

The Day of Jezreel

Hosea 1

Americans chose July fourth, 1776 to declare its independence from Great Britton. The desire and resolve to be free from bondage and oppression by the British government set America on its course to become the champion of freedom around the world.

After the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor on December 5, 1941, President Roosevelt declared that day a "day that would live in infamy." Such carnage and destruction is marked indelibly in the minds of millions who cannot forget.

September 11, 2001 is another such day in the lives of freedom loving people around the world. America suffered the first ever attack against our homeland by extremists who would destroy the greatest human advocate for peace in the world today.

Such are the days of our lives, and we are thankful there are not many of the bad days.

There is another day of far greater importance to mankind than Pearl Harbor, Independence Day or 911. Hosea called it, in 1:11, "the day of Jezreel." He called it a great day, (of great importance). It has great significance, either positively or negatively on the just and the unjust.

Hosea has been grouped with those called the "Minor Prophets." His was minor only in the sense of brevity of text. His ministry lasted more than seventy years but his message is timeless, as is all the Prophets of God who preached "salvation by grace, based on Christ's righteousness imputed alone." He was a resident of and prophesied to the ten tribes called Israel. He was called of God to prophesy what would be the future of Israel and Judah.

Read V-1. Hosea is God's choice to carry God's message to Israel. "Hosea" in the Hebrew is "Oshea" from the root word "Yaw-shah" and means Jesus, Joshua, Deliverer. As is with any Prophet of God, Hosea brought with him words of life from God. To some his words, as is the day of Jezreel, a savor of life unto life; to others his words are a savor of death unto death. (2 Corinthians 2:16)

He was of the household of Beeri. In the Hebrew, Beeri means "my well," meaning bountiful supply, suggesting Hosea's father was a man of great means. Hosea left his father's house to accomplish the will of God concerning the nation Israel. It was to him the "word of the Lord" came. That word: Read V-2, "Go, take a wife." God's instructions to Hosea are "go take a wife and love her." This is God's command to all husbands: "love your wives as Christ loved the church."

Hosea is a type. His role as the husband of his wife typifies Christ, the Bridegroom of his bride the church. To him, God the Father said; "go, take a wife." Christ left the glories of heaven and

his Father's bounty to "tabernacle among men" with "not where to lay his head" He who had nothing of the world's goods had all of everything needed to secure the salvation of his people.

So, "When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them who were under the law." Said the angel in Mathew 1:21; "call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins."

Read V-3. His wife was Gomer, meaning in the Hebrew "consummate." Consummate means complete in every detail. It comes from the root word "corrupt." Gomer was consummate in corruptions. She was a woman of whoredoms. Her children would be children of whoredoms. She was given over totally to idolatry. V2b defines whoredoms as "departing from the Lord."

The northern kingdom, "Israel," separated from Judah at the death of Solomon. They worshipped at the man-made altars in Bethel and Dan. They forsook God's appointed temple, altar, high Priest and sacrifice. These were in Jerusalem. They departed from the Lord. God told Hosea; Take unto thee Israel, a nation "departed from the Lord." They worship at the altar of Baal. God designated one place to worship him; the temple in Jerusalem. Israel said, we can worship God just as well in Bethel and Dan as in Jerusalem. They called it worship. God calls it spiritual whoredoms.

Isn't that the case today? People by the millions are today worshipping at a pagan altar, idols of man's imagination. They are engaged in spiritual whoredom and ignorant of it. They have departed from the Lord. God is not in their assemblies.

God has one altar, one sacrifice, one High Priest to offer the one sacrifice for sins, the Lord Jesus Christ. When we meet at any other altar than "Jesus Christ the righteous" we are engaged in spiritual whoredoms. 1 John 2:1 "My little children, these things write me unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." It is He who makes the difference in idol worship and true worship.

So Gomer, this wife of whoredoms would, over a period of several years bear three children of whoredoms. They too, would be idolaters.

Like Hosea, Gomer too, is a type. Her role as wife of Hosea typifies the nation Israel; itself a type of spiritual Israel, the church. Her lifestyle is not one any husband would choose if given a choice and yet Christ's choice of her for a wife does not contradict the holy character of God. Why would Hosea choose such a wife? Why would God choose me, you?

She is a sinner. "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

She is a harlot. "Publicans and harlots go into the kingdom before the Pharisees."

She is depraved. "Who can find a virtuous woman?" "There is none righteous."

She is an idolater. She "departed from the Lord." She prayed to a god who cannot save.

She is qualified. *“God justifies the ungodly.”*

She is the object of God’s love. Jeremiah 31:3, “The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.” Aren’t you glad God is no respecter of persons?

It was of Gomer God said; *“Go, take her for your wife.”* Christ didn’t hesitate in his choice of a wife. She was the one God the Father gave him in the everlasting covenant of grace and placed all the responsibility for her salvation on Christ. He willingly assumed that responsibility, knowing the cost to secure the final glorification of his bride, the church. *“He came and took.”*

V-2. So God said to Hosea, *“go, take a wife of whoredoms and children of whoredoms.”*

God gave prophetic names to Gomer’s children, signifying God’s disowning and abandoning Israel. These prophetic names are interpreted by God.

