warriors, the roar of battle will rise against your people so that all your fortresses will be devastated.

[2:30] As Shalman devastated Beth Arbol on the day of battle when mothers were dashed to the ground with their children. Thus it will happen to you, O Bethel, because your wickedness is great.

When that day dawns, the king of Israel will be completely destroyed. It's good to see that we have a farming family visiting us today because Hosea is taking us to the farm this morning in chapter 10. God's farm. Where we're going to see God's vine and God's heifer. And if the themes that we'll see in this chapter are the same, Israel's sin and God's judgment, it's because Israel's need is still the same.

To turn from their sins that they might avoid God's judgment. There's a strong tendency in man to dismiss the coming judgment of God.

Just to write it off. Just to not think about it. To count it as a fairy tale. And it's all because God is so patient and kind and good to his enemies that men come to the wrong conclusions about him.

[3:58] They think that because when I sinned, lightning did not strike. The earth did not open up and swallow me. God really must not care.

He must not see. Or if he does see, he really doesn't care about my sin. He's not going to do anything serious. He hasn't done anything. And so men sleep on under the damning delusion that he won't do anything.

And so God in mercy sends his word to wake man up to reality. You're living in the dream world. The real world is there's a moral government, governor, a king who will judge all citizens, all peoples of the earth.

And so to a nation asleep to the coming judgment, God sends his trumpeting prophet Hosea. And he sounds the alarm to awaken this sleepy nation from their fatal ease and to call them to repent before it's too late and judgment arrives.

And how our nation needs to hear this word from God and how we living in this sleepy nation need to hear this word from God lest we too are only half awake and fall into that sleepy stupor that all people around us seem to be in with regard to God's coming judgment.

[5:36] So you ready? It's to the farm this morning. And our first stop is the vineyard. And secondly, the threshing floor. So we come to the vineyard and here we see a spreading vine.

It's vigorous. That's the word spreading. It shows it's healthy. There's the single root, but the branches come up and they reach in each direction for a long distance and they're just laden with luscious fruit.

That was Israel. Blessed by God, in a fertile land, they were like this spreading vine. In a place where milk and honey flowed, where they prospered and flourished.

But there was a problem. Verse 1 tells us, as his fruit increased, he built more altars. As his land prospered, he adorned his sacred stones.

So Israel pours the prophets back into her idolatry. They put more gold and silver on their idols and doll up their sacred shrines to make them really ornate and valuable.

[6:59] And they do it all to thank the God of fertility, the Canaanite God of fertility, for all the blessings upon the land, for making them this fruitful vine and to secure future blessings upon their crops.

In other words, they abused the goodness of God, the prosperity that God poured upon them to make them such a vine, they abused. And instead of the goodness of God leading them to humble repentance, it led them to just pour their profits into more and more idols, replacements from God. So he blessed them. And the more he blessed them, the more they sinned against him, the more they turned to their idols. So how have you responded to living in the land of prosperity and God's goodness upon you?

Has it caused you to offer up yourself and praise to this God or just to take his blessings and to use them on yourself?

We're not a lot different as a nation from Israel. Are you different? Am I different? Well, the cause of the problem with this vine goes deep.

[8:21] It's a heart problem. It's a bad heart, he says. Verse two, their heart is deceitful, slippery, false, untrue, unfaithful. The problem with this, this vine, as it turns out, is not just a little scab on one of the branches that needs to be pruned off, but it's shot through the whole system.

There's there's disease at the very root. The heart is deceitful in this nation. And so now they must bear their guilt. Time's up. God's calling for the rent.

He expects good fruit of holiness and praise to himself. And now he demands it and they don't have it. So the day of reckoning has come. She must bear her guilt.

Now, when God meets out punishment, his punishment always matches the crime. That's not always true in our homes. We sometimes err. It's not always true in our nation, but it's always true in God's court.

And it's true here in the way that he punishes Israel. It exactly fits the crimes. The two things in this chapter that will be destroyed as punishments are their idols and their kings.

[9:38] God's judgment will put an end to the very things they trusted in to help them. They hope that their idols would help them and give them prosperity.

And they hope that their kings and his military would protect them and maintain their prosperous nation. And so what two things are put in the sights of God for destruction?

Their king and their idol. And it goes back and forth throughout this chapter between the king and the idol. Both to be done away with.

