

## “HEATED DESIRES”

Hosea 7:1-7

Pastor Keith E. Gephart

### INTRODUCTION

Far too often men question the motives of our God. He is said to be cruel, sadistic, indifferent, or fickle. Is He really sovereign? Is He sovereign but heartless?

Once again the prophet shows us the true heart desire of our God toward His people and toward all mankind. However, His people have their own desires that prevent God from fulfilling His benevolent desires toward them.

Man following his own ways brings upon himself catastrophe, ruin, and heartache. Israel insisted upon following its own hearts desires and as a result brought utter ruin upon itself. Both leaders and people were thoroughly callous to the Lord’s ways and full of debauchery. The rulers fed off of the corruption of the people, and the people destroyed the rulers. The nation came to utter ruin. Any nation whose God is not the Lord and which does not follow His ways will end in the same predicament.

### **Your heart’s desires must be in harmony with God’s heart desires.**

“Trust in the Lord and do good. . . . Delight yourself in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him, and He will do it.” (Ps. 37:3-5)

- I. Yahweh’s Desires (6:11b-7:1)
  - A. Yahweh Would “Restore the fortunes” of His people [Lit—“return the captivity”]  
Compare Job 42:10—Same idea.
  - B. Yahweh would Heal Israel (7:1)
  - C. Yahweh’s desires are hindered by the wickedness of His people (1)
    1. Iniquity of Ephraim is uncovered—exposed [“that which is twisted, bent”]
    2. Evil deeds of Samaria
    3. Deception and fraud
    4. Thieves enter inside
    5. Bandits raid outsideThe whole picture is of tremendous moral instability!
  - D. Yahweh’s desires are hindered by His full awareness of their deeds, though their hearts are oblivious of this fact.
    1. He remembers their wickedness.
    2. Their deeds are “in His face!” Such deeds surround them—everywhere.

II. THE LEADERS' DESIRES (3, 5)

- A. The Leaders—kings and princes—revel in the wickedness and lies of the people—they do not seek to rebuke or correct them (3).
- B. The leaders revel in debauchery—along with the people (5).
  - 1. They become sick with the “heat” of wine.
  - 2. They participate with scorners. “Stretch out the hand—familiarities such as handshakes, greetings, toasts, etc.
  - 3. Little do they realize that the judgment they lose in such corruption prepares them for their own ruin.

III. THE PEOPLE'S DESIRES (4, 6, 7)

- A. The Root Problem—“They are all adulterers.” [This adultery is literal, spiritual, and political. They long after prosperity and success—whatever it takes to achieve it: someone else’s wife or daughter, “favors” and benefits from following a false deity, benefits from building relationships with a foreign power. It may be that they can best achieve their goals by overthrowing the current political leaders (esp. king). Otherwise, **they are worldly minded! How different are they from the average person in our culture?**
- B. They “**bring their heart** into their ambush (like into an oven), where the plot is hatched. (v. 6)
- C. Over time the plot is hatched, until it finally breaks out into a flame—consuming their political rulers. (4, 6).
  - 1. Note that the “baker” works in a **clandestine** way. The **baker** is evidently the evil working in them—the passion of idolatry—or here especially their treachery and conspiracy. [The baker is not to be identified with some supposed person who instigates the conspiracy.]
  - 2. When the time is right the baker ceases resting, stirs the flames, and executes the plans. Like the frog in the pot, the heat of the oven seems fairly harmless while the dough is simply leavening and rising after it has been kneaded. **But when ready to bake, after the “baker” has “slept” all night (v. 6), he awakes to stir the fire and bring open flames (4, 6).**
  - 3. All the people are “hot like an oven (v. 6). They attack—bring their **ambush** (v. 6).
  - 4. **No one calls on the Lord**—NOT PEOPLE NOR LEADERS!
- D. They “consume” their rulers (v. 6).  
All their kings have fallen. (v. 7)

## CONCLUSION

The catastrophes and political upheavals resulting from such wicked hearts and behavior were numerous in Israel: Hosea knew what he was talking about (II K. 15:10, 14, 25, and 30).

- King Zechariah was assassinated by Shallum.
- Shallum by Menahem.
- Pekahiah by Pekah.
- Pekah by Hoshea.
- All of these within a short span during the prophetic ministry of Hosea. These assassinations do not even include those of previous generations!

In our stubborn pride we men think that we can make decisions and do things better than the Lord's commands and instructions. We only succeed in ruining our nations and our personal lives!

**Your heart's desires must be in harmony with God's heart's desires.**

Ps. 37:3-5.