

## HOSEA: Message 2

INTRO: In our first message we saw the first picture and proclamation of God's great love for Israel. Hosea was instructed to marry a woman of impure character. And then this woman bore him three children in unfaithfulness. The first, a boy, was called Jezreel, meaning sown or scattered. By this God meant He would scatter Israel among the nations, and this happened in Hosea's life time. The second, a daughter, was called LoRuhamaw, which meant, "No Mercy". God would scatter them and not have mercy upon them. Watch videos of the holocaust, and you will see this like in no other picture. Then she bore another son and called him, "Lo Ammi", meaning, 'not my people'. What a picture that is of the time from 722 BC until 1948 AD. But the promise was that God would return her to Himself, and of that we have seen the beginning. Today, this part of the message of the prophets is in progress.

Then, in the first message, God recounted in the proclamation how He had loved Israel and how He had brought her to Himself and married her and cared for her, but she disowned Him and ran after other lovers. Let me just insert here, that today, that is the same as Christians dressing like the world, talking like the world, acting like the world, listening to the world's music and so on. But again, God's proclamation closed with the promise that He would bring Israel back again some day and in the end He would say, "You are My people" and Israel will say, "You are My God." Today, the Israeli prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu has Bible studies in his home. God has brought Israel back to the land, and He is now seeking to woo her to Himself once more, and the promise of the Word of God is that it will happen.

And this morning we begin our second message in chapter three, which also begins Hosea's second message to Israel. Here we will once more be given a picture, with both the blight and the blessing. Then it will take 11 chapters to cover the proclamation with both its blight and blessing. So we begin with chapter 3.

### II. MESSAGE #2 (3:1-14:9)

#### A. PICTURE OF GOD'S STEADFAST LOVE (3:1-5)

##### 1. Blight (3:1-4)

In chapter 3, in verses 1-4 we have the blight (read). You will remember from the first message that Hosea was given a very difficult assignment. He was to take a wife of great impurity, a severely defiled woman, and marry her. Hosea did so, and now, once more God gives Hosea a very difficult task. The command is to go again and love a woman who is loved by a lover. Some think that Hosea is commanded here to love another woman, besides Gomer. That cannot be as it would destroy the picture of God's love for Israel, who is yet the same woman. So here is the picture I get. Gomer has left Hosea. She has run off with yet another lover. And now he is commanded to go take her back. J. Vernon McGee says, "Perhaps Gomer had sold herself to some group of racketeers who were running brothels in the land. Hosea had to buy her back. Here is one of the clear passages on the doctrine of redemption. Have not you and I too, been bought back from the pig pen of sin?"

And God explains the picture clearly in verse 1. And the picture this gives, according to this verse is that Hosea's taking his wife back is, "... just like the love of the LORD for the children of Israel, who look to other gods and love the raisin cakes of the pagans." So the picture is that of unfaithfulness. Now I understand that the raisin cakes were made of pressed grapes and were part of the ceremonies of many Canaanite cult festivals. Cohen and Vandermay say that they included the ritual that honored the queen of heaven (Jer. 7:18; 44:19). And they make this comment, "Especially note the similarity of the cult of Mary to the ancient 'queen of heaven' concept."

Now in order for Hosea to get his wife back, he has to buy her back. There we have the doctrine of redemption. But the price he paid for her was half the price of a slave, which was 30 shekels (Ex. 31:22). So, this woman is not of much value, even by other men. And then he also paid 1 and 1/2 homers of barley, and that is, as someone has pointed out, animal feed. Half the price of a

slave and some animal feed, and Hosea has her back. What a picture. Some think that the 1 and 1/2 homers of barley made up the other 15 shekels of the price of a slave.

And now, when Hosea had her back, he said to her, "You shall stay with me many days; you shall not play the harlot, nor shall you have a man; thus I will also be toward you." This, of course, is all prophetic, and verse 4, gives us the meaning (read). It is an amazing thing that Israel, in her captivity, was forever cured of worshipping false gods. But the problem was that nationally she never yet has learned to recognize Her Messiah, Jesus Christ. So, Israel has been without a king or prince, without a sacrifice or sacred pillar, without ephod or teraphim now for over 2000 years. But this is not the end of the story, so let us consider this short recounting of the blessing in verse 5 (read).