These three prophetic names define the Day of Jezreel to be:

A day of retribution for Israel. V4-5

A day of redemption for Judah. V-7.

A day of reconciliation for the church. V9-11

The day of Jezreel is a day of retribution for Israel. V4-5.

Read V-4 “And the Lord said unto him, call his name Jezreel; for yet a little while, and I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu and will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel.”

“Jezreel” in the Hebrew means the scattered, Israel means stability. Israel, confident of their portion in the Promised Land would lose their inheritance, their identity and be scattered, as a farmer scatters seed. Because they “departed from the Lord,” the glory of the Lord would depart from them.

The “blood of Jezreel” has connection with the death and destruction of King Ahab and his entire administration along with his family, including his wife Jezebel and all the worshippers of Baal. 2 Kings 10 gives the details of Jehu’s slaughter.

The Valley of Jezreel was located in the fertile plains of northern Israel. The city of Jezreel, in this valley was the royal city of Ahab, king of Israel. Also located in this valley were the cities of Bethel and Dan. It was here Ahab built his ivory palace. Ahab was a successful king in that he

expanded the borders of Israel and increased in power, wealth and influence. But he led his people in the worship of Baal. For this, God commanded Elisha to anoint Jehu king in his place and commanded Jehu to destroy the whole house of Ahab and the worship of Baal. Read 2 Kings 10:28-31. *Thus Jehu destroyed Baal out of Israel. Howbeit from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, Jehu departed not from after them, to wit, the golden calves that were in Bethel, and that were in Dan. And the LORD said unto Jehu, Because thou hast done well in executing that which is right in mine eyes, and hast done unto the house of Ahab according to all that was in mine heart, thy children of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel.* Here God is commending Jehu for his obedience in destroying the ministry of Ahab.

V-31. 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.

He had obeyed God and was rewarded by God for his actions against Ahab and his house. But for what Jehu so zealously pursued in the destruction of the house of Ahab, he was himself guilty. Ahab offered blood on the altars in Bethel and Dan. His sacrifices were a mockery of the sacrifices God set forth for Israel and the proper place of sacrifice and the appointed Priest to offer them. There was no respect for the blood of sacrifice, therefore no respect for life. When Jehu was installed as king of Israel, he (2Kings 10:31) followed Ahab's sin of offering up blood on the same altars. Read V-32.

This is the blood for which God said, in V-4 *"I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu."* For his refusal to repent of idolatry God would avenge the blood Jehu offered to his idol in Jezreel upon Jehu. Jehu would learn that God is a just God. He would learn that sin has its consequences. Its penalty must be paid. Since Jehu had no Advocate with the Father he must answer for himself. He was charged with a sin he had no ability to pay. Since he refused to repent of his idolatry, a Just God and Savior had no recourse but to bring retribution against him for his idolatry. And that retribution was *"I will cause, V-4b, to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel."* Led by the wicked kings of Israel in idolatry, the ten northern tribes would, *"in a little while cease to be."* Those guilty of the blood of Jezreel, God will cause to cease their kingdom and its inhabitants because, V2b. *"The land hath committed great whoredom, departing from the Lord."*

Read V-5. *"And it shall come to pass at that day (the day I avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu) that I will break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel."*

The word *bow* is *"Keh-sheth."* It means to bow down. To what was Israel bowing down? Was it not the idols in place at Bethel and Dan? What held the ten tribes together? Was it not the golden calves of Bethel and Dan? Jeroboam, when he led the revolt that separated Judah and Israel, reasoned that his people, if allowed go back to worship in Jerusalem would be turned again to the lord and he would lose his kingdom. So his strategy was to keep them in ignorance,

superstition, fear and idolatry. This is the bow (means, weapon, the concession) he used to hold Israel. Is this not Satan's weapon of choice today? How does God break Satan's hold on ignorance? With truth. The word break is *ōshabarō* and literally means to: *"break out, break away."* God says that he will break forth in truth to expose the sin of Jehu and Israel. Understanding Jehu's sin and God's hatred of it and our own practice of it by nature is the Spirit's work to deliver us from it. To the rest, V-6, from whom he withholds mercy, they are given over to a reprobate mind. His warning was not heeded by Jehu, who continued in idolatry along with the nation Israel, and Read V-6, God withdrew his mercy from Israel, and *"took them away."* God, V4, *"avenged the blood of Jezreel upon Jehu"* that day. Jehu succumbed to the sin for which he killed Ahab and in which he led Israel.

God, through the Prophet Hosea prophesied the fall and complete annihilation of the nation Israel. They would become captives to the Assyrians and through intermarriage and assimilation into the Assyrian culture, lost their identity. They would become the hated Samaritans of Jesus' day.

A warning for all is offered by the writer of Hebrews.