First of all, he starts with the idols. 2b, verse 2b, The Lord will demolish their altars and destroy their sacred stones. Remember, those were the altars and the stones that they dolled up with all their gold and silver and poured their profits into.

They are now marked for destruction. All that they invested in is to go up in smoke. And this is something that the covenant Lord will do. The Lord will demolish their altars.

[10:45] Because the idols had usurped his place in their lives and in their heart. They will be completely destroyed. And then the king comes under punishment.

Verse 3, Then they will say, When their idols are destroyed, then they will say, We have no king because we did not revere the Lord. Now we're talking about the northern kingdom of Israel. And in the northern kingdom, it was the king that sponsored the idolatry. They paid for the idolatry. It was part of the king's governmental policy to keep his people from defecting to the southern kingdom to go down to Jerusalem and worship God there.

Afraid that when they go to Jerusalem, they'll defect to the southern kingdom. So he says, We can't have them going there. Let's set up our own centers of worship. And he put a calf idol in each center and his own priests and his own sacrificial system.

That was Jeroboam. When they broke away from the southern kingdom, they set up this whole idolatrous system. It was funded with public monies.

[11:57] And so it's not surprising that the king goes down with the idol. It was an unholy alliance of the monarchy and idolatry, so both will come to an end together when the Assyrians come and invade.

They were partners in crime. They'll be partners in punishment. No more idols. No more king. And in that day, they will know why this is happening to them.

Because they did not revere the Lord. They didn't fear God. And that's the ultimate cause for their punishment. They don't realize it now, but when idol and king go away into captivity, they will realize then this came upon us because we didn't fear Jehovah.

They treated him as a nobody and his laws as nothings. So there was no reverence and awe for God. There was no desire to please him.

No fear of displeasing him. And God's judgment will be so devastating that they will say, verse 3b, but you know, even if we did have a king, what could he do for us?

[13:10] The situation is so bad under God's judgment that even though we have no king, if we had one, he couldn't do anything for us. If God is against us, it doesn't matter what king and military are for us.

They'll see it then, but now they keep trusting in their king. It will be a lesson learned too late. Verse 4 shows us the fruit of a nation that has no fear of God.

What does a nation look like that doesn't fear and revere God? Well, the whole society from rulers right on down is riddled with dishonesty, deception, cheating, lying.

Notice he says, they make many promises. Oh, but don't count on them keeping their word. They take false oaths as they make agreements or covenants or contracts.

They're worthless, empty words. Whether it's the contract, the covenant with their spouse to remain true all their lives or with their neighbor or with their customers or with their citizens and therefore lawsuits spring up like poisonous weeds in a plowed field.

[14:31] So there's the newly plowed field and come back a few weeks later and it's filled with noxious weeds. What should be in the furrows of that field?

Healthy grain. Justice, truthfulness, faithfulness, that's what should be springing up in the land. What's there instead? Deception, lying, breaking words, breaking contracts, breaking marriages. In the place of justice, wickedness was there. It's the whole disintegration of law and order in society and it's there because there's no fear of God before their eyes and they'll know that in that day of judgment.

Well, now it flips back to God's judgment upon the idols. Verses 5 and 6. The people are shaking now. They're trembling in fear for their calf idol at Bethel.

And Hosea doesn't even give it the name Bethel because Bethel means house of God. And he calls it Beth-Avon, house of wickedness. So where's their calf idol?

[15:41] It's in one of the centers of worship at Bethel. Rather, house of wickedness, Beth-Avon. And the people are trembling for their dear calf idol.

There it goes. Look where it's going. Away into captivity. They're mourning over it. They're weeping. They're wailing. And so are its idolatrous priests.

All those who boasted, who rejoiced over its splendor. And why the weeping and the wailing? Because it's taken from them into exile. It will be carried to Assyria as tribute for the great king. So their beloved, invested in, idol is now being carried into captivity.

There it goes. The people will lose their precious, their calf idol. And the priests will lose their identity and their livelihood. For what good is an idolatrous priest without his idols?

[16:46] He's worthless. And so they're wailing. But then, come to think of it, what good is an idol that can be carried away into captivity? Isaiah mocks the idolaters in his day and he talks about a man who's too poor to make a molten idol.

And so he selects wood that will not rot and looks for a skilled craftsman to set up an idol that will not topple. Because horror of horrors to have your idol topple and go down on you.

