
The Book of Hosea

Part 8 by: Ronald L. Dart

History really does repeat itself. The reason is simple and obvious. We keep making the same stupid mistakes over and over again and it produces the same results over and over again. You know I think we are living on the cusp of one of these cycles of history as it repeats itself. We started this cycle with the near universal belief in a Creator in this country. There may have been a few people here and beyond that did not believe in a Creator God, but they were few and far between.

Do you remember these words? "We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal and were endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights." It's the beginning of the founding document of this country, "The Declaration of Independence."

The men who signed that document, to a man, believed in a Creator. Now they may not have shared in your particular belief system, they may not have seen God in the way you see God, but they still saw the Creator as the guarantor of our rights, or these men would not have signed that document.

Nearly to a man, all the leaders of this fledgling nation had read the Bible, they were conversant with the history and with the message of both the Old and New Testaments and they had also read widely in the history of man. From these things they learned lessons and developed character that helped them through the hardest of times and helped them to lead this nation.

Cycle Of History Being Repeated

The cycle of history that we are today repeating is a cycle represented in the Bible by the house of Israel. It is precisely why, as you read the Bible, you come to a prophet like Hosea, who sounds like he's been reading our newspapers and watching our television.

The reason I think we are living near a turning point is that we still have leaders who believe in God and are directed at least in some part by their faith in that God.

Famine Of The Gospel

But we have a generation coming that has had its faith shredded in the educational system and there is a powerful coordinated effort coming from a determined minority in this country to eradicate any reference or deference (honor and respect) to God in public life.

Teachers and preachers who read and expound the Bible are on the agenda of this determined minority and the day is coming when the Bible will no longer be taught on the public airwaves.

Call that a prediction not a prophecy. The same forces that have managed to get the Ten Commandments banned from the courthouses will sooner or later manage to get the gospel banded from radio and television stations.

The principle is exactly the same. The public, the taxpaying public is deemed to own the airwaves by treaty or whatever and as a consequence just like the public owns the courthouse, you can't have the Ten Commandments in there because the taxpayers are paying for it.

When we come to the broadcast bands, they are owned by the government and they are going to decide that you can't preach the Gospel there. It is for that reason I have determined to read and teach the Minor Prophets on the air while I can.

Hosea Was The prophet To The House Of Israel

Hosea was a prophet in the house of Israel at the time of their greatest power and prosperity. You know how it is at peaks, you go up a mountain on one side and when you get to the top there is nowhere to go but down. For Israel all that lay ahead of them was decline, and so once again the prophet, speaking in the name of God, draws on Israel's history.

Hosea Chapter 11 Verse 1: "When Israel was a child, I loved him and out of Egypt I called my son."

Now there's an interesting sidebar here, everybody knows from the story of the movie the Ten Commandments; about Israel being called out of Egypt or lead out of Egypt by Moses. Right? Matthew sites this very passage, "Out of Egypt I have called my son" and applies it to Jesus. It was not long after Jesus' birth, a time shortly after the visit of the wise men and they had returned home to their country, that the angel of the LORD appeared to Joseph.

Matthew 2 Verse 13: "The angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, and he said, "Arise and take the young child and his mother and flee into Egypt and stay there until I bring you word, because Herod will seek the young child to destroy him." {14} So Joseph arose, and he took the young child and his mother by night and left, departing into Egypt. {15} He stayed there till the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, "Out of Egypt have I called my son.""

I never would have made that connection in a million years because when I read Hosea it just seems to be talking about Israel, but Matthew saw it and explained it this way. The prophecy seems to be about Israel not the Son of God, but Israel is presented here as a son to God.

'Type' and 'Antitype'

There are two words you're going to encounter if you read very far into the literature about the prophets, the words are 'type' and 'antitype'. 'Type' comes from a Greek word that refers to a 'die'

that can be used to stamp an image into something, perhaps like a die you would use to stamp the images on your quarters front and back. 'Type' come from the Greek word that says a die. 'Antitype' is also from the Greek and refers to the image that is struck, it's comparative to the other.

Now you encounter 'types' and 'antitypes' all through the Bible. Abraham and Isaac played the roles of God and his Son in a drama when Abraham is called to sacrifice his only son. Therefore, Abraham is a 'type' of God and Isaac is a 'type' of Christ. David is universally seen as a 'type' of the Messiah, the die that is struck to create the image of the other side. Now we see that Israel is also a 'type' in a way of the Son of God.

