

“DEATH AND DESTRUCTION, OR THE DESTRUCTION OF DEATH”

Hosea 13:9-16

Pastor Keith E. Gephart

INTRODUCTION

As we saw in 13:1-8, Ephraim at one time commanded honor and respect. Yahweh had been their God since Egypt and had cared for them through all the wilderness wanderings. However, Israel became satisfied, proud, and forgot God (13:6). They turned to their own ways and worshiped false gods—even golden calves and other idols. Therefore, the Lord threatened to destroy them like a lion or leopard, or bear. All of their prosperity was temporary and would vanish away.

This theme of ruin and destruction continues in vv. 9-13, and vv. 15-16. However, in the midst of such threats of ruin and devastation, the Lord gives His people one of the most amazing promises of redemption and restoration found anywhere in Scripture: “I will ransom them from the power of Sheol. I will redeem them from death. O Death, where are your thorns? O Sheol, where is your sting? Repentance will be hidden from My eyes.”

- I. REJECTING ONE’S ONLY HELPER IS DESTRUCTION (9-11)
 - A. Ephraim is against Yahweh.
 - B. They are against their “Help.”
 - C. Their kings and rulers are no help (10)
 - D. Yahweh removes the kings that he gives them (11)

- II. RETRIBUTION FOR SIN CANNOT BE POSTPONED (12-13)
 - A. Ephraim’s sin is “bound up” and “stored up” (12).
 - B. Labor Pains produced no birth or life—only suffering (13).
 1. He is an unwise son.
 2. He refused to “be born.”

- III. RICHES AND PROSPERITY ARE TEMPORARY (15)
 - A. The “east wind from Yahweh out of the desert will dry up all water sources.
 - B. The Assyrian conqueror will plunder their valuables.

- IV. REBELLION RESULTS IN SHOCKING BRUTALITIES (16)
 - A. “They will fall by the sword”—invasion of the Assyrian armies.
 - B. “Their children will be dashed in pieces.”
 - C. “His (Samaria’s) pregnant ones will be ripped open.” Note that abortion, even in that day, was considered a horrific action.

- V. REDEMPTION FOR ISRAEL LIES IN THE FUTURE (14)
 - A. God ransom’s His people from the power of Sheol

- B. God redeems His people from Death.
- C. God strips Death of its plagues.
- D. God strips Sheol of its destruction.
- E. God will never repent—change his mind—from His redemptive purpose.
- F. Paul takes this truth to its ultimate conclusion: I Cor. 15:51-55

CONCLUSION

What an unexpected delight to find the power of the Gospel in the midst of a passage of justice and judgment upon sin. Yes, the truth of Romans is shown once more:

“Where sin did abound, grace did much more abound.”

The Lord is sovereign; He will accomplish His purpose!

Rejoice you people of God; for our God triumphs over sin and rebellion.