

Welcome friends to another broadcast of “Morsels for Zion’s Poor”

When we read the book of Hosea we can see, illustrated most clearly, the LORD’s determined purpose to manifest HIS love for HIS bride and HIS determination to justly punish sin. We marvel at Hosea’s faithfulness and provision to an unfaithful wife, yet we are completely dumbfounded when we realize that the LORD used him to illustrate HIS own utter faithfulness to that bride of HIS choosing, who has not only been unfaithful but has despised HIS overtures of kindness. *“For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.”*

Ephraim was one of Joseph’s two sons which were born unto HIM in Egypt by the daughter of an idolatrous, heathen priest. It appears that Jacob considered them as his own sons by adoption as he did in a measure remove his blessing from Reuben and Simeon giving it unto Ephraim and Manasseh. Though Manasseh was Joseph’s firstborn son, it was unto Ephraim, the second son to whom the greatest blessing came. In this we are reminded that the blessings of GOD to HIS children have not come unto them through the first Adam but through the LAST. *“And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.”*

We see the name of Ephraim mentioned 37 times in the book of Hosea. He is an illustration of the carnal, fleshly man, who is nonetheless made as a vessel of honor in the sight of GOD and whom the LORD would ultimately bless with deliverance, as HE has made HIS elect subject unto vanity. The children of GOD cannot be differentiated from the rest of the world as all men are born into this world in the weakness of natural flesh. Apart from the grace of GOD which sets them apart in CHRIST as a people chosen in HIM from before the foundation of the world, they would surely arrive at the same destination as those who are appointed unto wrath. This fulfills the purpose of GOD in demonstrating HIS everlasting love for those who are HIS and upon whom HE would be pleased to grant salvation which is purchased by the precious blood of CHRIST.

When they are “born again” by the SPIRIT of GOD and indwelt by HIM they are made “new creatures”, old things are passed away and all things become new. Yet their flesh remains as it was when they were born, a rebel against GOD and opposed to all that is good. Yet now this “new man” is no longer in bondage to his flesh, but rather the SPIRIT works in him and wars against the flesh which would daily desire to bring him back into that bondage. A desperate struggle ensues, and it is sometimes not apparent who the victor will be, yet such is the grace of GOD that HE will preserve that work which HE has begun and will not forsake that which is HIS.

Thus, we see Ephraim described in the book of Hosea as *“joined to idols”*; committing whoredom; and *“oppressed and broken in judgment”*. He is likened unto *“a cake not turned”*; which denotes his unsuitableness, like as a cake which is burned and inedible. He is called a *“silly dove”* who seeks out help from Egypt and winds up in servitude to Assyria. He stupidly makes the same mistakes over and over again and brings upon himself bondage and fear. The chastisement of the LORD is continually upon Ephraim, because whom the LORD loveth HE chasteneth. HIS rod and HIS staff are their COMFORT, even though for the present no chastening seemeth to be joyous, but afterwards yieldeth its perfect fruit. The LORD will keep HIS children from falling even though HE may lay HIS hand heavily upon them. HE will deal with the iniquities of those whom HE loves. *“every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.”*

We can see quite plainly, throughout the book, the utter unsuitableness of Ephraim to the kingdom of GOD. He has nothing in himself that would serve as a recommendation thereto and if he should gain anything it would have to be by the mercy of GOD. This is exactly what we see occurring as the LORD “hides his sin”. *“The iniquity of Ephraim is bound up; his sin is hid.”* *“And I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph, and I will bring them again to place them; for I have mercy upon them: and they shall be as though I had not cast them off: for I am the LORD their God, and will hear them. And they of Ephraim shall be like a mighty man, and their heart shall rejoice as through wine: yea, their children shall see it, and be glad; their heart shall rejoice in the LORD.”*

*Thy free grace alone,”#11***If you would like a free transcript of this broadcast email us at forthe poor@windstream.net**