

Major Lessons from the Minor Prophets

Hosea: Healed by Love

Message 4: The Holiness of God and the Seriousness of Sin

Hosea 4:1-19

Hear the word of the Lord, O children of Israel, for the Lord has a controversy with the inhabitants of the land. There is no faithfulness or steadfast love, and no knowledge of God in the land;² there is swearing, lying, murder, stealing, and committing adultery; they break all bounds, and bloodshed follows bloodshed.³ Therefore the land mourns, and all who dwell in it languish, and also the beasts of the field and the birds of the heavens, and even the fish of the sea are taken away.⁴ Yet let no one contend, and let none accuse, for with you is my contention, O priest.⁵ You shall stumble by day; the prophet also shall stumble with you by night; and I will destroy your mother.⁶ My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because you have rejected knowledge, I reject you from being a priest to me. And since you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.⁷ The more they increased, the more they sinned against me; I will change their glory into shame.⁸ They feed on the sin of my people; they are greedy for their iniquity.⁹ And it shall be like people, like priest; I will punish them for their ways and repay them for their deeds.¹⁰ They shall eat, but not be satisfied; they shall play the whore, but not multiply, because they have forsaken the Lord to cherish¹¹ whoredom, wine, and new wine, which take away the understanding.¹² My people inquire of a piece of wood, and their walking staff gives them oracles. For a spirit of whoredom has led them astray, and they have left their God to play the whore.¹³ They sacrifice on the tops of the mountains and burn offerings on the hills, under oak, poplar, and terebinth, because their shade is good. Therefore your daughters play the whore, and your brides commit adultery.¹⁴ I will not punish your daughters when they play the whore, nor your brides when they commit adultery; for the men themselves go aside with prostitutes and sacrifice with cult prostitutes, and a people without understanding shall come to ruin.¹⁵ Though you play the whore, O Israel, let not Judah become guilty. Enter not into Gilgal, nor go up to Beth-Aven, and swear not, "As the Lord lives."¹⁶ Like a stubborn heifer, Israel is stubborn; can the Lord now feed them like a lamb in a broad pasture?¹⁷ Ephraim is joined to idols; leave him alone.¹⁸ When their drink is gone, they give themselves to whoring; their rulers dearly love shame.¹⁹ A wind has wrapped them in its wings, and they shall be ashamed because of their sacrifices.

How did Israel get to this point in their relationship to God? _____

Hosea 5:5; 7:10 > *"Israel's arrogance testifies against them..."*

Hosea was called by God to prophesy against the kingdom of Israel because of their sinfulness at a time when Israel was at the height of their national prosperity. It was through this prosperity that Israel developed its arrogance and began to turn from God.

Romans 2:4 – "Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not know that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?"

The Indictment:

God offered a three-part indictment (sins of omission) that would bring judgment on the kingdom of Israel (4:1-2).

1. Charge #1: _____ v4:1a

No trustworthiness > No reliability > No holding firm in your faith

The characteristic that God so abundantly shows us was lacking from Israel.

“Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong.” 1 Corinthians 16:13

2. Charge #2: _____ v4:1b

No enduring love > No faithful love > No loyalty > No devotion

*If any two attributes should be present within a covenant marriage it is faithfulness and a loyal love.

3. Charge #3: _____ v4:1c

Acknowledging and knowing God go hand in hand. We acknowledge God by knowing Him and who He is and we come to know Him through knowing His word. Hosea clearly indicts the priest for this lack of knowledge among the people of Israel.

“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge, because YOU (the priest) have rejected knowledge. I reject you from being a priest to me.” v6

“Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” Exodus 19:5-6

God _____ acknowledgement of Him as God

Hosea 13:4 – *“But I have been the Lord your God ever since you came out of Egypt. You shall acknowledge no God but me, no Savior except me.”*

God _____ acknowledgement of Him as God.

Hosea 6:6 – *“For I **desire** steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.”*

This lack of acknowledging God had _____ the kingdom of Israel.

Hosea 5:4 – *“Their deeds do not permit them to return to their God.”*

This knowledge/acknowledgement of God should produce within us a _____.

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight.”
Proverbs 9:10

This lack of acknowledging God would lead to Israel’s _____.

Hosea 4:6 – *“My people are destroyed from lack of knowledge because you have rejected knowledge.”*

“In a word, men go on as licentiously, as if they did not think that there is a God in heaven, as if all religion was removed from their hearts.” For as long as any knowledge of God remains in us, it is like a bridle to restrain us: but when men become wanton, and allow themselves every liberty, it is certain that they have forgotten God, and that there is in them now no knowledge of God.” Martin Luther

>Look at how this acknowledgement/knowledge of God is addressed by Paul in the Romans 1:18-25

Five results of not acknowledging God for who He is

1. _____ within society. v4:2

Swearing, lying, murder, stealing and committing adultery, violence > the basic principles of the 10 Commandments

2. Effects upon the _____ .v4:3

*The land mourns, the inhabitants languish, and the beast, birds and fish are taken away

3. A decline in the _____. v4:6-9

*Since you will not acknowledge me, I reject you as my priests to the world v6

*The more priest-the more they sinned against me. v7

*They became false worshippers by exchanging God’s glory for idol worship v7

*They fed on the sins of the people and took pleasure in it v8

*Correlation to the sin offering where the priest were allowed to eat > Leviticus 6:26

4. Not acknowledging God will lead to _____. v4:10-11

God has given us things in this world to enjoy but when their order of priority is out of line it will lead us to a life of emptiness.

*They will eat and not have enough v10a

*They will engage in prostitution and not be satisfied v

*The excessive sins will be so bad God will not even judge it any more – the sin itself will be the judgement v14

5. Not acknowledging God will lead to _____ v4:12-13

*They even worshipped wooden idols > Isaiah 44:15-16

*Spiritual adultery has its beginnings in _____. We give other things/people the place of prominence in our life that belongs to _____.

What false idols are you worshiping in your life?

When you see the list of charges that God has outlined against Israel what do you see about that list?

See any modern parallels?

Israel's guilt and shame is a warning to Judah

Even though Joel's primary task was warning Israel of their impending judgement he also issued a warning to the southern kingdom of Judah. Do not let Judah become as Israel. v4:15-19

Hosea's warning to Judah is also a warning to _____.