

HOSEA

2

Departing from the Lord.

The prophecy of Hosea begins with a commandment from God to Hosea to marry a woman of questionable character. Though sanctioned by God, their marriage was short lived because Gomer proved to be an unfaithful wife. Through her infidelity, we are given a portrait of fallen humanity. *“There is none righteous, no not one,”* aptly fits each of us as it did Gomer. We might question Hosea’s choice of a wife but Gomer’s character and conduct is reflective of that of each of us by nature. Hosea didn’t have much to choose from. *“All we like sheep have gone astray.” Not one of us can point the finger at Gomer and say; “shame on you.”* And yet Christ so loved his church, he condescended unto such sinners and was made like us (without sin) in order to redeem us, even though we are unfaithful to him.

Hosea is a prophecy to the nation Israel and subsequently a warning to sinners today of the dangers of turning away from the Lord. He is to be heard, obeyed and followed, as did Hosea. Hosea, who was yet in his father’s house, heard the command, *“go, and take unto thee a wife of whoredoms,”* V-3, so Hosea went and took Gomer.

There are many types and pictures in Old Testament scripture shadowing Christ and his offices and Hosea’s prophecy is no exception. If we miss the types, we miss the vital truths of his gospel and have nothing more than a history lesson.

Hosea was a type of Christ. He was a type of him to whom the Father gave a people in the Everlasting Covenant of Grace and conditioned all their salvation upon him. 1:1, *“The Word of the Lord came to Hosea.”* As God’s prophet, he delivered that word. Christ is the Living Word. Hosea, the type took unto himself a wife of whoredoms; one that had departed from the Lord. Christ, the Anti-type took unto himself a Bride who, according to 1 Peter 3:14 *“will be found of him in peace without spot and blameless.”* Hosea’s very name means Joshua, Savior.

Gomer is a type of Israel. She was chosen by Hosea, *not* based on anything in her or what might be done by her but simply because God said to Hosea, *“Go love a woman, beloved of her friend.”* Hosea 3:1 As a result of His love for Israel, God had delivered her from bondage in Egypt. After four hundred years of bondage in Egypt and forty years of wandering in the wilderness, Joshua led Israel into the

inheritance promised by God to Abraham. That promise was the Land of Canaan, the rest of God. God's covenant with Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3) was twofold.

God promised Abraham a seed no man could number. He also promised Abraham a spiritual seed through whom all families of the earth would be blessed. From the time God made this promise to Abraham in about 1900 BC until the time of Hosea was about 1,000 years. In this time Israel had possessed the Land of Canaan and prospered, especially under the kingship of David. We pick up the prophecy of Hosea here.

This prophecy is about Hosea, a type of Christ and Gomer, a type of the church, the bride of Christ. It shows the love Christ has for his church and her unfaithfulness to him. Throughout this prophecy we'll see his love displayed in restoring her to her rightful place in the house of God. This is an illustration of God's love for his people.

At the death of David, Solomon ascended the throne in Israel. It was in Solomon's reign, the kingdom began its slide into idolatry. His permissive way of life introduced Israel to idol worship by allowing his concubines and wives to practice it openly in Israel. This is why God charged Israel with "*departing from the Lord.*" **Read Hosea 1:2b.** "*For the land hath committed great whoredom, departing from the Lord.*"

I have taken my title for today's message from **V-2; "Departing from the Lord."** I do so because no matter your state before God right now, you and I are just like Gomer. We have departed from the Lord many times and are subject to do so again. He is faithful to recover us but we are prone to wander. It is my prayer that Hosea's message today will reach the hearts of those separated from God and effect a "Prodigal Son" change.

There are three truths made clear in Hosea's prophecy that addresses those who depart from the Lord.

