

“Hosea 11, Applications for Communion with God”

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Hosea Chapter 11 is a most excellent chapter in the Word of God. Meditating upon it makes for great preparation before entering into the presence of Almighty God, and our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ. It is generally true that what is true of nations in the Bible is also true of individuals today. So let us step into Israel’s shoes this morning, hear the Word of God to her through God’s prophet Hosea, and heed its applications for ourselves.

“When Israel was a child, I loved him, And out of Egypt I called My son” (11:1, NKJV)

We recall the new birth of the Christian (John 3:3-6). This is freedom from sin’s power by divine work. Just as Israel went across the Red Sea on dry land and obtained physical deliverance, the child of God crosses from death into life by the Red Blood of the Sinless Savior which was shed at the cross (Exodus 14:21-31; John 5:24). If you have trusted in the Savior, then you have left spiritual Egypt, the place of bondage.

“As they called them, So they went from them; They sacrificed to the Baals, And burned incense to carved images.” (11:2)

Consider that what sins you used to practice, and that old lifestyle you used to practice, must remain in the past.

“I taught Ephraim to walk, Taking them by their arms; But they did not know that I healed them. (11:3)

We recall the Christian discipleship process. It is all of God. His work. Yet do any consider themselves to have obtained, thereby stealing God’s glory?

“I drew them with gentle cords, With bands of love, And I was to them as those who take the yoke from their neck. I stooped and fed them.” (11:4)

Look at how the Lord draws us gently, in contrast to the violent wrenching of sin. How blessed we are that we have a divine Deliverer and Provider!

“He shall not return to the land of Egypt; But the Assyrian shall be his king, Because they refused to repent.” (11:5)

Friend, if you have been saved from sin’s penalty by believing in Jesus the Son of God, then you will not go back to Egypt to the unsaved state. Instead, you will go captive to Assyria for a while, that you may know the discipline of the Lord towards His children. The believer who still refuses to repent there will remain there until coming to the senses.

“And the sword shall slash in his cities, Devour his districts, And consume them, Because of their own counsels.” (11:6)

Be afraid of the power of sin (be it greed, adultery, dishonesty, or bitterness and grudge holding). It can corrupt, devour, and destroy your life and reputation.

“My people are bent on backsliding from Me. Though they call to the Most High, None at all exalt Him.” (11:7)

Yet the unrepentant sinner prays? Should the Lord hear the backslider’s cry?

“How can I give you up, Ephraim? How can I hand you over, Israel? How can I make you like Admah? How can I set you like Zeboiim? My heart churns within Me; My sympathy is stirred. I will not execute the fierceness of My anger; I will not again destroy Ephraim. For I am God, and not man, The Holy One in your midst; And I will not come with terror.” (11:8-9)

But there is good news, if sin does not take your precious life. Our God is sympathetic, so He will go to great lengths to get your attention. Consider that He convicts your conscience from within and without, and this morning He sends a parade of preachers to speak His words and bring about godly sorrow in you leading to your repentance (2 Corinthians 7:10).

“They shall walk after the LORD. He will roar like a lion. When He roars, Then His sons shall come trembling from the west; They shall come trembling like a bird from Egypt, Like a dove from the land of Assyria. And I will let them dwell in their houses,” Says the LORD.” (11:10-11)

Out of captivity, people are coming. Some come from Egypt, believing for the first time that Christ died for their sins and rose from the dead. Others come as doves from Assyria, having relented in their arguments against God which were holding them back in their discipleship.

“Ephraim has encircled Me with lies, And the house of Israel with deceit; But Judah still walks with God, Even with the Holy One who is faithful.” (11:12)

We have here a reference to the historical record of the divided Kingdom of Israel. The Northern Kingdom led by the tribe of Ephraim would have none of God’s counsel. They chose open sin or religious hypocrisy, both of which lead to the judgment of God. The southern tribes led by Judah repented and chose to walk with God in that day, and were enjoying His presence. Which will you choose this day?