



THEN said the LORD unto me, Go yet, love a woman beloved of her friend, yet an adulteress, according to the love of the LORD toward the children of Israel, who look to other gods, and love flagons of wine. 2 So I bought her to me for fifteen pieces of silver, and for an homer of barley, and an half homer of barley: 3 And I said unto her, Thou shalt abide for me many days; thou shalt not play the harlot, and thou shalt not be for another man: so will I also be for thee. 4 For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim: 5 Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days. (Hosea 3:1-5)

The ways of the Lord seem strange and illogical to the mortal mind at times just as the action of the master of the house may seem strange and senseless to a pet animal; but God's ways are not our ways, and His thoughts are not our thoughts. God must often resort to physical illustration to make spiritual truths discernible to our small understanding.

God loved Joseph when He had him ill-treated and sent as a slave down into Egypt. Neither did His love for the treacherous brothers of Joseph lapse. He loved both for He had made provision for them from before the foundation of the world. Joseph was a type of Christ in his example of going down into a land of moral depravity and becoming a savior to his less-righteous brothers. God had named the name of Israel upon Joseph's father, Jacob. But Israel was unrighteous in forgetfulness, even in the

days of Jacob, of the Lord whom Jacob had faced at Penuel (Facing God) and wrestled therewith.

So Israel went down into Egypt to escape the famine in Canaan and wound up becoming slaves in the land for four hundred years – yet God remembered Israel and loved them throughout this period of chastening and teaching. *“For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.”* (Hebrews 12:6-8)

When a father of the world chastens his son or daughter, it is a principle of teaching that motivates the practice. If the child realizes he will suffer disciplinary action and disdain from his father if he plays in the road, he will avoid it out of the fear he has learned from the chastening.

God did not leave His people in the Hell of Egypt, but prepared a means for their deliverance in His prophet called Moises whom God groomed and prepared in both opulence and wilderness deprivations. Now God tells His servant, Hosea, to perform a duty that most men of lesser faith would have balked at doing – to take a woman unto himself who was a notorious adulteress. God did not tell Hosea to simply TAKE the woman unto himself, but more than this, He told Hosea to LOVE the woman. Hosea purchased the woman at a cost of fifteen pieces of silver – a lesser price than the cost of a slave. Consider the example here given. Israel has played the harlot with the Lord in running after other gods. She plays the harlot in major churches across America, and the world, today. Yet, God still loves His apostate people whom He has chosen as His elect people. This is also true of a husband devoted in love to a wife that has played the adulteress to him who loves with an undying love.

Several years ago, I preached a sermon on Abraham’s intended sacrifice of Isaac – his only begotten son. I tried to make clear that God never intended Abraham to sacrifice Isaac, but was merely showing us a vivid picture of the pain of a man sacrificing his only beloved for others. I mentioned how the Lord stayed the hand of Abraham in the sacrifice and how Abraham had told Isaac at the base of Mt. Moriah how the Lord would provide Himself the Lamb for the offering – in other words, God would give His own only Begotten Son as the Lamb of God for the sacrifice. Afterwards, during the fellowship hour, one of the parents of one of my beloved young men told me he did not like God.’ I asked why he would say that. He responded, ‘Because God told Abraham to sacrifice his son!’ In spite of my most diligent efforts to make that picture clear, this father missed the point even if his young son did not. We are like that, aren’t we? Many of us have ears to hear, and hear not; and eyes to see and see not.

“For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim.” Indeed, Israel did abide many days without a king, prince, or sacrifice. There are two prominent examples that bear this prophecy out: from the end of the Book of the Prophet Malachi until the advent of John the Baptist, four hundred years transpired when there was no king, prince, or sacrifice in the Israel of Jerusalem. There was no word whatsoever from Heaven. These were four centuries of deafening silence from God. So also the Ten Tribes of Israel, in wilderness exile having forgotten their past abode and wandering aimlessly, were without a king, prince, or sacrifice until that made on Mt. Calvary. Those of the gentile nations who were drawn to believe that

promise, from every nation, kindred, and people, came to know the essential points of their faith even if the non-essentials of genealogy were forgotten.

The early Church of the New Testament spread rapidly throughout Asian Minor and Europe, and from thence throughout the whole world. Such a blessing has that influence, even for unbelievers, been for the uplifting of the poor, the widows, the orphans, the sick and halt in the world. It has been proven true that every nation and tongue has been blessed in that promise made to Abraham long ago on the high desert of Canaan. Once the brilliant and gleaming Light of Christ was shed abroad in the hearts of those who had ears to hear, (and did hear) and eyes to see (and did see), the plight of humanity was markedly improved. The unbecoming yoke of those who had sat in darkness was lifted when they saw the great Light of Christ.

“Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days.” (Hosea 3:5) We must not mistake the nation-state of Israel today to demonstrate the pure faith of God’s people. David the King is dead and buried, but this is not the One to whom God refers as David the King, but rather the Son of David, and God’s own Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. In spite of our love for the Holy places of Judah and the people of that land above that of the murderous peoples who seek their destruction, these are not a privileged people in the eyes of God. Only those, including the Jewish race, who come seeking the face of the Lord Jesus Christ as their sacrifice (and not Temple sacrifices) will be the chosen and elect people of God, or Israel returned.

We do not worship a race of people, and neither does God look upon the mortal bloodline of man in seeking those whom He has called out of the world. The only bloodline that matters is that sinless bloodline of our Lord Jesus Christ to which Abraham looked in faith and saw His Day. *“Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.”* (John 8:56) The faith of Abraham was a profound faith. He, willing to sacrifice his own son at the command of the Lord, lived in faith of a future Redeemer for those of faith – he looked forward in faith to that even to which we look back upon as a proven historical fact, yet we fail often times in faith.

God will forever preserve a remnant of His people Israel in the world. Even in ancient days before the Roman invasion of England, there was a remnant Church in England true to God and believing that same promise made to Abraham and knowing it.

Gomer is a fitting description of the Israel of today with her adulteress abandonment of biblical truth and the God who spoke it. But we look to that better example given in the twelfth chapter of the Book of Revelations: *“And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.”* (Revelation 12:1-2)

The Gospel of our Lord is simple and easy to understand – so much so that even a child can know it. Let us avoid complications of genealogy and hyper-theologies that make the study of arcane vocabulary to lifted above the pure and simple truth of God’s Holy Word. Knowing that the Holy Spirit will bring to mind, or reveal, nothing that is not written in that Holy Word. It is complete and sealed. *“For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, **for filthy lucre’s sake**. One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, The Cretians are alway liars, evil beasts, slow*

bellies. This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith; Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth (as we see today in church compromise). Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate."