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**C1013 – April 14, 2010 – Hosea 14:1-9 – The Future Restoration  
Of Israel**

In Hosea 14 we come to the end of Hosea's book and as we do we want to be reminded of the importance of cataloguing books. The Jews catalogued the OT into three sections; first the Law, the five books of Moses: these sketch God's will for the nation Israel, what God wanted them to do. Second, the Writings, these are wisdom books, books like Song of Songs, Proverbs, the Psalms and they deal with issues of marriage, work, family, basically the divine institutions and how to live skillfully in these areas; and third the Prophets and here you have two sub-divisions, the earlier prophets like Joshua and Judges, 1 and 2 Kings, (these earlier prophets were historical analysts, they observed what took place and picked and pulled out what was key to God's program and wrote a commentary from God's perspective on it and the later prophets who are more like prosecuting attorneys than historical analysts. Their job is to bring a case or lawsuit against the nation, they're calling the nation back to the books of Moses, back to Moses' Law. Hosea is one of these later prophets. He's bringing a case against the nation at a time when the nation was far gone, far, far, far away from God's word. When you're far, far, gone one of the things the prophet will do is work with the problem of conviction of sin, exposing your sin and over a prolonged period of time the nation had developed habitual sin type patterns. Not the once in a while sins, but deeply embedded sin patterns that plagued the nation. If that's you then this is the book you want to study because this is the book that tells you how to get out of that. It's not easy to get out but you can get out. That's Hosea's contribution to the canon.

As we conclude we also want to review the structure of Hosea. Hosea divides into three sections. The first section is chapters 1-3, where God tells Hosea to go marry a prostitute. Despite pious attempts to get around this situation,

that's what it says. Hosea is to go marry a prostitute, to come into a contractual arrangement with her, which will demonstrate before the nation what God is married to and the contract they had. The nation was committing mass spiritual prostitution. Yet God was her right husband while she was out fornicating with other gods and so Hosea's marriage to a prostitute and all the harlotry that woman engaged in during their marriage depicted what God was having to go through with the nation continually worshipping other gods and how concerned God was about that and the fact that God is faithful to His covenant. He's a faithful Husband and so He would continue to work with her.

The second section is chapters 4-10 and this is the *rib* procedure or the lawsuit. You can't have a lawsuit without a standard of law. So the *rib* presupposes the Mosaic Law. The nation was given this Law at Mt Sinai, the details of which were very clearly revealed, they were to read it every seven years and so they knew what was in it and yet they were in constant violation of it. Therefore God sends Hosea as His attorney to prosecute the nation on its violations of specific detailed legislation in the Mosaic Law.

The third section is chapters 11-14 and they deal with the elective plan of God. God could legally, as far as the Mosaic Law is concerned, say oh well, you people have fouled up one too many times and so that's it, I'm done with you, I cast you off forever. God could have done that, legally, under the terms of the Mosaic Covenant. But God loved Israel with an elective love, an *ahav* love which brought about His *chesed* love in the Abrahamic Covenant. So this section looks back to the prior covenant with the nation in the time of Abraham, a covenant that provided security for the nation Israel. So therefore chapters 11-14 deal with the covenant back of the Mosaic Covenant and that's the Abrahamic Covenant. The nation Israel can never be totally destroyed because of God's elective love in the Abrahamic Covenant. And tonight we come to the final conclusion of God's Abrahamic Covenant and see that promise fulfilled. God is faithful and she will finally be restored to her right husband, she will finally be restored to the place of blessing.

But to get to the blessing, to get restored she first has to confess her sin and so Hos 14:1-3 is the confession of the nation. It is the future confession of the nation Israel. This is yet to occur. But remember when you discuss confession of sin, you first have to have conviction of sin; if you're not convicted of sin

you have nothing to confess. This is why it does no good to go around confessing when you don't know what it is you are confessing. Some Christians have gotten that idea that if I just use 1 John 1:9 all the time, even if I'm not aware of any sin, that'll be a good thing. 1 John 1:9 doesn't say that. 1 John 1:9 says confess sin that you know, some content that you take to the Lord. You can't do that till you know a sin. How am I going to know a sin? If God the Holy Spirit works the same way today as He did back then there's only one answer to the question: the only way you can have conviction of sin is by exposure over and over and over to the teaching of the word of God. It requires sustained, patient and tireless study of the word of God. That will open your eyes to what sin is in your life.

And so you first have to be convicted of sin, then you can have confession of sin. And at this future point the nation Israel will be convicted of her sin and will confess a true confession. The moment true confession occurs the conviction stops. And if conviction of sin keeps on coming in your life after you have confessed it, you have a spiritual problem of some sort because God is not convicting you of the sin once you have confessed it. He doesn't rub your nose in it; that is not the way God works and we can say that emphatically and dogmatically on the basis of God's word. That is a satanic distortion of conviction of sin. And if you have this, this is the worst way to torture your soul, make yourself the most miserable person in the world and Christians do this all the time. That's what Satan wants you to do. Do you know why? Because Satan wants to immobilize you in the Christian life. He's not interested in your spiritual growth; he's interested in stopping spiritual growth.

So we have confession in Hosea 14:1, **Return, O Israel, to the LORD your God, shub, return**, this is the word for turn around. It's a word that includes confession but is larger than confession; there's another element to the word which is often needed when we're dealing with a deep, deep carnality, when we've been out of it for a long time we've developed habitual sin patterns and we keep getting stuck in this sin pattern, we keep falling over and over and over and once we're convicted of this we confess and get back in fellowship, then we fall out again, so we confess again and get back in fellowship, then fall out again, confess and get back, it's a yo-yo operation. When you get involved with that kind of a situation where you're back and forth, in and out of fellowship over this same thing then what do you do?

Obviously the Bible must have a solution because someone besides you had the problem before in history so what is the procedure? The procedure is to start training yourself in new godly patterns. You've got to replace the old habitual sin patterns with new habitual godly patterns. And you'll need to constantly be praying for God to help you do this, you can't do it on your own, so you want to know that when you're in this kind of a thing it's not enough just to stop the sin pattern. You have to develop a new pattern in its place, if you don't you'll just slide over to a new sin pattern and you'll slide from sin pattern to sin pattern to sin pattern. So you have to establish new patterns. I've taken you through Eph 4; the latter half of Eph 4 is very good for training yourself in new patterns of behavior, which is sort of a rehabilitation program, that's what it amounts to. So after we've been out of it for a long time and we've realized we're stuck in this sin pattern then comes the rehab program and that means you've got to pray and start a crash program in the word of God - daily over and over and over and over and over, hearing the word of God, the word, the word. There's no way around it. This is the only solution.

So when he says, **Return, O Israel, to the Lord**, *shub*, it means not just to confess the sin, but also to start this crash program in the word of God. And Daniel 12 discusses how the nation Israel in the future Tribulation will be on a crash program in the word of God. Up till that point they've rejected the NT, so they have the entire NT to learn and they will be going back and forth and knowledge will increase says Daniel. They've got to go through this crash program. Why? He says why at the end of the verse. **For you have stumbled in not because...you have stumbled in your iniquity.** Here again it shows another basic tool that God uses. This one is used commonly in our life; it's very simple, anybody can understand it, no big hairy doctrine of theology, it's just simply this: you stay out of fellowship and you go down, down, down and everything gets worse, worse, worse and God says I fixed it that way so you fall apart. So God just simply points that, do you remember what happened, He says, **you stumbled in your iniquity.** Just look at the chaos and the misery and the suffering and the unhappiness that running away from Me causes. Now isn't that sufficient motivation to confess and get on with life. So that's the basic motivation He's using here: look at the mess, the chaos that's caused by being out of fellowship for a prolonged period, you've been down that road, at least try this other road, return to Me.