That would be a disgrace, wouldn't it? Remember, that's what happened to Dagon. Down he went. They set him back up, prop him up. So they fashion silver chains for their idols so they won't topple. But Israel is blind. Why are you trusting in something that can so easily topple? Why are you trusting in an idol, a calf idol that can be carried away into Assyria?

It can't even help itself, much less you, the worshiper. And so Ephraim will be disgraced, verse 6 says.

[17:54] Another name for Israel. Israel will be ashamed of its wooden idols. The very things they gloried in. Look at our golden idol. That will become a cause for embarrassment as it's being hauled off by Assyrian soldiers back to the great king for tribute as a plunder of his victory.

When the things you trust in fail you in your greatest hour of need, you're embarrassed.

Why did I trust him? Why did I lean upon a broken, splintered reed like that? And you're ashamed. And so Ephraim will be disgraced and ashamed when they see that the things that they trusted in are completely useless, worthless, helpless.

How embarrassing. All idols lead to embarrassment. They do not do what they promise to do and they leave their worshipers embarrassed.

[19:12] embarrassed. I don't like to be embarrassed. I especially don't want to be embarrassed for all eternity. But you know when God judges the world, a lot of people are going to be embarrassed.

There's a lot of do-good religionists in the world today. And they're trusting in their own righteousness. That's their idol. they trust in the fact that they're in church today that that'll help them get into heaven.

Whether they cut their hair in such a way or don't do this or don't do that, they believe that somehow all their religious ceremonies and good deeds will stand them well in this day of judgment.

judgment. But when Jesus returns, how embarrassed they will be for they'll see that their own righteousness are like filthy rags. That's all they ever were.

But they thought they were splendid, precious things that would help them, saviors. And then they'll see them for the stinking, disgusting rags that they are as the Holy One appears and shows them to be the dark things that they are.

[20:29] Shame for all of eternity. What a fool I've been not to submit to God's way of righteousness through us, through Jesus Christ, but to hang on to my own righteousness. And the things that people gloried in and live for will be their shame when they stand before the Almighty.

What a disgrace to have lived for the idols of pleasure and possession and position only to find out in that day they live for nothing. Absolutely nothing.

They enter heaven bankrupt. They're not rich toward God. They have nothing, no righteousness to put them in His stead, to stand them in good stead with God.

What an embarrassment. There'll be a lot of embarrassment going on at the judgment seat of Christ. But while others are being embarrassed and disgraced, whoever trusts in the Lord will never be disgraced.

Over and over that's the message of the prophets. Whoever trusts in the Lord will never be put to shame. They won't find that Jesus lets them down like Israel will find that their idols left them down.

[21:44] and so idols are only going to bring shame in the day of judgment. So get rid of them now. Don't live for them now.

That's the idea. Don't lean and give your life and your wealth and your money and your time to idols. Give it to Christ. And then verse 7 takes us back to God's judgment on the king.

Samaria, that's the capital city of the northern kingdom, Samaria and its king will float away like a twig on the surface of the waters. Do you see it there? It's that little wood chip just being carried along by the current of the rushing stream.

Where's it going? It's going out of sight. It's going wherever the stream's taking it. It has absolutely no power to resist the force of this oncoming current.

No way for that little wood chip to buck the force of that water. And so it's carried away. There goes your king. There goes the great king and his army that you trusted in.

[22 : 51] Absolutely helpless. As worthless as that idol that can be carried away. And now he turns back to God's judgments upon their idols.

Not only the calf idol, but its centers of worship will be destroyed. It's hilltop shrines because on every high hill and under every spreading tree they had these centers of worship.

And so verse 8 says the high places of wickedness will be destroyed. It is the sin of Israel. The sin of Israel. They have forsaken me the living God and they've turned aside to idols.

That is the defining sin of Israel. And so her high places of wickedness will be destroyed. Thorns and thistles will grow up and cover their altars.

Kids, where did thorns and thistles come from? Remember in Genesis 3, it was only when Adam and Eve sinned against God that God cursed the earth for Adam's sake.

[24 : 06] And he created thorns and thistles to come up so that Adam would have to work by the sweat of his brow and with hard labor to eke out a living. In other words, thorns and thistles become a symbol for God's curse.

And here we find them growing up. Here's the altar and the thorns and the thistles just start growing up and they're crawling all over the altars that Israel has set up on their high places.

The curse is growing up on the cursed things. It's an eerie thing, isn't it? The cursed things that God hates are now being cursed by God and then they will say to the mountains fall on us and to the hills cover us.

death wish. The punishment falling on them will be so dreadful that death will be welcome.

