

Better Way Apostolic Church- Bible Class

Subject: Remember the Past: Hosea 10:12

Three simple rule in Life:

1. If you don't go after what you want, you'll never have it.
2. If you do not ask, the answer will always be no.
3. If you do not step forward, you'll always be in the same place.

TO BREAK UP OUR FALLOW GROUND. The heart of man is represented --

1. As ground. Therefore expected to produce fruit that will benefit its owner.
2. **As fallow ground. It is destitute of the fruit that it might produce.** It is not only useless to its owner, it is prejudicial to neighboring land that has good seed sown in it, in preventing the plants of righteousness from growing to perfection.
3. **As our fallow ground. Because we all have ground committed to our cultivating care.** And if it be not fallow now, there was a time when the term might have been applied to it with correctness and propriety.

Breaking up our fallow ground implies a work --

1. Of labour; for which the Master of the land imparts strength.
2. Of sacrifice; for which the Proprietor communicates fortitude.
3. Of constancy and perseverance; for which the Lord of the soil supplies patience.
4. Of renovation; for which the Owner of the ground affords means. The soil in its present state is unfit to produce any useful plants; but when the weeds which now grow therein are destroyed, the ground shall be renewed, that it may bring forth the fruits of piety.

II. SOW TO YOURSELVES IN RIGHTEOUSNESS. We have here a representation of right principles, under the figure of seed; the propriety of which may be discerned, if we notice --

1. Right principles are not indigenous to the human heart. They must be sown there.
2. The value of right principles.
 - (1) Their author and giver -- God.
 - (2) Their price -- the blood of the covenant.
 - (3) Their result -- plants of righteousness.
3. The care and attention they demand. How great is the solicitude of the husbandman in reference to his seed.

4. The vegetative power and productive quality. Right conduct is the offspring of these principles. "Sow to yourselves" means --

(1) Allow these principles to sink deep into the heart; let all obstructions be removed out of the way.

(2) Let every plant that grows in our heart be the result of this precious seed.

(3) Though our anxiety should be principally on our own account, yet our conduct should be a union of piety and benevolence.

How could Hosea's unfaithful wife Gomer ever question her husband's love? Didn't he demonstrate it by seeking her out, pleading with her to come home, and paying the price to set her free?

How could Israel ever question God's love and refuse to respond to it? After all, the nation had not only broken the Law of God; they had broken the heart of God. In the closing chapters of this book, Hosea reminded them of God's compassion for His people, and he did it by presenting three clear evidences of God's love.

1. God's Mercies in the Past (Hosea 11)

At least fourteen times in the Book of Deuteronomy, Moses used the word remember. Deuteronomy is Moses' farewell address to the new generation of Israelites as they were preparing to enter the Promised Land. But why would Moses ask these young people to look back when they were getting ready to move forward? Because a correct understanding of God's dealings in the past is the best way to be certain of success in the future. Philosopher George Santayana expressed this truth succinctly: "Those who do not remember the past are condemned to relive it."

God's love demonstrated at the Exodus (Hosea 11:1-2). God sent Joseph ahead into Egypt to prepare the way for Jacob and his sons. What Joseph's brothers did to their brother was meant for evil, but God used it for good (Genesis 50:20). Because of Joseph, the people of Israel were kept alive during the severe famine and were able to multiply in the ensuing years. From this humble beginning, God formed a nation; Moses led that nation out of Egypt in great power and triumph (Exodus 12-15).

Hosea pictures the God of the Exodus as a tender father who freed his son from bondage. The emphasis here is not on Israel, the unfaithful wife, but on Israel, the ungrateful son. (For God as "Father" and Israel as a "son," see Exodus 4:22-23; Isaiah 1:2-4; and Deuteronomy 32:5). After all God did for His son, he will refuse to return His love or obey His will.

