

Hosea 9:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

They shall not offer wine offerings to the LORD, neither shall they be pleasing unto him: their sacrifices shall be unto them as the bread of mourners; all that eat thereof shall be polluted: for their bread for their soul shall not come into the house of the LORD.

Analysis

Worship ended: 'They shall not offer wine offerings to the LORD, neither shall they be pleasing unto him: their sacrifices shall be unto them as the bread of mourners; all that eat thereof shall be polluted: for their bread for their soul shall not come into the house of the LORD.' Exile ends worship: no wine offerings (נֶסֶךְ, nesekh), sacrifices not pleasing (אֲרָב, arav), compared to לֶחֶם אוֹנִים (lechem onim, bread of mourners—ceremonially unclean). Their food sustains physically but cannot access God's house. This prophesies worship's end in exile: no temple access, no acceptable sacrifice, no covenant meals. Only Christ's once-for-all sacrifice enables eternal worship access (Hebrews 10:19-22).

Historical Context

Torah prescribed wine offerings accompanying sacrifices (Numbers 15:1-10), pleasing to YHWH when from obedient hearts. Exile prevented these: no legitimate altar, no temple, no priesthood functioning properly. 'Bread of mourners' refers to food eaten in context of corpse contact (Numbers 19:14, Deuteronomy 26:14), rendering eaters ceremonially unclean—unable to approach God or offer sacrifice. In Assyrian exile, all food became defiled (no tithing, no proper slaughter, pagan land). Archaeological evidence shows lack of cultic/temple remains from exilic

northern Israelite communities, confirming worship's cessation. This demonstrated that covenant violation results in covenant worship access lost. Only remnant returning to Jerusalem could resume proper worship.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does loss of worship access demonstrate the seriousness of exile as covenant curse?
2. What does Christ's opening eternal access to God (Hebrews 10:19-22) reveal about the superiority of the new covenant?

Interlinear Text

לֹא	יִסְכּוּ	יְהוָה:	יַיִן	וְלֹא	יִעֲרְבוּ
H3808	They shall not offer	of the LORD	wine	H3808	neither shall they be pleasing
	H5258	H3068	H3196		H6149

לֹו	זִבְחֵיהֶם	לֶחֶם	אֻנִּים	לֶהֶם	כָּל
H0	unto him their sacrifices	for their bread	of mourners	H0	H3605
	H2077	H3899	H205		

אֲכָל יוֹ	יִטְמָאוּ	כִּי	לֶחֶם	לְנַפְשָׁם	לֹא
all that eat	thereof shall be polluted	H3588	for their bread	for their soul	H3808
H398	H2930		H3899	H5315	

יָבֹאוּ	בֵּית	יְהוָה:
shall not come	into the house	of the LORD
H935	H1004	H3068

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 6:20 (Sacrifice): To what purpose cometh there to me incense from Sheba, and the sweet cane from a far country? your burnt offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices sweet unto me.

Deuteronomy 26:14 (References Lord): I have not eaten thereof in my mourning, neither have I taken away ought thereof for any unclean use, nor given ought thereof for the dead: but I have hearkened to the voice of the LORD my God, and have done according to all that thou hast commanded me.

Hosea 8:13 (Sin): They sacrifice flesh for the sacrifices of mine offerings, and eat it; but the LORD accepteth them not; now will he remember their iniquity, and visit their sins: they shall return to Egypt.

Ezekiel 24:17 (Parallel theme): Forbear to cry, make no mourning for the dead, bind the tire of thine head upon thee, and put on thy shoes upon thy feet, and cover not thy lips, and eat not the bread of men.

Hosea 3:4 (Sacrifice): For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim: