

The Faithfulness of God

Hosea 11:1-12

- In the last chapter Israel is told by God through Hosea to break up the fallow ground, that which had become so hard that it needed to be broken up so that productive seed can be replanted into it again. They had plowed wickedness and have reaped iniquity, so God tells them to seek Him with a whole heart, instead of a divided heart, to begin planting righteousness instead of wickedness, so that the hardness of their hearts will be replaced with a tenderness of heart toward The Lord again.

V1-12

- **V1-2** Hosea perhaps more than any other book paints the picture of how God views Israel, for despite being a **polluted** and **punished** people, they're still to The Lord a **prized** and **precious** people. There is a popular view being taught within the church and outside the church called replacement theology, where folks are teaching people that the church has replaced Israel as God's chosen people, and therefore have become the recipients of God's covenant promises once reserved for the Jews.
- We will see in this chapter that despite Israel's disobedience and stubbornness that God will not disown them, and therefore replace them with another, but instead will keep them from being destroyed and fulfill His promise that He has made to them.
- **V1** God reminds Israel that after more than five hundred years since He brought them out of Egypt He still remembers how much He loves them, regardless of whether or not they've forgotten. Its like a parent seeing their forty, fifty old grown child with al their wrinkles and warts that have set in, the wear and tear of life showing on their face and body, and yet the parent still remembers them when they were young and innocent, and life hadn't taken its toll upon them as yet.
- The primary understanding of this verse is when God brought Israel out of Egypt and into the Promised Land, but through the account of Herod the king in Math 2, we also see a dual meaning. In **Math 2:15** were told that "**out of Egypt**" can also point to Jesus when He returned from Egypt, having escaped Herod's assassination attempt of Him when he massacre the babies who were two years old and younger.

- **V2** gives us an interesting detail, for as God called Israel out of Egypt to fulfill His Promise to them, so also did the idolatry of the Baals the false gods of the ungodly. Sadly Israel listened more to Baal's call, then they did to The Lord's call, and people its like that for us today, all of us who know The Lord can relate to hearing His call to us, but we can also identify with another call from the enemy to go back to trying to satisfy and gratify the flesh, the question is which call will you surrender to.
- As both voices were calling out Israel decided they'll follow the Baals, the local false deities of Canaan, and they forsook The Lord and began an idolatrous relationship with them, that has continued on to this day thousands of years later.
- **V3-4** despite that betrayal God still displays a tender love toward Israel, describing how He > **1.** Taught them how to walk, **2.** Led them with compassion, **3.** Healed them gently with love, **4.** Freed them from their chains, **5.** Met them where they were and fed them. In sharing this it shows that Israel had attributed all these blessings to some other source, just like we do, we remember the person who taught us how to ride a bike, who taught you how to drive, how to read and write, folks it was God.
- In doing all of this scripture says God "**stooped down**" meaning He came down to their level, where they were to minister to His needy people. It reminds us of Philip 2 which also speaks of the Servant nature of Jesus, as **Philip 2:7-8** tell us He made Himself of no reputation coming as a carpenters son and not from a noble family, taking the form of a servant, acting and looking like a regular guy, nothing special physically, and then humbling Himself to be tortured and killed by His creation.
- **V5-7** Israel's response to God's nurturing and compassionate love was rejection > **V3-** did not recognize that it was God, but turned to idols, and the more God called to them the more they strayed from Him, as we read > **A.** A refusal to repent **V5**, **B.** A refusal to listen to Godly counsel **V6**, **C.** A refusal to exalt and honor God **V7**.
- **V8-9** don't ever doubt the depth of God's love, and if you somehow start to then do a study of these next few verses. **V8** it brought God no pleasure in bringing judgment upon the Northern Kingdom although they deserved every bit of it. In reading verse 8 it brought anguish upon The Lord to punish them, **Eph 4:30** says sin grieves The Lord, it pains God when people continually refuse to surrender to Him.

- Admah and Zeboiim are mentioned in **Deut 29:23** as two cities near Sodom and Gomorrah that got caught up in the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. When sin is being judged there is bound to be some collateral damage to anyone or anything that is around it. What God is saying is this judgment was meant for the unbelieving nations around you, but because you decided to endear yourself to them instead of surrendering to me, what was meant for them will now happen to you also.
- **V9** God tells them He doesn't want this for them, that His sympathy towards them is stirred up for them, so He holds back His fierce anger, and tells them that He is not like man, who when wronged will exact judgment without mercy. So He refuses to annihilate Israel, but instead will spare them, that doesn't mean they want go unpunished, but they will have the opportunity to be restored.
- **V10-11** in not destroying Israel God will call them back to Him with a loud roar like a lion, this speaks of future restoration, God is not done with disobedient Israel, that is how man would handle the situation, but as we read God is not like us, so don't believe that false replacement theology, meant to replace scripture.
- For scripture says they will hear from the far corners of the world and come back to The Lord in peace. Only God can put Himself between man and his past, and promise him a peaceful future, remember Jacob, for twenty years he lied, schemed, and deceived, until The Lord snapped his hip out of place where he had to live the rest of his life walking with a limp to remind him to trust God not himself.
- **V12** Ephraim the northern Kingdom feeds encircles The Lord with its lies and deception, deceiving itself and its people, but with Judah there is still hope as a remnant is walking with The Lord, The One Who is Faithful. Man looks only at the negative, but God sees a bright side, even when all seems completely dark The Lord says there's hope.