

Feeding on Wind Hosea 12 - 13:9

Introduction:

1. Hosea begins chapter 12 by declaring that Ephraim (Israel) was feeding on wind and following after the east wind.
2. What a vivid illustration of so many people today. People are wasting their lives feeding on things of no eternal substance. They are feeding on wind, yet they are like Israel in Hosea's day - they are too blind to see it.
3. There are so many people who are feeding on wind, who at the end of their life realize that their life is empty of the things that really matter.
 - The end of the man who feeds on the wind is emptiness.
 - The end of the man who follows after the wind is a life of frustration, misery, and regret.
4. The believer today need not spend his life feeding on wind. As we sink our teeth into God's Word, we learn how to invest our lives into things of eternal substance and consequence, things that don't just satisfy the flesh, but satisfy the soul and spirit.
5. In this lesson we will learn exactly how Israel was feeding on wind, as well as God's response to Israel. We will also learn how people should respond when they realize they are spending their lives feeding on wind.

Feeding on wind - how did it happen?

Hosea explains clearly to Israel why they were feeding on wind.

1. Materialism - 12:8
 - Israel was consumed with riches and wealth. The phrase, "become rich" means "to accumulate."
 - The phrase "*I have found me out substance*" means "I'm wealthy."
 - They were into accumulating wealth and material riches, and had been rather successful at it, but Hosea says they were feeding on wind.
 - They were like the rich fool in **Luke 12:15-21. cf. Colossians 3:1-2**
2. Dishonesty - 12:7
 - Their unbridled thirst for material wealth led them to gain wealth by dishonest means.
 - "*Balances of deceit*" mean the scales of fraud and deception.
 - Their desire for material wealth led them to oppress (defraud) others.
 - Are you honest with others? Are you honest with God? Paul warned the believer of the temptations that come with a desire to be rich. **1 Timothy 6:9-11**
 - Are we handling our material riches honestly or has greed and materialism gripped our hearts? Our attitude towards giving reveals the answer to those questions. **1 Timothy 6:17-19**
3. Idolatry - 13:2-3
 - What happens when people become infatuated and engrossed in material things? It always leads to an idolatrous heart.
 - We make idols out of our material wealth. This is exactly what Israel did. They made idols according to their own understanding.

- Idolatry steals our hearts away from God. We begin to feed on wind, getting caught up in a whirlwind of things that really do not matter.
 - What happens to people like this? Their short lives disappears like the wind, like smoke out of a chimney. 13:3
4. Pride - 13:1, 6
- In their materialistic idolatry, they became prideful. They no longer saw a need for God.
 - Their attitude was, "Look what we have done, what we have built - what we have acquired, what we have accomplished." **Deuteronomy 8:11-14, 17-19**
 - God had blessed them, but their hearts were exalted and they forgot God. How many times has this scenario been repeated throughout history? People who really think they are something, but too blind to see that they are simply feeding on wind.

Feeding on wind - how did God respond?

1. God warned them through His Word.
 - When God sees His children full of materialism, and prideful, idolatrous hearts, God loves us too much to leave us that way.
 - In love and grace, God gives us His Word to reveal the error of our way and to convict us of our sin. **Hebrews 4:12; Jeremiah 23:29**
 - This is what God did with Israel. He spoke through the prophets, warning Israel of coming judgment if they didn't turn from their sin. 12:10-11
 - It is a dangerous thing to turn away from the Word of God. This is God's way of speaking to us. Christian, when you decide to quit church or stop reading your Bible, you are cutting yourself off from the voice of God in your life. It is a serious thing.
2. God would humble them through trials.
 - Since they refused to heed God's Word through Moses (the law) and the prophets, God would have to bring judgment. 12:2, 14, 13:6-8
 - God would strip them of their riches and once again cause them to dwell in tents in the wilderness. 12:9
 - The children of Israel were slaves in Egypt, but God's prophet (Moses) came to them with the Word of the Lord. Israel listened to Moses and he led them out of the bondage of Egypt. 12:13
 - Why would God bring judgment and trials upon Israel? To get them to once again listen to His Word.
 - Christian, when God allows trials in your life, may those trials draw you to God's Word and cause you to listen attentively to the Word of the Lord.

Feeding on wind - what was the answer?

1. When people are wasting their lives or destroying their lives by feeding on wind, there is only one answer - turn to God and obey His Word. 12:6
2. **Hosea 13:9** sums it up perfectly, "*O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help.*"
3. When we humble ourselves, turn to God, and believe His Word, God will gladly help us.

4. Hosea uses Jacob as an illustration. Jacob was a conniver and a deceiver. God humbled Jacob through trials, and Jacob turned to the Lord and was a changed man. 12:3-5, 12
5. God doesn't simply desire to be Number One in our life - He wants to **be** our Life. 13:4
6. Christian, have you been feeding on wind and following after the wind? Turn to God today in humility, listen to His Word, and believe it. Don't delay like Israel - now is the time. **1 Thessalonians 2:13**