God's love demonstrated in the wilderness (Hosea 11:3-4). The loving father not only carried His son out of bondage, but He taught him to walk and tenderly cared for him during the wilderness journey. When a child stumbles and gets bruised, mother and father are there to give healing and encouragement, and that's what God did for His people. He taught them, healed them, and led them; He was careful to lead them as you would a child and not as you would an animal. He bound Himself to them with cords of love, not with bit and bridle (Psalms 32:8-9) or a galling yoke.

Hosea 11:1-4 again, but instead of noting what God did for Israel, notice how Israel treated God. Like spoiled children, they rebelled against their Father and turned to idols. God spoke to them through His prophets, but the more God called to Israel, the more they strayed from Him! They were happy to enjoy

His gifts, but they didn't want to obey the Giver. He sought to lead them with ties of love, but they said. "Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us" (Psalms 2:3, KJV).

Throughout history, whether Jewish or Gentile, human nature is pretty much the same, and all of us are prone to do what Israel did: enjoy God's blessings, but take God for granted. "My people are determined to turn from me" (Hosea 11:7, NIV). "Also, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a brood of evildoers, children who are corrupters!" (Isaiah 1:4, NKJV) God set them free and guided them to their inheritance, but within one generation after the death of Joshua, the nation turned to idolatry and forsook the Lord (Judges 2:7 ff).

Hosea 11:5-7; Hosea 11:8-9; Hosea 11:10-12

God's love demonstrated by His long-suffering (Hosea 11:5-7). On more than one occasion, God could have destroyed the nation and started over again (Exodus 32:10), but He chose to be long-suffering. When the journey became difficult, the Jews wanted to go back to Egypt; they complained when they show

We have already seen that some of the references to Egypt in this book refer to the "new bondage" in Assyria (Hosea 11:5). Israel refused to repent, so the nation had to go into captivity. They made plans without consulting God, so their defenses would fall before the invaders. The only time they called on God was when they were in trouble, and God graciously helped them; but now the end had come.

God's love demonstrated by His faith-fulness to His promises (Hosea 11:8-9). What a revelation we have in 11:8 of the compassionate heart of God! According to Jewish law, a rebellious son was supposed to be turned over to the elders of the city and stoned to death (Deuteronomy 21:18-21), but how could God do this to His beloved son, Israel? (Centuries later. His innocent, only-begotten Son would suffer for the sins of the whole world.) God destroyed the cities of the plain because of their sins (Genesis 18:16-19:29), and those people didn't have the same privileges of learning about God that Israel had. What right did Israel have to expect God to spare them, especially since they were sinning against a flood of light.

What motivated God to spare Israel from total destruction? Not only His deep compassion, but also His faithfulness to His covenant. "For I am God, and not man" (Hosea 11:9, KJV). "God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will he not make it good?" (Numbers 23:19)

God's covenant with Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3) is unconditional and will not change: therefore, the nation of Israel is preserved. But His covenant with Israel at Sinai had conditions attached, and if the people failed to meet those conditions, God was obligated to withdraw His blessings. Israel's possession of the land and its blessings is based on the Abrahamic Covenant, but their enjoyment of the land and its blessings is based on the Mosaic Covenant. God was faithful to both covenants: He preserved the nation, but He disciplined them for their sins.

God's love demonstrated by the hope of future restoration (Hosea 11:10-12). Often in Scripture you will find a declaration of judgment immediately followed by a promise of hope, and that's the case here. Hosea looks ahead to the end times when Israel will be gathered together from all the nations, brought to their own land, cleansed of their sins, and established in their kingdom. In the past. God roared like a lion when He judged the nation (5:14; 13:7, but in the future, His "roar" will call His people to come back

to their land. Like birds turned loose from their cages, the people of Israel will swiftly fly to their own land, and God will "settle them in their homes" (11:11, NIV).

Meanwhile. God is long-suffering with His people, as He is with all sinners (2 Peter 3:9), even though they lie to Him and rebel against Him (Hosea 11:12). What Jesus said to Jerusalem in His day, God was saying through Hosea to the people of that day: "How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!" (Matthew 23:37, NKJV)

God's mercies in the past certainly proved His love, but Hosea offered a second evidence that God loved His people.