



An Introduction to the Book of Hosea

THEN shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land: for great shall be the day of Jezreel. (Hosea 1:10-11)

We are beginning a study of the Book of Hosea today. As a preface to the study, I am appending some introductory thoughts as well as a former devotion I did on Hosea as a type of Christ.

Hosea is a prophet whose message is primarily addressed to the Ten Tribes of Israel though Judah is referenced at points. In reviewing the first eleven verses of chapter one, we find Israel in material prosperity. Such prosperity is never proof positive of the favor of God, and Israel is an excellent example of that fact. Hosea is called to proclaim to the Ten Tribes their sins of apostasy and coming destruction. Their major sin is that of idolatry – a sin common to the modern churches of America in placing the God of buildings, wealth and growth ahead the God for whom these were dedicated.

God uses a repulsive physical example to reveal the enormity of their sins in commanding Hosea to take for a wife, Gomer, a notorious prostitute. This character of

this woman is not only similar to that of Israel, but also of the Church today which is not faithful, in Word and deed, to their Bridegroom, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Israel and Judah will be united under the Messiah in the calling of the Gentiles. Though God renounces Israel as not His people, He later will call them His own under Christ: "As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved. And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God." Romans 9:25-26 (KJV) The salient point is this: None are righteous and deserving of the grace of the Lord, but He has prepared for us a Redeemer whose sacrifice will render those who are His called to be righteous by His 'imputed' righteousness. "Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy." 1 Peter 2:10 (KJV)

Hosea as a Type of Christ 2012

My heart is rent for poor Hosea when I read the account of all that God had commanded him to do and to suffer. But, then, I consider that all of the commandments of God are a joy to him who receives them. Hosea obeyed God without question when God directed him to take for a wife a whore. There is a deep significance to the purpose of God in such a command, and Hosea well understood and gladly complied. As a matter of fact, Hosea would have yet complied even if he had not understood the purpose of the Lord in the command. We all are to be as a good and obedient soldier facing the enemy on the field of battle. Whatever command is given by our Line Commander, we obey immediately and without reservation. It is impossible for the common soldier to know the tactical plan and purpose of the field Commander, so he must trust to that better judgment and understanding just as we must trust to that perfect will and knowledge of God in all things. Hosea is the perfect example for us.

Please imagine, if you will, the plight of the prophet Hosea. He was a God-fearing Hebrew Prophet. Yet, God has ordered him to take a whore for a wife. When she proves unfaithful and returns to her former lovers, God tells Hosea to take her back at a great expense to Hosea, and he does! What does this tell us of God's dealings with His people and the role Christ played in coming among us?

Hosea was a prophet of Israel though he also addressed the affairs of Judah. These were, unlike the common perception, two separate peoples. Israel was those ten tribes that had broken off and formed the Northern Kingdom – later taken into captivity and dispersed in unknown parts. They are the scattered flocks of God which are hidden, as a remnant, among all the world. Judah and Benjamin were of the Sephardic Jew who claimed lineal descent from Judah. There are few Jews in Israel today who are of Sephardic descent. Most are of the Ashkenazi race from central Europe and who, it is doubtful, have a single drop of Judah's blood in their veins. At length, the blood type is of no account, for Christ came to save all of Israel – those who are the Children of Promise who are of the 'spiritual descent' and not the bloodline of Israel. (see Romans 9:8, Gala 4:27-31) It is a known fact that many lineal Jews are now coming to Christ – not as Messianic Jews bearing Judaic superstitions in their hearts, but simply 'Christians' as are all who are the Children of the Promised Seed (Christ).

11. Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land There is neither Jew nor Gentile, for all are ONE in Christ Jesus. (see Romans 10:12 & Gala 3:28) Hosea is a type of Christ in that he suffered as did Christ by having an

unfaithful spouse. It is amazing how the prophets of the Lord were called upon to bear such heavy crosses, but they did so because they belonged to Christ by faith. The One Head to which Hosea pointed was none other than Christ! *The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.* (Gen 49:10) Shiloh is an epithet for the Messiah. He is the 'sent One'. *And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.* (John 17:3) *For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace* (Eph 2:14-15)

Christ is a pure and true Bridegroom. But His bride, the church (in both the Wilderness and the Christian era) has committed adultery. Israel was in a fallen and immoral state when Christ came. He bought her with the cost of His own bloody sacrifice, yet, she remained unfaithful. As Hosea prophesies the falling of Israel from her lofty place, so Christ pronounces the judgment on Jerusalem. He tells the Jewish leaders *Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.* (Matt 21:43) This seems an irreversible circumstance, but it is apparent only and not fixed. Just as God, through Hosea declared to the off-spring of Israel, *Now when she (Gomer, the prostitute wife of Hosea) had weaned Loruhamah, she conceived, and bare a son. Then said God, Call his name Loammi: for ye are not my people, and I will not be your God.* (Hosea 1:8-9) This is a time-limited pronouncement against Israel. See what God later says through Hosea: *Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God.* (Hosea 1:10) It is at the time of the uniting of the people of God of the Old Testament with those who have been gathered from every tribe and people from all over the world (scattered believers) in Christ that has reference here.

Christ came to mother Israel and was rejected. She played the whore. She wanted nothing to do with her offspring (descent from Abraham as the Promised Seed). Even as Christ pleaded with her to gather to Him, she was aloof and resentful. *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.* (Matt 23:37-38) We see a description of the coming persecution of Israel and the Elect Church in Revelations 12. The mother of the New Testament is the Old.

Time will not allow for a fuller study on Hosea in a mere devotion, but I encourage every Reader to study this book to the enlightenment of your souls. There are some particularly disconcerting points raised in Hosea (depending, of course, on your perspective of being in – or out – of a state of grace). Hosea has his most horrific warning to the apostate people of God: *For they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind: it hath no stalk: the bud shall yield no meal: if so be it yield, the strangers shall swallow it up.* (Hosea 8:7) One cannot help but observe the devastating effects of those great whirlwinds that have battered the coastal cities of America over the past few years. Such storms, coming in quick succession, render us helpless and hopeless in contending with them. They cripple our economy and reduce us to hunger in many places. The remarkable references to the Whirlwind in bringing God's judgment are too numerous to discount (a single reference would be sufficient). *Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; But ye have*

*set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; When your fear cometh as desolation, and **your destruction cometh as a whirlwind**; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. (Prov 1:24-27) Have we set at naught the counsel of God once heeded by our Fathers? Is it likely that God will apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah for harshly judging them while ignoring the sins of a nation that has been so richly blessed by His bountiful grace?*

*I have seen also in the prophets of Jerusalem an horrible thing: they commit adultery, and walk in lies: they strengthen also the hands of evildoers, that none doth return from his wickedness: they are all of them unto me as Sodom, and the inhabitants thereof as Gomorrah. Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts concerning the prophets; Behold, I will feed them with wormwood, and make them drink the water of gall: for from the prophets of Jerusalem is profaneness gone forth into all the land. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Hearken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you: they make you vain: they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord. They say still unto them that despise me, The Lord hath said, Ye shall have peace; and they say unto every one that walketh after the imagination of his own heart, No evil shall come upon you. For who hath stood in the counsel of the Lord, and hath perceived and heard his word? who hath marked his word, and heard it? **Behold, a whirlwind of the Lord is gone forth in fury**, even a grievous whirlwind: it shall fall grievously upon the head of the wicked. The anger of the Lord shall not return, until he have executed, and till he have performed the thoughts of his heart: in the latter days ye shall consider it perfectly. (Jer 23:13-20)*

I am not drawing any conclusions, but I will ask you to consider these things.