Read Hebrews 2:1-3. *"Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip, For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him?"*

The day of Jezreel is a day of retribution for Israel. God weighed Israel in the balances and found her wanting. She received her just reward. The kingdom of the house of Israel ceased to be. Has retribution been made for your sins? If it has, then:

The day of Jezreel is a day of redemption for Judah. V-7

Read V-7. *"But I will have mercy upon the house of Judah."* Why? What was the difference in Israel and Judah? What makes the day of Jezreel a day of retribution for some and a day of redemption for others? Were they not both sinful? Why will God have mercy on one and not another? *"Even so Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight."* I know this:

Israel was an idolatrous people.. She had no respect for the honor of God's redemptive glory in salvation. Her idolatry revealed this to be so and God withdrew his mercy from her. But, V-7, two reasons why God redeemed Judah. *"I will have mercy on the house of Judah. "I will propitiate (make satisfaction) I am satisfied with Judah. On what basis? Not by swords but "By the Lord their God."* Because of the substitutionary work of the Lord to satisfy God's law and justice against Judah and establish righteousness for her which God freely imputed to her. *"Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts. (Zechariah 4:6.)"*

Another reason is given in Read V8-9, God was not Israel's God and Israel was not God's people. This was not so because of anything Israel did or didn't do; it was simply a matter of God's choice. Read Deuteronomy 7:7-10.

Paul the Apostle quoted God in Romans 9:15; *"I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion, and whom I will, I will harden."*

We know another reason God saved Judah was to maintain the lineage through which the Lion of the Tribe of Judah would come to redeem his people.

God would save Judah, not based on anything done in or by her but based solely on what her High Priest; Jesus Christ who was to come through that lineage would do for her.

The day of Jezreel, a day of retribution for Israel was a day of redemption for Judah.

Have you experienced Judah's redemption? If you have;

The day of Jezreel is a day of reconciliation for the church. V10-11.

Read V-11. The day of Jezreel (the scattered) will be a great day when God, who said of them in V9, *"you are not my people and I will not be your God,"* says to them in V-10, *"Ye are the sons of the Living God."* These sons of God will gather out of every kindred, tongue, tribe and nation. Though they are more than the sands of the sea in number, yet a remnant *"according to the election of grace"* will come. This assembly will include Judah and Israel. Since the northern kingdom ceases to exist, I believe he is referring to spiritual Israel, the church of God, both Jew and Gentile. I believe we are living in the day of Jezreel. That day when the scattered are called back by the gospel, which declares the middle wall of partition is broken down and there is neither Jew nor Greek but all one in Christ. I believe Hosea, speaking of one head is referring to Christ the head of the body his church, who through his death wrought peace, thereby reconciling sinners unto himself. Now, through the *"gathering together of the children of Judah and the children of Israel,"* who themselves appointed (submit to) Christ as their head, are today fulfilling this prophecy when sinners under the gospel message hear of God's reconciliation to them by the death of Christ, and are themselves reconciled to God on that same basis.

The woman of Samaria is a good example. She is one who suffered retribution at the hand of God because of her worship at Bethel and Dan. She, Hosea 1:11, a child of Israel was taken prisoner by the Assyrians and adopted the Assyrian lifestyle thus becoming a hated Samaritan. She was confronted by Christ at the well of Jacob and was converted. She appointed Christ her head and came up (repented) out of the land. Though great was the day of Jezreel's afflictions, great is the day of Jezreel's glory. That day is the day in the life of a scattered seed brought to life under the preaching of the gospel and made to behold the glory of God in the face of Jesus

Christ. That's why "Jesus must needs go through Samaria." (John 4:4) One the Father told him to "go, take a wife of whoredoms" was waiting for her Day of Jezreel.

The day of Jezreel is a day of retribution for the wicked. For those who worship at Bethel or Dan it is a day of casting off by God.

The day of Jezreel is a day of redemption for the lost. It is a day of casting off the filthy rags of self-righteousness for his spotless robe of righteousness.

The day of Jezreel is a day of reconciliation between a sinner and Holy God and a sinner with his peer. It is the day when those sinners who are not my people shall be called the sons of the living God. It is the day they see their oneness with God based on the work of their Substitute and Representative who, in casting away their sins behind God's back, remembers them no more. It is, V11, a gathering together "shall be gathered together" in one gospel, one common faith, in single goals and in common motives, under one Head, Christ.

This is the prophecy of Hosea. God has a people. Though some were cast off and others grafted in, yet a remnant according to the election of grace, under the gospel sound shall "come up out of the land."

Gomer was unfaithful to Hosea. Israel was unfaithful to God. But our Covenant God would not leave his people to the enemy of the church to have way with them. God remembers his covenant with the Fathers and calls his scattered out of every kindred tongue and nation.

When it is all said and done, there will be only one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.

Have you experienced the day of Jezreel? Has Christ taken away your retribution? Has he satisfied the law's charges against you? Are you clothed in his righteousness? Are you reconciled to God based on his reconciliation to you? Then great will be the day of Jezreel for you because God has avenged the blood of Christ upon the enemies of God and broken Israel's bow in the valley of Jezreel. Hosea will further expand this subject next lesson.

Maybe we should make the day of Jezreel a national holiday?

Winston Pannell

