

## Major Lessons From Minor Prophets: Lesson 2

### Love & Judgment: God's Dilemma

Israel, at the time of Hosea, was in trouble. They were in need of serious correction because they had wandered far away from God's plan for them. In order to get His people's attention and warn them about coming judgment, God employed the use of metaphors. God used various ways to warn His people because He loved them.

**2 Kings 14:25-27** "He restored the territory of Israel from the entrance of Hamath to the Sea of the Arabah, according to the word of the LORD God of Israel, which He had spoken through His servant Jonah the son of Amittai, the prophet who was from Gath Hepher. <sup>26</sup>For the LORD saw *that* the affliction of Israel was very bitter; and whether bond or free, there was no helper for Israel. <sup>27</sup>And the LORD did not say that He would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven; but He saved them by the hand of Jeroboam the son of Joash."

**Memory Text: Hosea 12:6** - "So you, by *the help* of your God, return; observe mercy and justice, and wait on your God continually."

#### Easily Deceived & Senseless

**Hosea 7:4, 6:** "They *are* all adulterers. Like an oven heated by a baker - he ceases stirring *the fire* after kneading the dough, until it is leavened. <sup>6</sup>They prepare their heart like an oven, while they lie in wait; their baker sleeps all night; in the morning it burns like a flaming fire."

**Hosea 7:8:** "Ephraim has mixed himself among the peoples; Ephraim is a cake unturned."

**Hosea 7:11, 12:** "Ephraim also is like a silly dove, without sense - they call to Egypt, they go to Assyria. Wherever they go, I will spread My net on them; I will bring them down like birds of the air; I will chastise them according to what their congregation has heard."

**Hosea 7:16:** "They return, *but* not to the Most High; they are like a treacherous bow. Their princes shall fall by the sword for the cursings of their tongue. This *shall be* their derision in the land of Egypt."

#### A Trained Heifer

**Hosea 8:9:** "For they have gone up to Assyria, *like* a wild donkey alone by itself; Ephraim has hired lovers."

**Hosea 9:10:** "I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness; I saw your fathers as the firstfruits on the fig tree in its first season. *But* they went to Baal Peor, and separated themselves *to that* shame; they became an abomination like the thing they loved."

**Hosea 9:16:** "Ephraim is stricken, their root is dried up; they shall bear no fruit. Yes, were they to bear children, I would kill the darlings of their womb."

**Hosea 10:1:** "Israel empties his vine; he brings forth fruit for himself. According to the multitude of his fruit he has increased the altars; according to the bounty of his land they have embellished *his sacred pillars*."

**Hosea 10:11, 12:** "Ephraim is a trained heifer that loves to thresh *grain*; but I harnessed her fair neck, I will make Ephraim pull *a plow*. Judah shall plow; Jacob shall break his clods. Sow for yourselves righteousness; reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground, for *it is* time to seek the LORD, till He comes and rains righteousness on you."

**Matt. 11:28, 29** "Come to Me, all *you* who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."

#### A Toddling Son

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

**Duet. 8:5:** "You should know in your heart that as a man chastens his son, so the LORD your God chastens you."

**Prov. 13:24:** "He who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him promptly."

**Heb. 12:6:** "For whom the LORD loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives."

**Rev. 3:19:** "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent."

#### Compassion Stronger Than Anger

**Hosea 11:8, 9:** "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."

**2 Peter 3:9:** "The Lord is not slack concerning *His* promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance."

## Healed, Loved, & Nurtured

**Hosea 14:** “O Israel, return to the LORD your God, for you have stumbled because of your iniquity; <sup>2</sup> take words with you, and return to the LORD. Say to Him, “Take away all iniquity; receive us graciously, For we will offer the sacrifices of our lips.<sup>3</sup> Assyria shall not save us, we will not ride on horses, nor will we say anymore to the work of our hands, ‘You are our gods.’ For in You the fatherless finds mercy.” <sup>4</sup> “I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely, for My anger has turned away from him. <sup>5</sup> I will be like the dew to Israel; he shall grow like the lily, and lengthen his roots like Lebanon. <sup>6</sup> His branches shall spread; his beauty shall be like an olive tree, and his fragrance like Lebanon. <sup>7</sup> Those who dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall be revived *like* grain, and grow like a vine. Their scent *shall be* like the wine of Lebanon. <sup>8</sup> Ephraim *shall say*, ‘What have I to do anymore with idols?’ I have heard and observed him. I *am* like a green cypress tree; Your fruit is found in Me.” <sup>9</sup> Who *is* wise? Let him understand these things. *Who is* prudent? Let him know them. For the ways of the LORD *are* right; the righteous walk in them, but transgressors stumble in them.”

**Hosea 12:6:** “So you, by *the help* of your God, return; observe mercy and justice, and wait on your God continually.”

**Phil. 2:12, 13:** “Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for *His* good pleasure.”

**Heb. 13:20, 21:** “Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom *be* glory forever and ever. Amen.”

*“Through nature, through types and symbols, through patriarchs and prophets, God had spoken to the world. Lessons must be given to humanity in the language of humanity. The Messenger of the covenant must speak. His voice must be heard in His own temple. Christ must come to utter words which should be clearly and definitely understood. He, the author of truth, must separate truth from the chaff of man’s utterance, which had made it of no effect. The principles of God’s government and the plan of redemption must be clearly defined. The lessons of the Old Testament must be fully set before men.” - Desire of Ages, p. . 34*

*“Through long, dark years when ruler after ruler stood up in bold defiance of Heaven and led Israel deeper and still deeper into idolatry, God sent message after message to His backslidden people. Through His prophets He gave them every opportunity to stay the tide of apostasy and to return to Him. During the years that were to follow the rending of the kingdom, Elijah and Elisha were to live and labor, and the tender appeals of Hosea and Amos and Obadiah were to be heard in the land. Never was the kingdom of Israel to be left without noble witnesses to the mighty power of God to save from sin. Even in the darkest hours some would remain true to their divine Ruler and in the midst of idolatry would live blameless in the sight of a holy God. These faithful ones were numbered among the goodly remnant through whom the eternal purpose of Jehovah was finally to be fulfilled.” - Prophets & Kings, p. 108*

**Summary:** The right understanding of the character of God and His actions attracts people to return to Him and to emulate His faithfulness, love, and justice. Let’s be sure we’re effectively communicating the goodness of God, both through our words and actions, in the hope someone will turn or return to God and receive the wonders of salvation. What do you say?