

HOSEA 12-14

REVIEW...

- **Hosea 1-3:** Hosea was a prophet to the Northern Kingdom from 755 - 715 B.C.
 - He prophesied during the reign of 6 different Kings in Israel – right up to the Assyrian captivity...
 - God used the example of his life – Gomer - to illustrate the rebellious character of Israel!
- **Hosea 4-6:** Hosea sets up a courtroom setting – God had a lawsuit to bring against Israel!
 - The people had forgotten truth / mercy / and the knowledge of the Lord...
 - The charge against the priests - the people are destroyed for lack of knowledge...
 - It was common practice to ask a wooden stick for help – because they had deserted God!
- **Hosea 7-9:** God wanted to heal Israel – but her wounds (*sins*) were far too great...
 - They had sown to the wind – and now they were going to reap the whirlwind!
 - The time of punishment had come - the day of payment was almost here!
- **Hosea 10-11:** The more Israel prospered – the more beautiful the statues and idols they built!
 - There was a cure for their impending judgment – break up their fallow ground...
 - If the people did – there was still time for them to reap a reward of Grace...
 - It was the time to seek the Lord – so that He could reign down righteousness on them!
 - God did not want to destroy Israel - God still had great love for His people...
 - And one day Israel would follow the Lord – He would call His children home from captivity...
 - Then they will come trembling from the west – flying like doves from east!

THE HOPE OF RESTORATION... (3 THINGS)

- **1ST – THE FOOLISHNESS OF ISRAEL... vs. 1-14**
 - 1st – The desire of Israel – feeding on the wind ... vs. 1
 - The idea is Israel was hungry for something (*air*) that would never satisfy them...
 - They were looking to the world for satisfaction – but only God could give it to them...
 - **Most people think this world has the answers – it lures us in with false hopes and promises**
 - **But if we are look for fulfillment from this world – we are going to be sorely disappointed!**
 - **Solomon put it best – it is like grasping for the wind - Ecclesiastes 2:10-11**
 - **It is not a matter of striving for the impossible – we are reaching for nothing!**
 - But Israel did not just feed on the wind – they chased the east wind!
 - **The east wind was a hot desert blast that came off the Arabian Peninsula...**
 - **It was well known for brining drought and destruction to Israel!**
 - Israel made alliances with Assyria (*East*) and Egypt – that they thought would save them...
 - But the reality was those very alliances were the ones that destroyed them!
 - **The sad truth is many people will chase after the things of this world...**
 - **Right up to the moment they leave it – and enter into an eternity separated from God...**
 - **We cannot dedicate our lives for this world – AND live our lives for Jesus...**
 - **We will end up wasting our life on things that do not last – and miss heaven!**
 - 2nd – The stubbornness of Israel – learning the hard way... vs. 2-6
 - Israel was like their forefather Jacob – they had to learn things the hard way...
 - Jacob was a self-reliant / cunning / rebellious man from day one!
 - The day he was born he caught the heel of his brother Esau at birth – **Genesis 25:26**
 - That is where he got his name Jacob - heel catcher / or more literally – *deceiver*!
 - He grew up and fought with God – wrestling with Him all night – **Genesis 32:24**
 - But God touched his hip – permanently disabling Jacob (*making him dependent on God*)!