Icons

Another way we might see this is by the word 'icon'. We're all familiar with icons now because of our use of computers. We understand that the icon stands for something, an entire series of instructions can be carried out with one click of a mouse. You are unaware of the great sequence of things that the computer has to do. Rather than make you write it all out, they just put that little icon up there, you click on it and your computer immediately does all the things you want done. When I'm using my word processor, I can count no less than 60 icons on the screen at the same time. Every one of them will do something and now over a period of time I've finally figured out what all of them do, I think. It's amazing how much you can do from that one screen because of the use of icons.

So, keep in mind when you read the prophets, they are using, verbal icons or types, images to represent something much bigger and more complex. People for a long time, speak of it as symbolism, in other words, a 'mountain' in the Bible is a symbol of a nation and in a sense that's true. So, you realize that when the prophet speaks of a mountain that's cut out without hands and it falls down and crash's on something, you realize we're not speaking literally here. That it is an icon which is supposed to carry some kind of meaning along with it. About the only way we can figure out, with any degree of accuracy, what the prophet is talking about is by learning the system of icons that are presented before us and realizing that's what it is.

When the prophet says, "When Israel was a child, I loved him and out of Egypt I have called my son." We understand where he's going, but the more God says "I called Israel, the further they went from me, they sacrificed to the Baals and they burnt incense to images, it was I who taught Ephraim to walk, taking him by the arms, but they didn't realize that I was the one who healed them" (Hosea 11:2-3).

Ah, the image of a parent, a father, a mother holding their kid by the arms and helping him to learn how to walk. This is what God is calling upon us to visualize that He has done with Israel.

"I lead them," {4} "with cords of human kindness and with ties of love, I lifted the yoke off their neck, I bent down to feed them. {5} Will they not return to Egypt and will not Assyria end up ruling over them because they refused to repent. {6} Swords will flash in their cities and will destroy the bars of their gates and put an end to their plans. {7} My people are determined to turn away from me; even if they call to the most high, he will by no means exalt them."

Looking at our country today, would God say this about us? "This people is determined to turn from God, but they are not determined to hold on to Him?"

There is that determined minority in this country who hate God and want him out of sight and out of mind and they have control of the public educational system and thus most of journalism and they are winning.

Hosea And His Wife Are Types

All the way through Hosea, a person should keep in mind the initial metaphor, the initial type. Hosea and his adulterous wife and the children begotten from that marriage are all 'types'. They are given here to illustrate the relationship between God and Israel, and Israel, his wife and Israel as children of that marriage. Hosea and his wife and his children are all 'types' of what happened between God and Israel.

God goes on to say in Hosea 11 verse 8, "How can I give you up?" I taught you how to walk holding on to your arms like a little tottering child, "How can I give you up? How can I hand you over Israel, how can I treat you like Admah.?"

Admah was one of the towns that was destroyed along with Sodom and Gomorra.

That's one of those illustrations where it's helpful to know your geography and your history of this land.

I can't do it, "How can I make you like Zeboim? My heart is changed within me, all my compassion is aroused: {9} I will not carry out my fierce anger, I'm not going to turn and devastate Ephraim. for I am God, and not man, I'm the Holy one among you. I'm not going to come in wrath."

A Time Of Return

Now what's interesting at this point is that while God said He would not do it, it happened. Then He goes on to say in Hosea 11 verse 10, "They will follow the LORD, he will roar like a lion and when he roars his children will come trembling from the west, {11} They will come trembling like birds from Egypt, like doves from Assyria, and I will settle them in their homes declares the LORD."

What's interesting about this to me is it seems to be implying a time of return, a return that never really happened in this way. Nothing like it ever happened. When Judah came back from Babylon, they returned there from Babylon. Now he's talking about the house of Israel which comes trembling from Egypt and from Assyria of all places. So consequently, I think, when God says I can't give you up, He's looking down through time, at a time when He will go and bring them back.

Verse 12, "Ephraim has surrounded me with lies, the house of Israel with deceit, Judah is unruly against God, even against the faithful Holy One."

Lies and Violence

Hosea Chapter 12: "Ephraim feeds on the wind; he peruses the east winds and multiplies lies and violence."

Wow, what a descriptive term of our society right now, lies and violence is our daily diet. You can't figure out who to believe in our news media. The politicians get on television and lie through their teeth all the time. Tune into any television network and you'll see a democratic strategist on the one side of a desk and a republican strategist on the other and the guy in the middle whose kind of a moderator and you listen to these two sides lie to one another and to us. And when they break from that program all the media does is go somewhere to show us the violence that's part of our daily diet.

