

THE PROPHET HOSEA

Lesson 5 *Love to the loveless shown*

Review. The previous lesson covered chapters 8-10. How would the Lord exercise his judgment upon Israel's impenitence?

Introduction

Recall the first three chapters of Hosea. What was so shocking about Hosea's choice of a wife? What was so shocking about Hosea's treatment of his wife?

Apply that illustration to God's relationship with Israel.

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Israel—determined to turn away

Read Hosea 11:1-7. How had Israel responded to the Lord's call according to verse 2?

What imagery does the Lord use in verse 3?

What imagery does the Lord use in verse 4? (Consider **Matthew 11:28-30**)

What do verses 5 and 7 highlight about Israel's attitude? What is the result of such an attitude?

Discussion

- Think of the parable of the lost son (Luke 15:11-32) from the younger son's perspective. He had everything he needed in his father's home so why was he so determined to leave? What parallels do you see between the lost son and Israel in Hosea's day?
- What is the difference between sins of ignorance and sins of choice?
- Israel refused to repent. They were determined to turn from the Lord. Are some naturally more inclined to repent and turn to the Lord than others?

The Lord—determined to love

Read Hosea 11:8-11. Note the very abrupt shift between verses 7 and 8. How could this be?

What changed the Lord's heart and aroused his compassion?

God states in verse 9, "I am God and not a man." How would a mere man react to such abuse and infidelity as Israel had displayed?

How do verses 10 and 11 help you better understand what it means to truly fear God?

Discussion

- Think of the parable of the lost son (Luke 15:11-32) from the father's perspective. What reasons did the father have to be upset with his estranged son? What reason did he have to receive his son upon his return?
- What reason did the brother in the parable of the lost son state for not welcoming his estranged brother?
- In what ways may we put limits on our love for others? Is it possible for us, mere humans, to love like God?

Lack of love persists

Read Hosea 11:12 - 12:14. How is Israel's lack of love evident in these verses?

How could one be so bold as to lie to God?

What does it mean that Ephraim feeds on the wind? (Verse 1)

What examples from Jacob's life does the Lord give and what purpose do they serve? (Verses 3-5; 12)

The Lord makes yet another plea in verse 6. What is he asking his people to do?

In verses 9-14, the Lord lists his efforts to help and save his people. In each case, how did Israel respond?

Discussion

- Twice in chapter 12 the Lord states that he will "repay" his nation for what they have done. What is the difference between human revenge and divine vengeance?
- The Lord simply asks his people to "Wait for him always" (verse 6). What does this mean?
- Do you typically like to wait? What temptations might we experience as we wait for the Lord?
- Patience is a fruit of the Spirit. How might the Lord work patience in our Christian hearts so that we learn to wait for him?