

Hosea 4:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

As they were increased, so they sinned against me: therefore will I change their glory into shame.

Analysis

Perverse prosperity: 'As they were increased, so they sinned against me: therefore will I change their glory into shame.' Numerical and material growth fueled pride rather than gratitude. The more God blessed, the more Israel forgot their benefactor—prosperity breeding apostasy (Deuteronomy 8:10-14 warned of precisely this). The Hebrew suggests priestly multiplication: as priests increased, sin increased. God promises to transform כְּבוֹדָם (kevodam, their glory/honor) into קָלוֹן (qalon, shame/dishonor). This reversal pattern appears throughout Scripture: the exalted humbled, the honored shamed (Luke 14:11, 18:14). Pride precedes destruction (Proverbs 16:18). Only in Christ is glory secure—not self-achieved but received as gift, based on His righteousness not ours (Philippians 3:9).

Historical Context

Jeroboam II's reign brought unprecedented prosperity to northern Israel—territorial expansion, economic growth, apparent blessing. This wealth, however, produced moral complacency and spiritual decline. Archaeological evidence confirms 8th century prosperity: fine houses, luxury goods, expanded fortifications. Yet prophets (Hosea, Amos) exposed injustice, oppression, and syncretism underlying material success. The priests, benefiting from increased offerings and tithes, had vested interest in maintaining the corrupt system. Their 'glory' (prestige, wealth, honor) would become 'shame' when Assyria destroyed the nation, exposing their false securities. Jesus warns similarly: 'Woe unto you that are rich!' (Luke 6:24).

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How does material prosperity sometimes function as spiritual danger, and what safeguards prevent prosperity from breeding apostasy?
2. What is the difference between glory received as divine gift versus glory pursued through self-exaltation?

Interlinear Text

כְּרַבּוּ ׀	כִּי ׀	חָטְאוּ	לִי ׀	כְּבוֹדָם ׀	בְּקָל וִן
As they were increased	H3651	so they sinned	H0	their glory	into shame
H7230		H2398		H3519	H7036

אֶמְרִי:

against me therefore will I change

H4171

Additional Cross-References

Hosea 13:6 (Parallel theme): According to their pasture, so were they filled; they were filled, and their heart was exalted; therefore have they forgotten me.

1 Samuel 2:30 (Parallel theme): Wherefore the LORD God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever: but now the LORD saith, Be it far from me; for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.

Philippians 3:19 (Glory): Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)

Malachi 2:9 (Parallel theme): Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people, according as ye have not kept my ways, but have been partial in the law.

Hosea 4:10 (Parallel theme): For they shall eat, and not have enough: they shall commit whoredom, and shall not increase: because they have left off to take heed to the LORD.

Hosea 10:1 (Parallel theme): Israel is an empty vine, he bringeth forth fruit unto himself: according to the multitude of his fruit he hath increased the altars; according to the goodness of his land they have made goodly images.

Habakkuk 2:16 (Glory): Thou art filled with shame for glory: drink thou also, and let thy foreskin be uncovered: the cup of the LORD'S right hand shall be turned unto thee, and shameful spewing shall be on thy glory.

Hosea 5:1 (Parallel theme): Hear ye this, O priests; and hearken, ye house of Israel; and give ye ear, O house of the king; for judgment is toward you, because ye have been a snare on Mizpah, and a net spread upon Tabor.

Hosea 6:9 (Parallel theme): And as troops of robbers wait for a man, so the company of priests murder in the way by consent: for they commit lewdness.

Ezra 9:7 (Sin): Since the days of our fathers have we been in a great trespass unto this day; and for our iniquities have we, our kings, and our priests, been delivered into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, and to a spoil, and to confusion of face, as it is this day.