

THE PROPHET HOSEA'S THREE CHILDREN

TEXT: HOSEA 1:1-11

INTRODUCTION:

God's judgment upon Israel is pictured by the names of Hosea's three children.

I. **JEZREEL** (1:4) -- "GOD WILL SCATTER." Israel has been scattered among the nations.

II. **LO-RUHAMA** (1:6) -- "NO MORE MERCY." God would lift His mercy, and He would allow them to suffer for their sin.

III. **LO-AMMI** -- (1:9) "NOT MY PEOPLE." This refers to this present dispensation when Israel is out of fellowship with God. Verses 10 and 11 await fulfillment and point to the future restoration of Israel.

I. **JEZREEL** (1:4) -- "GOD WILL SCATTER." Israel has been scattered among the nations, and will remain scattered until Christ returns.

1. Hosea married Gomer, and their first child was a boy named Jezreel (1:3, 4). His name means, "God will scatter," indicating what the LORD would soon do to the nation Israel.
2. Jezreel was the royal city of the wicked king Ahab, and became the scene of bloody murder inflicted by Jehu. In short time, the LORD would avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu, and He would bring to an end the northern kingdom of Israel (1:4).
3. It was in the valley of Jezreel that Jehu had displeased the LORD by committing an excessive bloodbath on the house of Ahab. Although he piously claimed that the brutal slaughter was God's will, Jehu was an ungodly and ruthless man, and he was motivated more by political ambition than by religious zeal.
4. Second Kings 10:31 says, "But Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the LORD God of Israel with all his heart: for he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, which made Israel to sin."
5. The LORD set a time clock for judgment that would last through four generations of the house of Jehu. The LORD promised Jehu, "Thy children of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel" (II Kings 10:30).
6. Then one hundred years later, the LORD told Hosea, "For yet a little while, and I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu..." (1:4).

7. This prophecy was fulfilled when Jehu's great-grandson King Zachariah was assassinated (II Kings 15:8-12).
8. Soon the Assyrian army would "break the bow of Israel, in the valley of Jezreel" (1:5). The northern kingdom of Israel would go into captivity, and they will not return until the millennial kingdom when God restores Israel (1:10, 11).
9. What we are seeing today is not a fulfillment of Hosea 1:10 and 11 because the Jews (for the most part) reject the Lord Jesus Christ, but what we are seeing is a step towards the fulfillment of these prophecies.
10. The stage is being set for the second coming of Christ.
11. Interestingly, the Battle of Armageddon will be fought on the western edge of the valley of Jezreel -- on the plain of Megiddo.

II. LO-RUHAMAH (1:6) -- "NO MORE MERCY." God would lift His mercy, and He would allow them to suffer for their sin.

1. The second child was a girl, named Lo-ruhamah (1:6), meaning "no more mercy" or "unpitied" (Scofield margin).
2. This signified that Israel would no longer be pitied, but would be sent into captivity.
3. However, these principles brought out here in the book of Hosea can apply to anyone, Jew or Gentile.
4. The apostle Paul applied Hosea's prophecy to the Gentiles in Romans 9:24 -- "Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles? (Hosea 1:10).
5. And Peter said in I Peter 2:10, "Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy."
6. There are several themes in the book of Hosea -- backsliding, and the judgment of God, and the forgiveness of God. But a very important theme is this -- sin beaks God's heart.
7. G. Campbell Morgan said, "Hosea has been described as the prophet of the broken heart. The pain and agony of the man's heart is everywhere apparent, but it had become to him an interpretation of the agony of the heart of God... No one can read the story of Hosea without realizing the agony of his heart. Then, lift the human to the level of the Infinite, and know this, that sin wounds the heart of God...Get into Hosea's soul when Gomer played him false and left him. That is how God feels, and that is what Hosea learned."

8. Lo-ruhamah's name means, "no more mercy" (1:6). "But I will utterly take them away" (1:6b) means God would allow the Assyrians to take them into captivity. God would lift His mercy, and He would allow them to suffer for their sin.
9. The Israelites never returned from that captivity. Hosea 1:10 and 11 predict the future restoration of Israel.
10. Judah did return after their seventy years in Babylon. Their return is recorded in the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi (cf. Hosea 1:7).
11. Whereas the northern kingdom of Israel established their own idolatrous worship, such as the golden calf worship in Bethel and Dan, Judah preserved the true worship of Jehovah in the temple at Jerusalem.
12. Furthermore, the Lord Jesus Christ is descended from the line of Judah.

III. LO-AMMI -- (1:9) "NOT MY PEOPLE." This refers to this present dispensation when Israel is out of fellowship with God. Verses 10 and 11 await fulfillment and point to the future restoration of Israel.

1. Hosea 1:9 is a very sad verse. God no longer recognized Israel as His covenant people.
2. Though this verse is dealing specifically with Israel, we can apply this in many ways. Many people think they are God's children when they are not.
3. I heard about a very devious liberal pastor who preached a message entitled, "For ye are all the children of God." He proceeded to preach that we are all God's children -- Protestants, Jews, Catholics, Muslims, and so on.
4. He used as his text Galatians 3:26, but he deliberately omitted the second half of the verse.
5. "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus."
6. Our Lord said in Matthew 7:21, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."
7. Our Lord said to the religious leaders in John 8:44, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."

8. *Lo-ammi* signifies the judgment of God (1:8, 9), but this judgment was temporary (1:10, 11).
9. Six specific blessings may be seen in Hosea 1:10--2:1.
 - (1) National increase (1:10a).
 - (2) Spiritual awakening and regeneration (1:10b). Ezekiel 37:14 says, "And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land..."
 - (3) National reunion (1:11).
 - (4) Messianic leadership (1:11b).
 - (5) Victory over their enemies (1:11c).
 - (6) The complete restoration of the covenant relationship (2:1).

CONCLUSION:

1. The end of verse 11 says, "and they shall come up out of the land: for great shall be the day of Jezreel."
2. This is the same valley where Gideon won his great victory over the Midianites and the Amalekites, and where Jehu wrecked the placed by his butchery and savagery and violence.
3. In that very same place the Lord Jesus Christ will return from heaven, and by virtue of his power He will rout and scatter the enemies of God as it is set out in the book of Revelation, and He will establish His kingdom having fought the last of the great battles in the Valley of Jezreel.
4. And it will be said at that time, "For great shall be the day of Jezreel" (1:11b).