- That is why Jacob wept and pleaded with God to bless him – so God renamed him...
- No longer called Jacob – deceiver / instead he would be called Israel – governed by God!
- There at Bethel (*house of God*) – the Lord spoke to Jacob face to face – **Genesis 28:19 / 35:1**
- The first time Jacob was at Bethel (*running from Esau*) he heard about the Lord...
- After his encounter with God – He returned to Bethel – but this time to worship the Lord!
- In his brokenness – Jacob / Israel learned to depend on the Lord – a relationship with God!
- Yet at Bethel - Israel now worshiped the Golden calf – and rejected God!
 - Israel was just like Jacob - self-reliant / cunning / rebellious from day one!
 - And Israel needed – like Jacob – to repent and seek mercy and justice...
 - They needed – like Jacob – to live a life completely dependent on God!
 - But – like Jacob – the only way they were going to learn to do that was to be broken!
 - We can choose to lay our lives down willingly – realizing life begins in Jesus!
 - Like Jim Eliot – a missionary in Ecuador – who died sharing Jesus with local tribes...
 - 'A man is not fool to give up what he cannot keep to gain what he will never loose!'
 - Or we can choose to do things the hard way – and learn through our mistakes...
 - King David learned this lesson well – His sin with Bathsheba!
 - God desires obedience / but sometimes the only we learn is to be broken...
 - Learn that when we are left to do the steering – our lives end up a wreck!
- o 3rd – The short-sightedness of Israel – no one is watching... vs. 7-11
 - Israel acted like cunning Canaanites (*merchants*)...
 - They would cheat people by doctoring their scales to get more money...
 - The result was Ephraim (*Israel*) became very rich – and they boasted about their success...
 - And they were certain they had cheated so well – no one would ever be able to catch them!
 - But the God who brought them out of Egypt was watching...
 - They had come from nothing – living in tents during the 40-year wandering...
 - And God would put them back in tents (*like during the feast of Tabernacles*)...
 - He warned Israel through the prophets – gave them signs (*Hosea and Gomer*)...
 - But they continued to worship idols in Gilead / heap up pagan altars in Gilgal!
 - Gilead was on the east side of the Jordan River – Gilgal was on the west side...
 - In other words the whole nation of Israel – from coast to coast- was full of idols!
 - People think that no one sees the sin in their lives – no one knows what they did...
 - But Every action / every word / every thought is open and seen by the Lord...
 - And for every action/word/thought - we will one day be judged for!
 - **Hebrews 4:13** - "Nothing in all creation can hide from him. Everything is naked and exposed before his eyes. The God to whom we must explain all that we have done."
- o 4th – The redemption of Israel... vs. 12-14
 - Bondage was coming for the nation of Israel...
 - Like when Jacob fled because of his sins (*stealing the blessing*) to the nation of Syria...
 - And ended up a servant to Laban – working for 14 years to marry Rachel – **Genesis 29:20**
 - Like the decedents of Jacob – who ended up as slaves in Egypt – **Exodus 1:8**
 - Israel would also pay the penalty for their sins – they too would end up as slaves!
 - But there was hope – just as God sent a prophet to bring Israel out of Egypt – Moses...
 - God would send a prophet like Moses to redeem the nation again - **Deuteronomy 18:15**
 - Peter quoting from Deuteronomy tells us Jesus is THAT Prophet - **Acts 3:22**...
 - If we choose to chase after this world / learn lessons the hard way...
 - Thinking no one sees our sin – we will end up in bondage to the world – **Romans 6:16**
 - But there is hope – because Jesus came to set us free from bondage – **John 8:36!**
- 2ND – THE DESTRUCTION OF ISRAEL... vs. 1-16

- o 1st – Israel was a bad influence... vs. 1-3
 - Back in the day – when Ephraim spoke – the whole nation of Israel trembled...
 - Ephraim was the dominant tribe in the Northern Kingdom – often called by that name!
 - Yet they led Israel into sin - the worship of Baal – making carved images of silver...
 - Encouraging all of Israel to bow down and kiss the golden calves!
 - Therefore they would be like the morning cloud / or the morning dew...
 - They would be like the chaff on the threshing floor / or the smoke from a chimney...
 - In other words they would not last very long – their destruction was sealed!
 - In fact Ephraim is one of two tribes not mentioned in the 144,000 - **Revelation 7:4-8**
 - I have often heard people argue – I am not my brothers keeper – **Genesis 4:9...**
 - Why should we be responsible for what might ‘stumble’ someone else...
 - I should be able to wear what I want / watch what I want / drink what I want...
 - But Jesus said if someone causes a child of God to be tempted to sin - **Luke 17:1**
 - It would be better if he tied a millstone around his neck and jumped into the sea...
 - Because God does not play around when it comes to stumbling His children...
 - He is a VERY protective Father - and will deal with anyone who threatens His kids!
- o 2nd – Israel broke the 1st commandment... vs. 4-8
 - I am the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt...
 - You shall know no other god but Me – there is no savior but Me – **Exodus 20:2-3**
 - Hosea quotes the first of the 10 commandments – the beginning of the Law...
 - Yet Israel had broken the law – abandoned God who provided for them in the wilderness...
 - They forgot Him when they became rich and were full – **Deuteronomy 8:10-19**
 - Since Israel had broken the 1st commandment – God would show Israel no mercy...
 - He would be to them like a Lion / Leopard hiding in wait for its prey...
 - Like a bear whose cubs have been taken – He would tear them apart and devour them!
 - In **Mark 10:18-22** – a rich ruler came to Jesus and asked ‘How can I get to Heaven’...
 - Jesus told him do not Murder / Adultery / Steal / Lie / Covet and Honor your parents...
 - The man excitedly told Jesus he had done all of these things from his youth...
 - Jesus looked at him – loved him – and told him there was only one thing he lacked...
 - Go and sell all he had - give it to the poor - and Follow Him!
 - What Jesus gave to the rich man was the 1st commandment - **Exodus 20:3**
 - Sadly that was the one thing he was NOT willing to do – and he walked away...
 - The man wanted to go to heaven – but he had another god he wanted more – money...
 - And all of his moral living meant nothing – because Jesus was not first in his life!
 - Those who live life to make money – are asking for trouble – **I Timothy 6:9-10...**
 - They will end up in lots of debt and then have the problem of how to pay it back...
 - They will compromise your morals to get an extra dollar – then not sleep at night!
 - All because they thought getting rich would solve all their problems...
 - It does not solve problems – it is the SOURCE of your problems!
 - People walk away from Jesus – for money – and choose destruction rather than life...
 - Because we cannot dedicate our lives to money – and to the Lord!
 - **Luke 6:24** - “No one can serve two masters... You cannot serve God and this world...”
- o 3rd – Israel would be destroyed... vs. 9-16
 - Where was the king that Israel demanded... vs. 9-11
 - God was the true King – but they had rejected Him – **I Samuel 8:7**
 - In His anger God had given them their first king Saul – far from a blessing...
 - And in His wrath God had taken their last king from them – Hosea (*salvation*)
 - Now whom were they going to look to for help – where would their salvation come from!