Now life has to be pretty bad. Life has to be going pretty bad for you to prefer being crushed by an earthquake than to go on living. We've seen something of the horrors of earthquakes.

[25 : 27] These people are crying out to be crushed by the mountains and the hills. Why? Because the brutal Assyrians would come in and slaughter them.

Or they would be left to the three year siege that would mean slow starvation and eating of the flesh of one another just to keep alive.

Or to go away into Syria and live out your existence in slavery. Fall on us. End it all. they cry.

So the day of reckoning is coming on this vine of Israel. Punishments upon the people, their kings and their idols. And the prophecy of the spreading vine ends by showing that their punishment is both certain and deserved.

They've left no other options open to the holy one but to judge them. Verse nine. Since days, the days of Gibeah. We're going back to Gibeah.

[26 : 38] Remember that last week? That's where the Levite and his concubine and that whole homosexual city, the evil vile men of Gibeah came and abused her all night and left her dead in the morning.

We're going back there. And that's what Hosea says. Since the days of Gibeah, you have sinned, O Israel, and there you have remained. So he takes them back to that vile city and says, since that day, you have sinned.

And you've stayed there. Your spirituality reached a low point in Gibeah. And we heard about that last week. It's 400 years earlier.

They had reached a low point, but worse than that, they had remained there. There you have remained. You see, it's bad enough to sin, but to remain in your sin when God comes calling you to repent is far worse.

And that's what Hosea says. You guys sinned 400 years ago. Give me that. That shows how low you stooped. And there you've just remained for 400 years. You haven't repented.

[27 : 54] You just go on in your own way. Because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart, you're storing up wrath against yourself for the day of wrath when his righteous judgment will be revealed.

Romans 2 5. To sin is evil. To remain in sin brings unthinkable judgment from God.

And so Israel is given a history lesson called the wages of sin is death. Did not war overtake the evildoers in Gibeah? Yes, it did.

Remember when the Levite cut up the dead body of his concubine and sent into 12 different areas of the country? What was the response? The whole country showed up in force, 400,000 armed soldiers, and they marched down to Benjamin, Gibeah of Benjamin, and they put the whole city to

the sword.

Did not war overtake the evildoers in Gibeah? Yes. Yes. And when I please, I will punish them.

[29 : 13] Nations will be gathered against them to put them in bonds for their double sin. Those who sin like Gibeah will be punished like Gibeah. That's Hosea's word to the nation.

And God is sovereign over his punishments, and he'll come in and punish when he pleases. He may tarry long, but when he chooses, he'll be there with his punishment. You can count on it, and he himself will punish.

He'll use the nations because he says he'll gather the nations against them to put them in bonds into captivity for their double sin. So the nations, what are they?

They're just the rod of God's anger. You know, the whole created order is an arsenal for God to just pick up and use as a rod to punish men. You see it in the ten plagues, don't you?

All the things that God used as a rod to punish Egypt. From fogs to hailstones, to blight, to locusts, to flies, to dust, to darkness.

[30 : 17] He's got the whole world he can pick up and use as a rod of punishment. And he'll use the nations to take his wrath out on Israel.

Israel. So they're taken back to Gibeah for this history lesson. Be sure your sins will find you out. Don't think that you can sin and remain like Gibeah and yet escape the judgment because of it. So there's the spreading vine. Secondly, and more shorter, we have a trained heifer from the vineyard. We move to the threshing floor on this farm. And here on the threshing floor, we find a trained heifer who just loves to thresh.

And this too is a picture of Israel who is here called Ephraim. And just as the heifer serves its owner, so Israel was to serve the Lord. Now, if you were going to be a heifer, of all the work that a heifer did, threshing was the most valued job.

It was the gravy job for heifers. There you would have the grain just scattered on the threshing floor. And so round and round the heifer would go, tromping on the grain, treading out the grain, separating the chaff from the grain.

[31 : 41] But what made this job loved by all heifers was the fact that they worked unmuzzled. And so while they treaded out the corn, they were unmuzzled and they were free to stop as they pleased and to bend over and eat the grain.

It was lawful to eat on the job. In fact, it was commanded in Scripture in Deuteronomy 25, you should not muzzle the ox when it treads out the grain. So they loved to thresh. Israel was a trained heifer who loved to thresh.

It was light work compared to all the other work on the farm to be done. And it pictures the pleasantness of God's service.

Isn't it a wonderful thing to be serving the Lord? His yoke is easy and his burden is light. And so we go round and round in our days serving the Lord.

And it's enjoyable work. It's pleasant. The yoke is easy. The burden is light. It's a privilege. to serve the Lord.

[32 : 52] His service is pure joy. His yoke is perfect freedom. But all that's passed for Israel. Her threshing days are over. For she rebelled and became a stubborn heifer.

Remember chapter 4 and verse 15? The Israelites are stubborn like a stubborn heifer. How then can the Lord pasture them like lambs in a meadow? He can't treat them.

You don't treat a stubborn heifer like a lamb that you lead into the meadow. You have a bigger rod to move the stubborn heifer. And there would be harder tests for Israel since she did not serve the Lord while threshing.

He will find more drudgery work for her. He'll put the yoke of slavery on her neck. He'll haul her away into captivity and make her to plow and to harrow and break up the hard ground.

And so now the heifer's pulling this heavy plow and suddenly that old plow hooks on a rock and it won't go and it jerks the heifer back.

[34 : 01] And that's its life now. So God says I'll make you I'll put a yoke on your fair neck. I'll drive Ephraim as a man drives his ox and Judah must plow and Jacob must break up the ground and all this because she would not serve the Lord.

She would not bring him glory. And as she's laboring under the yoke of slavery in Assyria she will pine for those old days back on the threshing floor.

Now you were made to serve the Lord. That's why you were created. And if you're Christian that's why you were redeemed. But if you reject the easy yoke of Christ you are bringing down upon you the heavy yoke of slavery to sin and to Satan.

You're bringing down on yourself these punishments. Israel rejected her calling and suffered for it. she did not heed the call of her kind master.

Come to me. Isn't that a sweet word from the master, the farmer? Come to me all you who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest.

[35 : 24] Take my yoke upon you and learn from me for I am meek and gentle of heart and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

But you would not have it. So you will have a heavy yoke of slavery. So much for the threshing floor for this stubborn heifer.

And continuing with the farming imagery, the Lord sets before them the only way to avoid this judgment. Verse 12, sow for your self-righteousness, reap the fruit of unfailing love and break up your unplowed ground, for it is time to seek the Lord until he comes and showers righteousness on you.

This was Israel's calling to serve the Lord, to serve him according to his righteous laws, to seek his kingdom first and his righteous laws.

And the harvest reaped for sowing righteousness would be the unfailing steadfast love of Jehovah. The covenant love would be their reaping harvest.

[36 : 35] So, sow righteousness and reap unfailing love. Isn't that a mercy? To reap unfailing love all your days in life and for eternity.

But their hearts were like unplowed ground, hard, unreceptive to the seed of God's word. They knew the cure, but they refused to take it.

Hard, crusty self-serving wills that had never been broken and brought to repentance. Never brought to say, I'm done with myself. I surrender to you.

Enough of my own way. I'm going to seek you and forsake my way and follow you. They never got to that point. So, their hearts were still crusty, hard hearted.

And he calls for a whole new start. Plow up your fallow ground. Come on, get the plow out. Break up that crusty heart. Calling for radical new start of regeneration.

[37 : 43] Drastic changes. You know, sinner friend, that there are areas in your life, and as you become a Christian, you'll learn this throughout the rest of your Christian life. There are areas of your life that are still unplowed good fruit from.

You perhaps haven't even thought about this area of my life. God wants good fruit coming to his praise and glory from that area of my life. I haven't even thought about that. But he'll have a way of taking you out to that unplowed field and saying, come on now, John, it's time to break up that hard ground, to receive the word, to be transformed and sanctified by that word, renewed in your mind, transformed in your life.

It's time to break up your fallow ground. But he has to say to Israel, but rather you have planted wickedness and so you have reaped evil and you've eaten the fruit of deception.

There's an unbroken! chain of causation here. What you plant, you reap, and what you reap, you eat.

You see it there in that verse 13? You've planted wickedness and so you've reaped evil and you've eaten the fruit of deception. The whole nation sunk in deception, lies, injustice, cheating, its own punishment coming down upon their heads.

[39 : 16] That's what you get for planting wickedness. You're reaping evil and deception. Do not be deceived. God cannot be mocked. A man reaps whatever he sows.

The one who sows to please the flesh will from the flesh reap destruction. But the one who sows to please the spirit will from the spirit reap life everlasting.