And when you do, Hos 14:2, **Take words with you and return to the LORD. Say to Him, “Take away all iniquity And receive *us* graciously, That we may present the fruit of our lips.** Literally the end of that verse says “That we may present the calves of our lips,” so you want to correct that just to see the point more clearly. The NASB translators are right in the concept but an OT believer would understand what it meant “to present the calves of your lips” and so we want to understand what they understood. To do that turn to Deut 16:16. In OT Israel they were given the Tabernacle in the time of Moses and later the Temple in the time of Solomon. This is where the OT saints would go to meet God. God dwelled in the tabernacle and temple in a visible form called Shekinah Glory, this was the “meeting place” and if you were to go before the Lord at the Tabernacle or the Temple there were certain requirements that had to be met. And here it is, Deut 16:16, “Three times in a year all your males shall appear before the Lord your God in the place which He chooses,” (that place turned out to be Jerusalem), and then he gives the three times each year, “at the Feast of Unleavened Bread and at the Feast of Weeks and at the Feast of Booths, and they shall not appear before the Lord empty-handed.” When you go you bring something, don’t come empty handed. Now, having said that, don’t start thinking this is salvation by works, this is not salvation by works. Salvation is always by means of faith and based on the finished work of Christ. But there are other issues of ceremonial pollution that were handled by the animal sacrifices in the OT to provide a temporal, external forgiveness. These issues arise when God’s presence is on the earth in a visible way and so this was true in the OT and this will be true in the Millennial Kingdom. Ezek 40-46 talks about animal sacrifices that provide atonement, which is external cleansing for ceremonial defilement, not for eternal salvation, only Christ can provide that, so in the OT, Deut 16:16 mandates you must bring sacrifice. And the end of Hos 14:2 is talking about bringing a sacrifice, but not of calves, a sacrifice of our lips.

So turn to Ps 69, a Psalm of David, and look at verse 30 to see how God thinks about the sacrifice of the lips. Animal sacrifices were important in the OT, fine, we’re not knocking them, but look what David says is more important than animal sacrifice, “I will praise the name of God with song And magnify Him with thanksgiving. <sup>31</sup>And it will please the LORD better than an ox *Or* a young bull” there’s our word from Hosea, young bull or calf. He says the words of praise and thanksgiving are more pleasing than the

most expensive calf you can offer. What do horns and hooves do? God looks down and sees horns and hooves. Who cares? Anyone can offer that. But who can offer praise and thanksgiving with their lips? Only someone who is genuinely thankful for God's work on their behalf.

That's another thing in the NT that you want to think about with respect to your spiritual life. Thanksgiving or praise are a barometer of spirituality. If you reflect on the question, am I thanking God in my prayers, in my thoughts for all the things He's provided for me; eternal life, justification, regeneration, redemption, propitiation, reconciliation, adoption, indwelling, all these positional truths, those positional truths God has given you once for all, you can't ever lose them. And He is to be thanked for that. And if you're straight in the area of thanksgiving you will normally be straight in every other area.

So let's turn back to Hosea 14 and see if we can pull this together. Number one you were not supposed to come before God empty-handed. Number two, God was more interested in praise and thanksgiving than a literal calf. Now let's read what Hosea says and see if it makes sense, **Take words with you and return to the Lord.** And so there are the words, that's Ps 69:30, words are what the Lord wants to hear, not barren words, genuine words. If you bring a sacrifice fine, but the important thing is the genuine words of confession. And then Hosea instructs them what words to say, **Say to Him, "Take away all iniquity And receive us graciously,** two things, **"Take away all iniquity"** and this means to lift up, it's the idea that the nation Israel in the end of days is carrying a heavy burden. And they'll say, lift it off of us; get rid of this weight that is weighing us down. Their iniquity is weighing them down and so when God takes away their iniquity the work of Jesus Christ on the cross is applied to them and they're set free. And friend, that is an issue worth praising God for, when you are set free from the bondage of sin to the righteousness of Christ that is a very good day. That day is only going to be rivaled by the day we get our resurrection body. So this is a fantastic day in the future and it will issue forth praise and so the first thing Israel will say in the future is **Take away all iniquity,** sometime in the Tribulation they will say this. Then the second thing they are instructed to say, **And receive us graciously,** but that has a translation problem. The Hebrew says, "And accept that which is good." What is the good? What is it that the "good thing" is that he's talking about? It's explained in the last clause, which shouldn't be rendered the way it is. We

said it should say, “that we may present the calves of our lips,” not the literal calf itself, the praise of our lips, the calf that they would usually bring is replaced by the praise of their lips, that very much better thing that God likes and so the calf is just metonymy for the praise of their lips. And that’s the good thing, the praise of their lips and they’re asking the Lord to receive this good thing, take the praise, and accept the praise. This is our thank offering, I don’t have a physical calf to offer here, but I do have the praise of my lips, will you accept that? So they will be saved and then they will offer praise. God enjoys praise and this is what should accompany it.