## 2. Blessing (3:5)

Verse 5 begins with the word 'afterward'. After what? After Israel has been without a king or prince or temple for many days, after that. And how many is many days? Many! After more than 2000 years, she still does not have all of what is promised here. But the beginning of this prophecy is already being fulfilled. The word 'return' means they will come back to Israel. And today, Israel is in the process of returning!

Listen. This prophecy stood written for over 2000 years with no part of it fulfilled. But, today, after so long a time, many days, she is returning! In 1948, not long ago, Israel once more became a nation against all odds, and today, Jews are still returning. It is a divine thing that is happening. There are incredible prophecies in the OT of this return and it is happening right now! We are living in those precious days! Today, as for many years now, Israel is returning from all over the world.

Let me quote from the Internet's Wikipedia, "In 1991, the sitting [Ethiopian](#) government... was

close to being toppled with the recent military successes of [Eritrean](#) and [Tigrean](#) rebels, threatening Ethiopia with dangerous political destabilization. Several Jewish organizations, including the state of [Israel](#), were concerned about the well-being of the sizable population of Ethiopian Jews, (black Jews) known as [Beta Israel](#), residing in Ethiopia. Also, the Mengistu regime had made mass emigration difficult for Beta Israel residing in Ethiopia, and the regime's dwindling power presented a promising opportunity for those Beta Israel who had been wanting to emigrate to Israel. In the previous year, 1990, the [Israeli government](#) and [Israeli Defense Forces](#), aware of Mengistu's worsening political situation, made covert plans to airlift the Beta Israel population in Ethiopia to Israel. This became the largest emigration of Beta Israel to date.

In 36 hours, non-stop flights of 34 Israeli aircraft, including [IAF C-130s](#) and El Al cargo planes, transported 14,325 Ethiopian Jews to Israel. Operation Solomon airlifted almost twice as many Ethiopian Jews to Israel as [Operation Moses](#). The operation set a world record for single-flight passenger load on May 24, 1991 when an [El Al 747](#) carried 1,122 passengers to Israel (1,087 passengers were [registered](#), but dozens of children hid in their mothers' robes). 'Planners expected to fill the aircraft with 760 passengers. Because the passengers were so light, many more were squeezed in.' Five babies were born during the flight" (end quote).

Go to the OT prophets and you will find this prophesied over and over again. So, Hosea here says Israel will return. And then he says they will seek the Lord their God and David their king. I think that is beginning to happen as well, though it is but a trickle today. And it says they will seek the fear of the Lord and His goodness in the latter days. We have not seen that yet, but it is beginning to happen. We are alive in the days when prophesies that have lain

dormant for over 2000 years are being fulfilled. I had the privilege of speaking with Gershon Solomon in Israel by phone a while ago. You should hear what a zeal this Jew has for what is coming!

Now let me just stop to tell you right now, that to Amillennialism, which represents by far the majority of evangelicalism today; these prophecies are perfectly meaningless. Oh they spiritualize them, but that is also meaningless, if not worse.

B. PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S STEADFAST LOVE (4:1-14:9)

1. Blight (4:1-14:3)

Well, all of that is pictured by God's instruction to Hosea to take his wife back from her present lovers. And now, from 4:1-14:3, we have the proclamation of God's steadfast love for Israel. As I view this passage, it hinges on 7 commands found in chapters 4-14. The first part of verse 1 is an introduction to this section (read).

a. Command # 1 (4:1-19)

The first command given is that Israel is to listen to what God has to say. And this is what He has to say. We find it in the second part of verse 1, "There is no truth or mercy or knowledge of God in the land."

How is it that truth is diminished, and mercy and the knowledge of God? Well, look at verse 6 (read). Notice the top of the list of responsibility is to disseminate the knowledge of God is the priest. That is a word to preachers. Now notice what happens when sin abounds in verse 7 (read).

