

FOR IT IS TIME

HOSEA 10

Text: Hosea 10:12

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¹² Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for *it is* time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you.

Introduction:

What would we think of a farmer who allowed his finest field to lie fallow year after year? We would think he was lazy, and careless. Yet men neglect their souls; besides being unprofitable, these inward fields become full of weeds and exceedingly foul.

Hosea was summoned as the prophet to reveal the wickedness of Israel in forsaking and God. Their deeds are summarized in verse 13.

Hosea 10:13

¹³ Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity; ye have eaten the fruit of lies: because thou didst trust in thy way, in the multitude of thy mighty men.

Hosea began to prophesy at a time when God was contending in a immediate way with the sinful people, who fell into the hands of the Lord, before they were turned over into the hands of man.

He began to prophesy in Israel at a time when their kingdom was in a flourishing prosperous condition.

Men are not to be flattered in their sinful ways because they prosper in the world, but even then must be faithfully reprov'd, and plainly told that their prosperity will not be their security, nor will it last long if they go on still in their trespasses.

Notice what the sins are which are laid to Israel's charge, the national sins which brings national judgment. The prophet deals plainly with them; for what good would it do them to be flattered?

1. PROBLEMS CITED

A. They were not fruitful in the fruits of righteousness. "an empty vine" (vss. 1)

B. They multiplied their altars and images, and the more bountiful God's providence was to them the more prodigal they were in serving their idols.

It is a great offense to God, and an abuse of his goodness, when the more mercies we receive from him the more sins we commit against him, and when the more wealth men have the more mischief they do.

C. Their hearts were divided (vss 2)

1. They were divided among themselves.
2. They were divided between God and their idols.

D. Their words were worthless. (vss. 4)

2. PERIOD CLARIFIED (VSS. 12)

“IT IS TIME”

A. Now is the time.

B. Now is all that we have

3. PREPARATION COMMENDED (VSS. 12)

A. Break up the fallow ground

- In order for good seed to grow there must be some preparation done.

(Isaiah 28:23-25) "Give ye ear, and hear my voice; hearken, and hear my speech. {24} Doth the plowman plow all day to sow? doth he open and break the clods of his ground? {25} When he hath made plain the face thereof, doth he not cast abroad the fitches, and scatter the cummin, and cast in the principal wheat and the appointed barley and the rie in their place?"

(Jeremiah 4:3) "For thus saith the LORD to the men of Judah and Jerusalem, Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns."

- Weeds grow with no preparation.
- B. Sow to themselves in righteousness.
- Every action is seed sown.
- There is a principle of Sowing and Reaping

(Galatians 6:7-9) "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. {8} For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. {9} And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

(Proverbs 22:8) "He that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity: and the rod of his anger shall fail."

(2 Corinthians 9:6) "But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully."

Notice:

- You reap what you sow.
- You reap later than you sow.
- Reap more than you sow.

C. Seek the Lord

4. PERSISTENCY COMMANDED – “SEEK THE LORD UNTIL HE COME AND RAIN RIGHTEOUSNESS UPON YOU”

We must look up to him for his grace, and beg of him to bless the *seed sown*. The husbandman must plough and sow with an eye to God, asking of him rain in the season.

- The problem is with most of us is that we grow impatient.

5. PROMISED CERTAINTIES – REAP & RAIN

A. Reap a crop of mercy

B. Rain righteousness

Notice the very thing that’s to be sown is that which will be reaped. Truly we do reap what we sow and certainly more than we sow.

Close:

God help us not to get weary in well doing and to "Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you."