Then in Hosea 14:3, since we’re saying that this is a true return to the Lord that involves first, confession of known sin and second, a follow up rehabilitation program where they get to building their knowledge in the word of God. Now verse 3 shows that this is a genuine return, they’ve confessed and they’ve grown in the Lord and they really trust God now to deliver them. They couldn’t trust Him before, now they can trust Him so they confess three things that cannot save them; three things they used to think could save them and they now admit can’t save. The first lesson they have learned, **“Assyria will not save us**, see, this is what Israel always tried to do. They always turned to a gimmick solution and the gimmick here is Assyria. It is the big boy on the block and can provide security so the kings would run to Assyria, kings who had no spirituality whatsoever, kings who were not recognized by God, kings who were not anointed by prophets, they were self-appointees. And so when the going got tough they ran to Assyria looking for a deal they could work out. Works gimmicks rather than to God’s grace solution, and so this shows us that one of the things the Holy Spirit is going to destroy in our lives, as he convicts us, is He is going to destroy the objects we’ve placed our faith in. Oh, you want to trust in that person, that thing, that money, that position, fine, I’ll just blow it away. You thought that was sufficient to hold you up, those crutches that you’re relying on. I’ll chop them off. And one of the crutches was their foreign policy with Assyria. When Assyria came in it was far from salvation they brought. It was a horrible thing they had to deal with in 722BC: the Assyrians ripped up the pregnant women and dashed the little babies against the rocks, a horrible thing. Lesson: gimmicks don’t work, political gimmicks don’t work, spiritual gimmicks don’t work; they appear to work for awhile and then you’ll find yourself right back in square one. And so, lesson one they have learned is that gimmicks in the area of foreign policy will not save us. By the way,



they'll try it again in the future Tribulation when they make a deal with Antichrist. They still have to learn that won't work.

Second lesson, **We will not ride on horses.** That expression means we will not rely on military strength. Horses were the supreme weapon of the ancient world; horses were the equivalent of nuclear weapons today. Always there's a fear in every generation of the supreme weapon, whatever it is. And today everyone is severely threatened by nuclear weapons; we watch it week in week out with North Korea and Iran and the threats to destroy the great Satan, America and the little Satan, Israel by nuclear holocaust. And in the ancient world horses were the equivalent of nuclear weapons because horses were fast, they meant you could come in and have your foot soldiers facing off with the enemy in hand-to-hand combat and then they could flank from the left or the right or both sides and as armies advanced in the battle they would do this at the proper time in the battle and they would come in swiftly from the rear and from the side, always to rapidly destroy the enemy, to throw them into confusion. Horses were deadly weapons in the ancient world. So they learned something else from history, we will not ride upon horses. That means they won't rely upon military warfare to save them anymore. They'll rely upon God.

And the third lesson in verse 3, again out of the hard, hard lessons of history they learned, **Nor will we say again, 'Our god,' To the work of our hands;** they will clearly understand that idols are simply the imagination of man projected and constructed by the hands of man and therefore they are impotent to save, they can't do anything. You prop them up, you can knock them down. They'll clearly understand when the final form of Daniel's fourth kingdom is raising up, that ferocious beast ruled by the Anti-Christ, that combines and melds the contribution of each prior kingdom, the fractional reserve banking system, (that's the economic aspect of the Anti-Christ's kingdom, contributed by Babylon), the global empire mentality, (that's the political aspect of the Anti-Christ's kingdom, contributed by Persia), the rationalist autonomous thinking, (that's the religious aspect of Anti-Christ's kingdom, contributed by the Greeks) and the military strength aspect, (that's the glue that's supposed to hold the whole thing together, contributed by the Romans), when all that comes together in the most idolatrous, wretched kingdom ever on the face of the earth, Israel will see that stuff can't save. That stuff is on the brink of collapse, that stuff is all idols, the imagination of



autonomous Gentile hearts amplified and projected as that which saves. And finally they'll say, it can't save, none of it, only God can save.

