

THE PROPHET HOSEA

Lesson 6 *A final call to repent*

Review. The previous lesson covered chapters 11-12. How did the Lord describe his love for Israel in chapter 11?

Introduction

Consider the account of the fall into sin in Genesis 3. Describe the relationship Adam and Eve had with God before they sinned.

Knowing what life was like with God in the Garden of Eden, how could Adam and Eve be so foolish to forfeit that life and relationship for a piece of fruit?

Adam and Eve quickly learned that life apart from God wouldn't be better. They had been duped. How easily do we recognize the perils of a life that strays from God's will?

The Lord's burning anger

Read Hosea 13:1-16.

How does Hosea picture Ephraim (Israel) in verse 1? How does he picture them in verse 3? How does he picture them in verses 7 and 8?

What do you learn about Israel's idolatry, and idolatry in general, from verse 2?

In Old Testament Scripture the exodus from Egypt was a big deal. Why is that?

Compare verse 6 with **Deuteronomy 8:10-15**.

What has brought about Israel's destruction according to verse 9?

How is that destruction described in the subsequent verses?

A tone of anger dominates this particular chapter of Hosea. However, do you catch any glimmers of grace in this chapter?

Discussion

- Idols are worthless, but they are not harmless. Why is it so important to make that distinction?
- Agree or disagree: "Anger is a sin."
- We are not certain how well the average Israelite in Hosea's day knew their nation's history. What are the dangers of being ignorant of the past? What are the dangers of being ignorant of Bible history?

- The graphic description of Israel's destruction is difficult even for the believer. We may wonder, "How could God let such terrible things happen even to little ones and pregnant women?" Why might questions like this cross our minds? How do we come to an understanding as we grapple with questions like that?

The Lord's burning compassion

Read Hosea 14:1-9. In Hosea chapter 6, Israel had tried to pay lip service to the Lord but the Lord was not moved by their insincere plea. In this final chapter, Hosea calls for a sincere acknowledgment of their sin. What would that sound like according to verses 2-4?

Repentance involves contrition, or sorrow, over sin. How would Israel express their sorrow?

Repentance also involves not only turning away from sin, but turning to the Lord. What would Israel receive as they repented and returned to the Lord?

Verse 4 switches persons; now God is talking. What words does he speak to those who repent?

Fruit is a recurring theme in Hosea. The once fruitful nation of Israel had become like a stock of wheat with no head (8:7) or like a withered root that bore no fruit (9:16). Now how is Israel pictured in the final verses of Hosea?

Repentance bears fruit. What fruits would naturally follow repentance for those in Hosea's day?

Prophecies of Israel's future growth and splendor find their fulfillment in the New Testament church. Those who repent and believe the good news are God's people. How has this growth been seen throughout history? Is it evident today?

Discussion

- Imagine that you are reading a drama about marriage torn apart by one unfaithful act after another. The adultery was so obvious and blatant. It persisted for years. The pain inflicted by the affairs was so deep and destructive. Now in the final chapter of the drama, the adulteress comes crawling back asking for forgiveness. How might the reader of such a drama react?
- Hosea tells the true story of God's love for sinners like you and me. How do you, a penitent sinner, react God's enduring love?
- Hosea paints a beautiful picture of renewal and growth. The Christian life is also characterized by renewal and growth. In what ways have you personally grown as you walk with Jesus?
- The Lord says, "Your fruitfulness comes from me..." (verse 8). Why is it so important to keep that in mind as we seek opportunities to grow and be spiritually productive? (See also **John 15:5**).

Closing thought. Hosea communicates words of strong rebuke and heavy law preaching. Hosea also communicates clear gospel and the God who love again. On which note does this book of prophecy end?