And in the rest of the verses of this chapter, Israel's harlotry as the wife of God is shown.

b. Command # 2 (5:1-7)

We find the second command in 5:1 (read). It is directed towards the priests, the common people and the princes, the house of the king. The order is this: first the religious leaders, then those who are led, the people, and then the political leaders. And they are all instructed to give ear to what is coming. And this is what is coming, "Yours is the judgment!"

Could we conclude here that as the priest or the preacher goes, so go the people; and as the people go, so go the politicians? Do we have an order here? Would that be an indication what is happening in North America? Is that why judgment must begin at the house of God? Oh preacher, do not fear man; fear God.

And why was Israel to experience this judgment? Well, look at the last part of verse 1 (read). Tradition says that Jeroboam set spies on these two highest places in Israel to see which of the people of his kingdom would go to Jerusalem to worship during the festival seasons. That is, they did not let these Jews worship the way God wanted them to. Later, in John 4, we still find the Samaritan woman asking Jesus where the true place of worship is.

Well, you may wish to later read the sections I am skipping in light of this message.

c. Command # 3 (5:8-15)

Command # 3 is found in 5:8-9 (read). So sure was the judgment that was coming that it is viewed here as beginning already. Now Ramah and Beth Aven were towns on the border of the tribe of Benjamin. J. Vernon McGee thinks that these two towns, that were part of the southern kingdom, were guilty along with Israel, the northern kingdom. I rather think that judgment will begin on the border of Benjamin, leaving the southern kingdom untouched at this time, and take in only the

northern kingdom. In 11:12 we find that Judah is still faithful at this time. Furthermore, historically it was only the northern kingdom that suffered God's judgment at this time. God had faithfully warned this wayward nation, and her end, according to the prophet, has begun.

Well, in the following verses we have described what will happen and how God will judge this rebellious nation. So look at verses 14-15 (read). God is leaving the northern kingdom. He will not return to her until the day in which Israel acknowledges her offenses, and that day has not yet come. It will come, and we are now closer to it than ever. Hitler's ovens have brought this day ever so much closer. Many things have brought them closer to this day, all of them very terrible experiences, but nothing has accomplished what Hitler's gas ovens did. The motto in Israel today is, "Masada shall never fall again."

d. Command # 4 (6:1-7:16)

In chapter 6, we have the fourth command. Let us read verses 1-2 (read). It is, "Come and let us return to the Lord!" But the question is this: Who is speaking? And as I have pondered this question, I think that Hosea the prophet is calling Israel to return to the Lord.

And what does he mean by these words, "after two days He will revive us and in the third day He will raise us up"? Could it mean after two millenniums, God will revive them and in the third they will be resurrected? It was after 2000 years that Israel was revived as a nation, but spiritually they do not have life yet. Ezekiel 37 speaks of their revival but still without spiritual life. And he tells us what happens when God breathes the breath of life into them.

And in verse 3, if this is the prophet's call to Israel, Hosea calls them to pursue

knowledge and he says if they will do that, God will come to them like the rains in time of need. We are in the process of training men for the ministry. I want to challenge those men, you must gain knowledge from the Bible.

Then in verses 4-6, God too calls to Israel to come back to Him. He said of this northern kingdom, that their faithfulness was like the morning cloud. In the morning it looks so promising and then it dissipates with the warmth of the day. And because of their waywardness, God sent the prophets to spank them, and yet they would not listen.

Now not verse 6 (read). As I understand this verse, it thoroughly condemns nominalism, being a Christian in name only. If I call myself a Christian, go to church on Sunday, maybe give some money too; and then go into the week and live for myself, that is what this is talking about. Jot down Matthew 9:9-13; 12:1-8. You may want to read Jesus application of this passage later.

After this, follows a list of the crimes of Israel. So look at just 7:13-16 (read).

e. Command # 5 (8:1-14)

In 8:1 we have the fifth command. It is this: "Set the trumpet to your mouth!" The idea here is that the trumpet sound will say, "The enemy is coming!" Listen to a comment by J. Vernon McGee, who died in 1988, meaning he wrote this before that. Talking about the prophets, Jeremiah and Hosea, who he feels prophesied at a time much like ours, he said, "Their message ought to alarm us as a nation today, but I do not have the faith that they will. I am afraid that we may have stepped over the line and that judgment is inevitable, just as it was for Israel" (Vol. V:641). He wrote that over 20 years ago!