You reap what you sow. And to live is to sow. You know a whole lot of seed went into the ground this week.

Just right here. Your life and mine all week long. You were sowing. You put a whole lot of seed into the ground young person. Older person. Seeds every day at work.

Home. Shopping. Seeds going in. Going into the ground. What kind of seeds you put in? Did you sow righteousness? Righteous family life.

[40:14] righteous use of time and money and all these areas of your life. Was it was a good seed? You'll have a harvest of unfailing love.

Or was it the seeds of selfishness and greed and pride and lust? What kind of seeds went in will determine what kind of crop comes out and it's sure to come.

It's sure to come. And Israel had sown wickedness and will for sure reap a harvest of evil. And Hosea who pleaded long with his unfaithful wife to return to him is here made God's representative to plead with Israel as it were one more time to return to him.

In other words God's not indifferent to what you're sowing God's not indifferent to what you will one day reap he wants you to sow righteousness that's why he tells you sow righteousness that's why he tells you to reap unfailing love he wants to pour out his unfailing love on you hear the voice of God in this passage break up your unplowed ground it's all overgrown with the ground covers! And ask him to plow up your hard ground And the time is now sinner for it is time to seek the Lord verse 12 until he comes and showers righteousness on till he rains salvation down on your head it is time to seek the Lord time was running out for Israel in just a few years after Hosea's voice would be snuffed out in death the judgment of God would fall on Israel and he's using his expiring breath to say it's time Israel it's time to seek the Lord that his righteousness might be rained down upon you even yet even yet there's mercy with the Lord today today is the time to seek the Lord you know there are people in hell who intended to serve the

[42:44] Lord tomorrow to seek the Lord tomorrow to repent of sin tomorrow and they're in hell not for a week or a year or a century they will be there after billions and billions of years because they did not seek the Lord when he could be found now that's just the reality of it today is the only time you have yesterday it's gone you can't get it back tomorrow you're not sure it's going to be there for you on this life you've got today and the Lord says it's time it's time son it's time daughter it's time elderly person it's time to seek me now I tell you now is the time of God's favor now is the day of salvation today if you hear his voice harden not your heart but Israel just keeps on going in her way like a stubborn heifer refusing to be corrected and so their wickedness that which they sow the bad seed they put in the ground is now spelled out once more for them the metaphor is dropped in very plain terms what kind of seed were they sowing well he tells us in verse 13b you have depended on your own strength and on your many warriors you have leaned on your own self sufficiency your king and his mighty military and they will prove unable to help you so because of this because you depend on your own strength and because you depend upon your many warriors well they'll be tried let them see just how well they'll defend you because verse 14 says the roar of battle because of your self dependence the roar of battle will rise against your people so that all your fortresses will be devastated as shellman devastated

Beth Arbol on the day of battle when mothers were dashed to the ground with their children this will happen to you oh Bethel oh house of god this will happen to you because your wickedness is great and when that day dawns the king of Israel will be completely destroyed king and his military the many warriors they will prove unable to save you and the destruction that the Assyrians will bring is likened to shellman's devastation at Beth Arbol we don't know what Beth Arbol the place of Beth Arbol nor do we know who shellman was but you can bet your last dollar Hosea's here's knew who shellman and Beth Arbol were so he has to do is mention that to strike fear in their hearts oh yeah we remember what happened at Beth Arbol mothers and children were dashed to pieces by shellman and his troops this will happen to you

Hosea says because of your sin against the lord those names were as common to them as Hitler and Dachau are to us it wasn't pretty it was gruesome barbarian carnage and this is the fruit the harvest the crop of what you've been planting Israel you're just getting what you had coming as your mothers and children are dashed to pieces no wonder they would prefer being crushed by the mountains and the hills it's all making sense so we come to the end of another chapter of Hosea and there's something in us that would like to sit back at a comfortable distance and see what God did to these people 2,800 years ago terrible terrible you know the

New Testament won't allow us to do that it brings us right in it just puts its arms out and brings us right in you know how it does it it quotes from Hosea chapter 10 the New Testament quotes Hosea 10 you know what verse it quotes verse 8 about the mountains and hills that's New Testament fulfillment in the New Testament not just 2,800 years ago when the Assyrians crushed the Israelites first place Luke 23 30 Jesus is on his way to Golgotha and a man has now been made to carry his cross behind him and the women of Israel are weeping and wailing behind him because another