And now the last of verse 3 shows what was on their mind after they learned the hard way of trusting in these false saviors, the gimmicks of life, **For in You the orphan finds mercy**. Now that's another motivation. Every time you see **For** in these great confession places in the Bible mark them; if I were you I'd take my pencil and mark the f-o-r because that would point you to reasons for confession. The first one was in verse 1, **For you have stumbled in your iniquity**, in other words, look at the mess you make when you're way out of fellowship. Here's another one that ought to be marked, **For in You the orphan finds mercy**. In the ancient world there was nobody more pathetic than the **orphan** because the **orphan** had nothing to give, a little child was a leach, there's no return. At least the men who married the widows would have a chance of raising a family, they'd have the helper that they'd gained by marrying the widow, but take care of an **orphan**? In Jewish law the orphan keeps his property, by taking care of the orphan you don't even share his property; you don't get anything out of it. Why take care of the **orphan**, there's no economic benefits from taking care of **orphans**. So the orphan came to be the symbol in the ancient world for the most helpless and worthless person in society. So this is a way of saying **in You the orphan finds mercy**. There's no reason God, you don't get any economic benefits out of helping the orphans, but it's part of His compassionate nature to help those who give you nothing in return. So this was the discovery they made; Assyria wouldn't save us, the horse, the ultimate weapon, wouldn't save us, the manmade, man thought out gimmicks, those can't save us, but only the God who is compassionate enough to take care of the orphans, He's the one that we're going to trust forever as our Savior. That's our God's character, He's not like those other things, we know what the Assyrians did, 722BC showed that. We know what the horses did; they weren't effective against the Assyrians. And we know what the idols did, big deal, when Assyria and Babylon came in they carried away the idols, so they didn't save us. But the one God who saved us is the God who put up with us all these many centuries, so He will be the one whom we trust.

Now in response to the confession of verses 1-3 we have God's answer, verse 4-8, and then the conclusion. Here's what God says, Hosea 14:4, after hearing the national confession of Israel and receiving their praise to Him, He

responds, **I will heal their apostasy.** The apostasy is they went way down this scale of six things we've noted over and over and over, they've gone way down there and now they've confessed, they've gotten restored to fellowship and God says, now that's all I've been asking you to do, but you wouldn't come to Me before, now you come to Me so I'm going to help you **I will heal your apostasy,** because by now these people are fed up, fed up with the social chaos. They've learned the lesson of verse 3, this is repulsive to them, and so God says that is all I was waiting for, just get fed up with it and give Me the problem, and the moment you get fed up with the problem and give Me the problem I'll take care of it, but I'm not going to take care of it until you reach that fed up stage and you're willing to turn it all over to me, then **I will heal their apostasy** and **I will love them freely.** I will love them graciously or generously, the word for unconstrained love, I will constantly be loving them generously. These are some of the greatest verses on God's love, so don't think what the liberal says about the God of the OT being a meany is true. This God is not a meany, this God loves and generously and gives forever and ever and ever.

Now that's the key to the rest of these verses because "generously" is not an abstract term. How do you love somebody generously? Describe it. Well, you've got to list some ways and the Jew would think of ways of demonstrating genuine love, and so that's why beginning with this verse, verse 4, and following you have all sorts of ways listed. These are specifics to show God's unconstrained love. **For My anger has turned away from them** permanently, once and for all forever, my anger is finished, because loyalty to God has been developed. When verses 1-3 occur in history, that means that Israel has met the goal of sanctification, she has learned to love the Lord her God and that means she's ready to be born into her joy, to receive the blessing. And that means the nation can enjoy final blessing, the blessing that burst forth in the Millennial Kingdom.