- The iniquity of Ephraim (*Israel*) was stored up... vs. 12-13
 - Like a pregnant woman – who does not deliver the baby for 9 months...
 - Although the baby is not yet born – the labor pains are for sure coming!
 - The birth pains of Israel were coming – the judgment was not far away...
 - But they were too stubborn (*unwise*) to repent – they choose to ‘stay in labor’ / tribulation!
 - Many people assume they are ‘ok’ because God does not immediately punish them...
 - They make mistake of interpreting God’s ‘patience’ for God’s ‘acceptance’...
 - God waits to punish sin only because He loves the sinner – **II Peter 3:9**
 - God is patient – longsuffering – to give time to repent and turn back to Him...
 - But if we harden our hearts - choose not to repent – the labor pains are a guarantee!
 - **Numbers 32:22** - “Be sure your sin will find you out...”
- I will ransom Israel from the power of the grave... vs. 14-16
 - This verse is somewhat controversial – it can be read one of 2 different ways...
 - As a statement God WILL rescue Israel from the grave – redeem them from death (*NKJV*)...
 - Or as a question – should I redeem you (*NLT*) – which would seem to fit the context better!
 - Because pity was hidden from the eyes of the Lord – He would bring an east wind...
 - Dry up the land – plunder every treasure and desirable prize...
 - Samaria (*Israel*) would fall by the sword / their infants dashed / women ripped open...
 - Speaking of the atrocities of the Assyrian armies when they conquered Israel!
- Yet this verse was ultimately fulfilled in Jesus Christ...
 - **I Corinthians 15:55** - “O Death, where *is* your sting? O Hades, where *is* your victory?”
 - Although Israel had been condemned to death because they broke the Law...
 - Death was ultimately condemned through the cross of Jesus Christ!
 - Death is a result of sin - **Romans 5:12** / and power of sin is the Law - **Romans 5:20**
 - But we have been given victory over both sin and death through Jesus...
 - Through the Gospel - Jesus did what the Law never could – He took away our sin!
- **3RD – THE RESTORATION OF ISRAEL... vs. 1-9**
 - 1st – Oh Israel – return to the Lord... vs. 1-3
 - The assumption is that at this point – Assyria had conquered Israel – 722 B.C.
 - They had been scatted to the nations – the Diaspora had occurred...
 - Hosea is now writing a final plea to them – they had stumbled because of their sin...
 - But though they were far from home – they did not need to far from the Lord!
 - There was not much they could take with them – except their words...
 - No matter where they were – they could ask God to take their sins / pour out His Grace...
 - Assyria was NOT going to save them – there was no power in the horses of Egypt...
 - The idols they had made could not help them - mercy was only found in God!
 - He alone would be a Father to the fatherless – a people without a homeland!
 - We may think we are beyond the hope of redemption – taken captive by our sins...
 - But wherever we are – no matter what we have done – we can always cry out to God!
 - Jesus is always right there looking us – seeking out His lost child...
 - The moment we turn back to Jesus – He is always ready to receive us again...
 - No matter how many times we make mistakes – even the same mistake
 - **Romans 5:20** - “But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more...”
 - 2nd – The results of repentance... vs. 4-9
 - God will heal their backsliding / love them freely / turn His anger away from them...
 - God will be like dew on Israel – they will grow like a lily (*very fast*)...

- They will have the beauty of an olive tree – deep roots like the cedars of Lebanon...
- The people will return to the Land – and be revived like grain / blossom like a vine!
- Then Israel will say – stay away from Idols – blessing (*fruit*) are only found in God!
- Those who are wise know the ways of the Lord are right – and the righteous walk in them!
 - Because one day Israel will be restored to God – even the 10 northern tribes – **Revelation 7**
 - There will no longer be a need to tell anyone about Jesus – they will already know...
 - **Jeremiah 31:34** – ““They will not need to teach their neighbors, nor will they need to teach their family, saying, ‘You should know the LORD.’ For everyone, from the least to the greatest, will already know me,’ says the LORD. ‘And I will forgive their wickedness and will never again remember their sins.’”
 - God will save the whole nation of Israel – all of them will believe in Jesus!
 - In light of the book of Hosea - a very comforting thought – because of Israel can be saved...
 - No one is beyond the reach of grace - anyone can be saved!
 - **Romans 10:13** – “Whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”
 - It does not matter whether you think you are a good person – or not so good...
 - Jesus gift of salvation is available to absolutely anyone who will receive it...
 - No sinner is beyond His reach - no sin so great He cannot forgive it...
 - That is why Jesus came to die on the cross - so we might have eternal life!