"Ephraim will make a treaty with Assyria and send olive oil to Egypt."

They will be doing all kinds of trade agreements with these people.

Jacob = Israel

Hosea 12 verse 2, "The LORD has a charge to bring against Judah. He'll punish Jacob according to his ways and repay him according to his deeds. {3} In the womb Jacob grasps his brothers Esau's heel, as a man he struggled with God."

Once Jacob was grown, he actually grabbed hold of an angel and overcame him. This is the case of Jacob struggling and wrestling with the angel. You can read about this in the Bible in Genesis 32:23-30.

Notice, he said: "He struggled with God (Genesis 32:28). It was not just an angel that Jacob grabbed hold of that night and whom he held on to till daylight.

"Jacob said he found this man at Bethel and talked with him there. Jehovah God almighty, Jehovah is his name of renown" (Hosea 12:4).

LORD (Hebrew YHWH)

It's easy to forget this because your Bible has the word LORD everywhere in the Old Testament and when you see LORD in small caps, every time you see that, what it is, is a substitution for the Hebrew letters because there are no vowel points, YHWH, and what you're looking at is what the King James version used as a diversion of it, Jehovah. It might be pronounced 'Jehovah' others say it is 'Yahweh', but the important thing for you to know is, God has a name and you just see it everywhere in the Old Testament.

Keeping Merchants Honest

Continuing in Hosea 12 verse 6, Hosea said, "You must return to God, maintain love and justice and wait for your God always. The merchant uses dishonest scales, he loves to defraud."

You know one of the great struggles that we have in our government is keeping merchants honest, they just love to take that extra dime from us, and they just love to put their thumb on the scales.

"Ephraim boasts," {8} "I am very rich, I have become wealthy; with all my wealth they will not find in me any inequity or sin."

This doesn't mean there isn't any sin there, he just says, "They're not going to find it." Why? They had dishonest scales and they have ways of taking advantage of people, of defrauding old people out of their retirement income, it's done all the time. The ones who do it, do it a tiny little bit at a time, over a large number of people, then they get rich, and no one is the wiser.

{9} "I am the LORD your God who brought you out of Egypt, I will make you live in tents again as in the days of your appointed feasts."

They all lived in tents during the Feast of Tabernacle. This was symbolic of their 40 years of their wilderness wandering when they were out there wandering around in the desert and waiting for the older generation to die off, so the younger generation could enter the promised land.

God Spoke To The Prophets

God says in Hosea 12 verse 10, "I spoke to the prophets, "I gave them many visions, I told parables through them. Is Gilead wicked? Its people are worthless, do they sacrifice bulls in Gilgal? Their altars will be like piles of stones on a plowed field.""

That's the way it was in the Middle East, there were so many rocks in the fields, if you ever wanted to plow it you had to gather up all the stones and put them in a pile.

{12} "Jacob fled to the country of Aram, Israel served to get a wife, and to pay for her he tended sheep."

This is talking again about the history of Israel and if you know nothing of it, it will go in one ear and out the other.

{13} "The LORD used a prophet to bring Israel up from Egypt, by a prophet he cared for him." That was Moses. {14} "But Ephraim has bitterly provoked him to anger; his LORD will leave upon him the guilt of his bloodshed and will repay him for his contempt."

What I think about here is the repayment of bloodshed. I hearken back, and I'll never forget watching the movie of 'Gettysburg', and seeing the way it was fought and the men who had died and the realization of how many brothers, sons and fathers died in that war. It really was, in a way, although I don't know of many people who think of it this way, as reparations for slavery, for all the slaves who were killed, for all of the slaves who were thrown over the sides of the slave's ship as they were coming to this country or died on the way. For all of that abuse, we paid, in the civil war. When you think about the guilt of our bloodshed and being repaid for it,

don't forget the nearly 40 million people in our population, who are not here today because of abortion.

Baal Worship

Hosea 13 Verse 1: "When Ephraim spoke men trembled, he was exalted in Israel."

Boy isn't that the history of this country, when we spoke people paid attention. "But he became guilty of Baal worship and died."

Now the question that logically should probably come to your mind, when you read that is, how on earth could worshipping an idol be such a huge deal? Remember what I said about icons, Baal is a verbal icon for sexual depravity and child abuse. Keep that in mind anytime you come across it, it's an icon. When you look at our society today, sexual depravity is our signature and child abuse, well it's in the news all the time.

