

The Faithfulness of God

Hosea 12:1-14

- As we near the close of the book of Hosea these last three chapters paint for us both the present state of Israel and how they got there, and their future deliverance and how they'll arrive there also. But in examining these last few chapters one cannot help but see the state of the whole world wrapped up in the book of Hosea, as God despite man's insistence on depending upon self, continues to say "**come to Him**".

V1-14

- **V1** is a continuation of what Hosea said at the end of chapter eleven, where Israel referred to as Ephraim because they were the largest most dominant tribe in the ten tribe Northern Kingdom, remember their first king Jeroboam was an Ephraimite.
- Hosea says they surrounded themselves with lies and deceit, and by doing so they had encircled God, meaning blocked God out with their deception, unwilling to hear and obey the truth. People do that today, with their immorality and so called higher learning, they have surrounded themselves with lies, and with it blocked God out, and therefore they will not and cannot stand to listen to the truth of God's Word.
- This caused Israel to feed on and pursue the "**East Wind**" which produces harsh, dry, hot conditions, where there is no nourishment, yet they are going after it. Again how many people we know and see chasing after things that have no redeeming benefit at all, there is no upside to it, only pain and suffering, and yet they are still pursuing after it whether it's a relationship, job, dream, it leaves them empty, and yet they still chase after it like their life depended upon it, no matter the cost.
- For Israel the cost was an increase in daily lies, as they've broken their Covenant with God, when they embraced the idolatry of the surrounding nations, and now they've gone into a Covenant relationship with the very nation who had enslaved them in the past (Egypt) and are going to enslave them in the present (Assyria). We see two sins here > **1. Feeding on the wind**- Turning from the True God for empty substitutes, **2. Depending on the enemy for their protection**- Egypt and Assyria.

- **V2-4** the Assyrians are already on their way to punish and enslave the Northern Kingdom, but now a reference by Hosea about the Southern Kingdom of Judah. It will be another hundred years before the Babylonians come and take them out of the land but we already see the cracks in their foundation that will cause it to happen. Ancient Jacob is used as an example of the children of Israel present deceit
- We already know how the Northern Kingdom feasted and trusted in lies and deceit well sadly so did the Southern Kingdom. Jacob was a man whom God had to cripple in order to bring him to the end of himself, that place of brokenness we all have to get to if we are going to surrender to The Lord. But before that Jacob trusted in his schemes and cleverness to manufacture things his way, it says even in the womb this rascal was grabbing and clawing clutching his brothers heel as he's being born.
- He was called "**the heel catcher**" that's not a flattering name, as he had no problem holding others back while he pulled himself up. What he'd done to man he also tried to do with God, wrestling with The Lord in an attempt to get his way, but it only led to more pain and hardship, as he cried out for help. At this point it had taken Jacob twenty years before he realized he was not going to prevail against The Lord.
- **V5-6** what these two verses are telling the children of Israel is like Jacob the deceiver, after being broken and punished by The Lord, he repented to The Lord and afterward was blessed mightily by The Lord. Israel the deceitful nation like Jacob also needed to return to her Covenant Ruler, The Lord Almighty, with tears and prayers, committing themselves to mercy and justice, serving The Lord always.
- **V7-8** at the end of Ch 11 we are told that Israel loved deceit, and we see three things they did regularly in order to enrich themselves, now tell me if they sound familiar. 1. **Oppression**- defrauded people **V7**, **Love of Money V8**- you can hear the pride as they proclaimed "I have found wealth for myself **1Tim 6:10**- money is no the root of all evil it's the love for and of it, that leads to evil, as the motive is for myself. **Insensitivity to sin V8**- no one can see my sin, this is the definition of self-deceived.
- **V9-10** God tells them that no deceit no matter how clever it is, and has fooled man, will evade Him, as He says "**I Am The Lord Your God**" I will put you back in your place taking away your land and placing you back into tents describing that they will no longer have a homeland but become wanderers in the world. **V10** says through prophets like Jeremiah, Isaiah, and now Hosea, He warned them this would happen.

- **V11-14** in closing Hosea reminds them where they are spiritually and where they came from. Gilead and Gilgal two prominent parts of the Northern Kingdom divided by the Jordan river, Gilead was the land flowing with green pastures where the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh decided for fleshly reasons to live and start their cattle business. Gilgal was where the Northern Kingdom performed their public worship that included their false altars and pillar of stones of idolatry.
- It shows they started out wrong putting money and business ahead of the will of God, and it led to false worship, now both Gilead and Gilgal will be overrun, and burned to the ground. That's where they are and this is where they came from, Jacob after deceiving his brother Esau and stealing the birthright ran from him to Syria, he then served his uncle Laban tending sheep for his wife, that led to two wives and twelve children that would eventually end up in Egypt.
- Where they became slaves and in need of a deliverer, which God raises up Moses the prophet, he leads them out of Egypt and into the wilderness, where Israel was preserved. God saved Israel, and preserved her through all of the hardship she encountered, and still Hosea says she rebelled against Him. For all the kindness God showed them its met with disobedience, therefore Israel is now left to deal with the consequences of its self reliance by shouldering its own guilt and reproach.