



Before His Face

And they do not consider in their hearts that I remember all their wickedness. Now their deeds are all around them; they are before My face.

Hosea 7:2

As I read chapter 7 of Hosea, I was struck by the feature verse above. My first thought was that it was desperately sad. When I think of the beauty and splendor, the glory and majesty of Creator God, of the lengths to which He went to rescue and redeem this pitiful, ragged, rebellious race, of the love that stirs His heart, the compassion that drips from His eyes, and compare it to the wickedness of humanity, it breaks my heart.

We ignore Him. We think Him powerless, ineffective, unable and uninterested. We mistake His mercy and grace as proof that either He is lenient and tolerant, or not as powerful as He claims. After so many years of seeming silence in the face of our collective sin, it becomes easy for us to convince ourselves that He doesn't see it, or that He overlooks it.

But He sees it. It builds in a towering pile of noxious garbage, reeking before His face.

My own sins are there. Those that are willful, prideful, arrogant. Those that I refuse to see, refuse to admit, refuse to confess to Him. I also am guilty of not considering in my heart that He remembers my wickedness. More, I have convinced myself that my wickedness isn't all that bad. But it is. No matter the justification, no matter the excuse, my sins stand on their own, adding to the stench created by humanity's sinful nature.

To think that Almighty God does not see them, will overlook them, will excuse them is a fallacy of immense proportions. To think that justice will not be met, or it will continue to be meted with mercy, is stretching the bounds of righteousness. Above all, our God is holy. Our God is pure. Our God is righteous. Justice *will* be poured out, and rather than mercy, it will be mingled with the undiluted wrath of an offended God on those who continue to reject Him.

Perhaps the most saddening truth of all is that He Himself has already paid the price in His own blood for all the sins of all the people of all the earth for all time. Each stinking, reeking sin in that pile of garbage before the King has been paid for. But we refuse His gift.

Oh let this truth arrow to our hearts and bring the weight of conviction on us. Oh that we would see our sin for what it is, and confess it to Him, allowing Him to cleanse us of it, so that rather than the stench of transgression, we offer the fragrance of praise and worship before His face.

Father, we are humbled and broken hearted at our sin in the face of Your sacrifice. Cleanse us from what separates us from You. Create in us a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within us. May we bring the fragrance of worship to Your throne.