In verse 2 God said, "Now they sin more and more, they make idols for themselves from their silver, cleverly fashioned images, all of them the work of craftsman. It is said of these people, "They offered human sacrifice and kissed the calf idols." That was the reputation of the house of Israel at this time.

"Therefore, they'll be like the morning mist, like the early dew that disappears, like chaff swirling from a threshing floor, like smoke escaping through the window, a breath of air, it's gone. {4} But I am Jehovah your God, who brought you out of Egypt; you shall acknowledge no God but me. No savior except me, {5} I cared for you in the desert, in the land of burning heat, {6} When I fed them, they were satisfied, and when they were satisfied, they became proud, and before long they forgot me."

You know this is an absolute characteristic of man, when we are fed and when we are satisfied, we are prone to get to big for our britches and we forget God who gave it all to us. So, watch for this in yourself, it is a temptation and it will come upon you at the most surprising times.

Iconography

God said in Hosea 13 verse 7, "I will come upon them like a lion, like a leopard I will lurk by the path, {8} Like a bear robbed of her cubs, I will attack them and rip them open, like a lion I will devour them, a wild animal shall tear them apart."

Now here's another word about iconography, the gentile nation or elsewhere in prophecy are presented as predatory animals, that's how they are shown. And I think what God is saying here is that he will come upon Israel in the person of the leopard (Assyria), the lion (Babylon), Egypt yet another raving animal.

Verse 9, "You are destroyed Oh Israel because you are against me, your helper. {10} Where is your king that he can save you." What happened to him? "Where are your rulers in all your towns of whom you said, give us a king and princes?"

You know, the prophet is just absolutely loaded with historical references and you really need to know the story. That's why we've mentioned several times in this series the opportunity to get a hold of our series of programs on Biblical history, where we start with first Samuel 1:1 and go all the way through Samuel and Kings and all the history of Israel that keeps being referred back to throughout these verses here.

"So, in my anger," God says in verse 11, "I gave you the king you ask for and in my wrath, I took him away." That was King Saul. {12} "The iniquity of Ephraim is stored up, his sins they're all on record, {13} Pain like a woman in child birth come to them, he's like a child without any wisdom, when the time arises, he does not even come to the opening of the womb. {14} I will ransom them from the power of the grave, I will redeem them from death, where O death is your plagues, where O grave is your destruction: I will have no compassion. {15} Even though he thrives among his brothers. An east wind from the Lord will come, blowing in from the desert, his spring will become dry, his well will dry up, his storehouse will be plundered. {16} The people of Samaria must bare their guilt because they have rebelled against their God, they will fall by the sword, their little one dashed to the ground, their pregnant women ripped open."

Two Results Of Sin

There are two results that follow after sin, one is punishment and the other is the consequences. What came upon Ephraim were the consequences of abandoning God for Baal.

In The Future Israel Will Repent And Return To The LORD

Finally, Hosea 14: "Return O Israel unto the LORD your God, Your sins have been your downfall. {2} Take words with you and return to the LORD and say to him "Forgive us of all of our sins and receive us graciously so that we can offer the fruit of our lips. {3} Assyria can't save us. we're not going to mount on war horses any more, We'll never again say, "Our gods" to what our own hands have made, for in you the fatherless find compassion."

And then there at the very end of it all, the prophet returns and says, the time out there in the future is coming when {4} "God will heal your waywardness and will love you freely, his anger will turn away from them and he will bring them back again. {7} Men will dwell again in his shade, He will flourish like the grain, and he will blossom like the vine, his fame will be like the wine of Lebanon. {9} The ways of the LORD are right and the righteous walks in them."

The late Ronald L. Dart was a Christian evangelist whose teachings still inspire thousands of people around the world. His legacy spans decades. For more information about the teachings of Ronald L. Dart, visit RLDEA.com where you will find booklets, articles, sermons, Bible studies, and books by Mr. Dart.

Discussion Questions

1. Do you think that the fall of our society will bring in the end of days?
2. Or do you think that it is possible for God to have us fall and be conquered by another nation and withhold sending His Kingdom just yet?
3. What are your thoughts about Mr. Dart's idea of how the "famine of the Gospel" could happen?
4. Do you agree with Mr. Dart that there are a lot of similarities between our society and Israel?
5. Why do you think wealth corrupts people?
6. What are your thoughts about iconography?
7. Is it hard to imagine that one day Israel will repent and return to God?
8. How can we make sure that we do not make the same mistakes?
9. We may not build an actual idol, but is it possible to still have 'idols' in our lives even if they aren't made from wood and stone?
10. What was the most important teaching in Mr. Dart's study for you?