Now Hosea 14:5 describes how God will love her generously in the Kingdom, **I will be like the dew to Israel. He will blossom like the lily, And he will take root like the cedars of Lebanon. <sup>6</sup>His shoots will sprout, And his beauty will be like the olive tree And his fragrance like *the cedars of Lebanon.* <sup>7</sup>Those who live in his shadow Will again raise grain, And they will blossom like the vine. His renown *will be* like the wine of Lebanon.** Notice all of these in verses 5-7 are idioms readily observable in

an agricultural society. And this means that the blessings that God is promising in the future will be concrete, will be real, can be felt, and tasted and so on. Notice the appeal to the senses, it's all empirical: the eyes verse 6, **his beauty will be...**the smell, verse 6, **his fragrance like the cedars**, notice that it says they will be attractive, notice, verse 7, the worldwide blessing, **those who live in His shadow Will again raise grain**, and then the productivity, the reproduction rate skyrockets, the Bible says this is a blessing, **And they will blossom like the vine**, it's talking about productivity, it's talking about security, it's talking about blessing, it's all going to be very real blessing in the Millennial Kingdom. The generous expression of the love of God for Israel.

Hos 14:8-9, **O Ephraim, what more have I to do with idols? It is I who answer and look after you. I am like a luxuriant cypress; From Me comes your fruit.** That first part is actually Ephraim speaking, vv 4, 5, 6 and 7 are God, now we have a short snippet from Ephraim, so be careful, it should be translated as the KJV has it, "Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols?" This is the confession of verse 3, Ephraim is done with idols and then God will respond, so the rest of verse 8 is God's response to this confession. But the first part up to the question mark is Ephraim's confession and now God says, **It is I who answer and look after you, I am like a luxuriant cypress; From Me comes your fruit.** Look who's going to look after and care for Israel in the Millennium. God is going to answer them; God is going to look after them. All blessing comes from Him and Him alone. And then the final expression in the verse, **From Me comes your fruit**, that actually is talking about produce but where did the Lord Jesus Christ pick this up and use it? John 15, the vine and the branches, it has to do with the Christian's fruit-bearing and so this is the background of John 15, "Abide in Me and I in you," that's mutual abiding, "he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing." Where did that start? Here in verse 8. It's a millennial promise applied to the fruit bearing of Christians in the interadvent age.

Then Hosea 14:9 is the conclusion, tacked on by whoever assembled the sermons of Hosea. If you look at it carefully you'll notice that the language of verse 9 is a little different. What book of the Bible does it remind you of? It reminds you of Proverbs. And it winds up with maxims for this life. And what it's doing is making application of the whole book to the reader, so this is

written to all believers. What can I take away from Hosea? Verse 9 you can take away. Verse 9 is a maxim to the wise. **Whoever is wise, let him understand these things; Whoever is discerning, let him know them. For the ways of the LORD are right, And the righteous will walk in them, But transgressors will stumble in them.** So this is an appeal to the believer who is interested in the word of God, who studies the word of God and has understanding and is able to make the application to life, it's given in three parts, and it's a warning, it's kind of a blessing and a warning at the same time, **For the ways of the Lord are right**, the ways of the LORD are straight, they're true, God's ways are the true ways, **And the righteous will walk in them.** That is, the people who are justified, those who have believed and been justified, those people shall walk in the straight ways of the Lord. **But transgressors will stumble in them**, these are the unjustified people, those who are not believers, they are the rebels, they shall **stumble in them.** The word of God does not return void. There's only two sides of the fence, the side where you walk and the side where you stumble, heaven and hell, just as in the future time of Israel there will be those who believe that Jesus is the Messiah and are justified so there will be those who do not believe Jesus is the Messiah and they will stumble, they will not enter into the blessing, they will not enter into the kingdom.

So the conclusion is that finally Hosea shows us that the word of God in Hosea lays out principles for those who are wise, those who pay attention to the word of God and respond. They may be justified and wobbling all over the place, but through time and study of the word and coming to understand the word they are sanctified and they start lining up with these straight paths. But the rebel who takes his stand in defiance against God and His Christ winds up worse and worse until he totters and stumbles completely over the word of God. And with that Hosea's book comes to an end.

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