Israelite son is going to the Roman gibbet to be executed and Jesus turns and says to them daughters of Jerusalem do not weep for me weep for yourselves and for your children your children for the time will come when you will say blessed are the barren women now we've seen when we studied

Hannah what they thought of barrenness oh that was a curse to be barren but there will come a time when you will say blessed are the barren women the wounds that never bore the breasts that never nursed and then they will say and he quotes Hosea chapter 10 and verse 8 they will say to the mountains fall on us and to the hills crush us cover us this is Jesus on his way to Calvary and he's quoting Hosea 10 8 to the generation that he is being rejected by and when the judgment of God falls upon Israel for crucifying her king the very same words that Israel will use to wish for death will be on their lips okay that's the first time it's used and a crushing earthquake would be preferred to facing and enduring the judgment of God

[49:03] Revelation chapter 6 now comes forward and it brings into its arms all the nations and peoples of the world and John sees the final judgment of God John in vision sees the last judgment when all men will be judged when Jesus returns it's not the coming of the great king of Assyria this is the coming of the king of kings and we read then the kings of the earth the princes and the generals the rich the mighty and every slave and every free man hid in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains they called to the mountains and the rock fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the lamb for the great day of their wrath is come and who can stand there's coming a day when

Hosea 10 8 will be on the mouths of people again they will wish to die but they will not be able to die because the punishment of final judgment is everlasting annihilation under an earthquake would be a joy ride but they will not be able to have their wish fulfilled and what do they want they want to die so as to not have to look on the face of the one who sits on the throne or to face the wrath of the lamb the wrath of the lamb the lamb of god who's so meek and broken and tender goes to calvary and there takes god almighty's wrath on himself in the place of his own people that they might be forgiven and never have to fear that final judgment the wrath of the lamb is that your view of jesus that his!

wrath is so great that people would rather be annihilated his wrath is as great as the fear that is due him who can dwell with consuming fire who can even imagine the horrors of infinite eternal torments in hell that jesus wrath will pour out on all rejecters and in that day we'll see just how much the holy jesus hates sin he's as fierce to rebels as he is kind to repentant sinners so the question this morning is are you ready to face that day you ready to face this lamb in judgment you ready for the judgment day the return of christ well it all depends on your relationship to jesus that day will either be your best day or your worst nightmare and it all depends on your relationship to jesus is he your friend or your enemy he makes the best of friends and the very worst of enemies and so that day when jesus comes will be the best day for all of his people who though they were sinful and as wicked as the other guys took their sins to jesus and trusted in his sacrifice as the lamb of god to take away god's wrath forever and ever upon them and he will welcome them into eternity but for any who just reject the lamb and reject his sacrifice they will be left for the eternal ages to bear that wrath themselves forever and ever and ever you say are you trying to scare me preacher if that's what it takes to wake you from your slumber yes fall on us next time you see an earthquake you think of yourself sinner friend as wishing that were you rather than facing the wrath of the lamb why is it in our bible is there to call us to repent today it's high time to serve the lord these things have to do with us the judgment of god on israel 2800 years ago is just a tremor of the big one that's coming the destruction of jerusalem in 70 a.d.

as wicked and terrible a thing as it was at the hands of the romans was just a tremor of a big one that's coming when the king of kings returns and all of these tremors down through the history of the bible and throughout human history are calling us to repent turn turn why will you die why will you not rather repent and live don't think they were worse than you and therefore you'll somehow escape jesus says nay i tell you unless you all repent you will all likewise perish heed the word heed the call biggest surprise coming for this world is the return of the lamb make sure you greet him as your savior and friend and not face him as your enemy for all eternity let's pray lord i confess that there's no reason not to believe in hell if we have eyes to read a bible and to believe that it is everlasting torments but i confess my own slowness to believe the difficulty even as a regenerate man to come to terms with everlasting punishment so teach me what i do not know teach me but

there are others here father who are not saved and hell is not a reality for them at all and the wrath of the lamb is just empty words on the page and only you can make it a burning reality to their soul we ask you have mercy lord you put these things in the bible for a reason you meant this crowd this audience to hear these words you meant it to be an awakening call that they might not have to say these things in the day of your return so use it effectively to drive people to christ for mercy to see just how he delights to show mercy oh forever save us from our sins and save us from ourself and save us from this godless generation and help us then to be vines that bring forth good fruits to your praise and glory and make us like a trained heifer that delights to work in your service to live for your praise we ask it in jesus name amen