According to a modern prophecy teacher, Dr. David Reagan, America has crossed the line. It is now but a matter of time.

f. Command # 6 (9:1-13:16)

We find command number 6 in 9:1 (read). "Do not rejoice, O Israel, with joy like other peoples." Israel was living in luxury and she credited her luxury to other gods. When good things happened or when the harvest was good, Israel rejoiced and gave credit to some false god. And God says, "Do not rejoice, O Israel, with joy like other peoples." John Gill says of the words in this verse, "So the words may be rendered, 'rejoice not, O Israel,' at an idol, or idols, 'as [other] people,' idolatrous ones..."

But look at the heart of God in 11:8-11 (read). What I see will happen to Israel is that God will give them into the hands of the Assyrians. And they will be scattered into the world, and even though she is scattered all over, God says, "How can I give them up?" That is, how can He give them up forever? He cannot. And his heart begins to churn within Him again, and His sympathy is stirred once more. Why will He do all this after what they have done to Him? Because He is God and not man! And then they will walk with Him. Why? Look at verse 10 (read).

In the 1800 and 1900's God roared! Israel was persecuted beyond measure. Then came the greatest persecution upon the Jew ever known to any of mankind. Adolf Hitler sought to make the world 'Judenrein'. He wanted not one Jew left alive and ended up mercilessly (Lo Ruhamaw) slaughtering 6 million of them.

Now look at what it says further, "'When He roars, then His sons shall come trembling from the west; they shall come trembling like a bird from Egypt, like a dove from the land of Assyria, and I will let them dwell in their

houses,' says the Lord." That is where we are today.

g. Command # 7 (14:1-3)

We come now to the seventh and last command in this long list of God's complaints against Israel. It is this: "O Israel, return to the Lord your God!" And the Lord says to Israel that they have stumbled (read 14:1). It is always sin that causes man to stumble.

Now notice how God gave His plea to Israel. He says, "Take words with you and return to the Lord." And then He says, "I will tell you just which words to take with you when you go to him." Look at verses 2-3 (read).

And if Israel will ever take those words with them and will go to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, then they will find mercy and then 14:4-9 will take place (read).

## 2. Blessing (14:4-9)

So, we have come to the blessing part in the proclamation of Hosea's second message. Twenty some years ago I wrote these words to this passage, "Popeye from the comic strip said, 'I likes to live in the past then I always knows what's gonna happen.'" And then I wrote, "Such is the only hope of the unsaved but for me, I like to live in the BOOK then I always know what is going to happen before it happens." And Hosea tells us what will happen. It is a book that ends like this, "And God and Israel were restored and they lived happily ever after, really." So let us read the last chapter.

And Hosea closes his prophetic book with the words of verse 9 (read).

CONCL: What is the message of the book of Hosea? God took one people from among all the people, back in Abraham's day, from in the midst of idolatry and He married this people, who became the people of Israel. But she bore Him illegitimate children, and because of her sins, and they

were many, she left Him. And then He bought her back, and in that state she would abide 'many days'. And toward the end of those days He would bring her back to her land once more.

God like Hosea took a wife of harlotry. God's wife like Hosea's turned back to her old ways. God, like Hosea, bought her back after all her sins and restores her. Israel's restoration is the final note of this book.

God once again makes something beautiful out of something repugnant and ugly. It is beauty to the utmost that is described here in the last verses of Hosea. As was proclaimed earlier in the book of Hosea, the children of Israel would abide many days without a king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred pillar, without ephod or teraphim; and as was said, "Afterward the children of Israel shall return..." Praise God.

Well today, in our day, they are returning to the land, and only in very small numbers to their God. Nationally they are very far from God. Nationally, they must yet experience the tribulation. But nationally, the tribulation will return them to their God. That lies not too far before us. Thank You Lord for the blessings You promised through Hosea.