

# Hosea 7:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knoweth it not:  
yea, gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth  
not.

## Analysis

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Unrecognized decline: 'Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knoweth it not: yea, gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not.' Israel's strength consumed by foreigners (זָרִים, zarim)—tribute payments, territorial losses, cultural influence—yet אֵינֶנּוּ יוֹדְעָא (einennu yodea, he knows not). Similarly, premature aging (gray hairs, שֵׂיבָה, seivah) signals decline, yet awareness lacking. This describes spiritual delusion: obvious deterioration invisible to those experiencing it. Pride blinds to reality (Revelation 3:17: 'knowest not that thou art wretched'). Only divine revelation exposes true condition. Christ as Great Physician diagnoses accurately, offering healing to those who acknowledge sickness (Matthew 9:12).

## Historical Context

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Israel's final decades saw progressive weakening they refused to acknowledge. Tribute to Assyria drained resources (2 Kings 15:19-20, 17:3-4). Territory lost to Assyrian campaigns (2 Kings 15:29). Political autonomy diminished. Yet rather than recognizing decline and repenting, they maintained delusions of strength and security. Amos condemned those 'at ease in Zion' (Amos 6:1). The 'gray hairs' imagery suggests age without wisdom—elderly physically but immature spiritually. Archaeological evidence shows declining economic conditions they apparently ignored. This demonstrates that spiritual blindness prevents recognizing even obvious decline. Church history shows denominations similarly declining while denying reality.

## Related Passages

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**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

**1 John 4:8** — God is love

## Study Questions

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1. How can spiritual blindness prevent recognizing obvious moral and spiritual decline in ourselves or our communities?
2. What indicators reveal spiritual 'gray hairs'—aging/declining faith masked by outward religious activity?

## Interlinear Text

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אָכל וְ	זָרִים	כֹּחַ וְ	לֹא יָדַע:	גַּם
have devoured	Strangers	his strength	and he knoweth	
H398	H2114	H3581	H3045	H1571
שִׁיבָה	וְרָקָה	בּוֹ	לֹא יָדַע:	
it not yea gray hairs	are here and there		and he knoweth	
H7872	H2236	H0	H3045	

## Additional Cross-References

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**Hosea 8:7** (Parallel theme): For they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind: it hath no stalk: the bud shall yield no meal: if so be it yield, the strangers shall swallow it up.