Sinners departed from the Lord:

Choose the shrines of Jezreel over the sanctuary in Jerusalem. V3-4

Trust the bow of the soldier over the blood of the Savior. V5

Prefer the merit of their labor over the mercy of the Lord. V6

Sinners departed from the Lord:

- 1. Choose the shrines of Jezreel over the sanctuary in Jerusalem. V3-4**

Read Hosea 1:1-4.

For Israel's sin of departing from God, Hosea warns of certain retribution against her. *“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.*

To the family of Hosea and Gomer was born a son, God named Jezreel. In the Hebrew, Jezreel means *“to scatter,”* as a sower scatters seed. This name was a prophecy by God of the **(Hosea 1:4b)** *“cessation of the kingdom of the house of Israel.”* In *“a little while”* I will scatter Israel to the four winds. They shall cease to be.

What would so anger the Lord that He would make Israel a byword among the nations, that he would withhold his mercy from them, that he would disown them after all these hundreds of years?

Hosea **1:2b**, *“They have committed great whoredom, departing from the Lord.”*

At Solomon's death the kingdom was divided. Judah and Benjamin remained loyal to Rehoboam, Solomon's son and successor to the throne. Seeking relief from the oppression of Solomon and receiving the promise of even greater oppression from Rehoboam, Jeroboam led the ten tribes in sedition against Rehoboam.

Read 1 Kings 12:25-33.

In an effort to maintain his kingship over the ten tribes, Jeroboam built the altars at Bethel and Dan. This action opposed the oath Solomon made with God to keep the worship of God in Jerusalem. This was the exact opposite of what he pledged to God in the dedication of the temple in Jerusalem. **Read 2 Chronicles 7:11-22.**

It was here the temple stood with the Altar, Sacrifice, Priesthood and the Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies. At the consecration of the temple, God promised to meet with Israel only in the temple. **Read Psalm 132:13-14.** *“For the Lord has chosen Zion; he has desired it for his habitation. This is my rest forever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it.”* **Read 1 Kings 12:30.** *“And this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one, even unto Dan.”*

So the ten tribes, called *“Israel”* cut themselves off from true worship at the temple in Jerusalem. This is what Hosea is referring to in **Hosea 1:2**, where he said *“the land has committed great whoredom, departing from the Lord.”* They chose Jezreel over Jerusalem.

What was wrong with worshiping in Jezreel? After all, a man can worship God at any time or any place, can't he? (*Matthew 18:20*) *“Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”* God was specific in

his instructions to Solomon to look for him only in Jerusalem in the temple at the Mercy Seat.

Jeroboam and the subsequent kings of Israel led their people to offer up their bloody sacrifices at the altars of Bethel and Dan. These services were performed by those priests appointed by the king and not from the Tribe of Levi. Jeroboam himself performed the office of priest. (1 Kings 13:1) They were careless in the quality of sacrifice they offered. They were served by priests God did not approve. **To rebel against God's prescribed place and manner of worship is to hold contemptible the honor of God's glory in redemption.** It cast shame and reproach upon Christ and his obedience, suffering and death to satisfy God's holy law and justice. It showed disrespect for God's glory in the salvation of his people by the precious blood of Christ. Nothing they did had respect to God's glory or Christ's person and works in the salvation of Israel.

Their Altar was unacceptable, their sacrifice was not sanctified, their priest was not qualified to mediate or offer the sacrifice and they had no holy of holies on which to sprinkle the blood of atonement. In other words, their worship services made a mockery of God's holiness and righteousness. Bottom line is they rejected God's Priest, God's sacrifice; God's Altar; they rejected Christ for Baal.

Hosea 1:4. God says; *"I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu."*

The Valley of Jezreel lay ten miles north of Jerusalem. It runs east and west across Palestine, dividing the north and south. The city of Jezreel was the royal city of Ahab, wicked king of Israel. Also located in this valley were the cities of Bethel and Dan. Because Ahab led his people in the worship of Baal, God commanded Elisha the Prophet of God to anoint Jehu king with instructions to destroy Ahab and his house along with the worshippers 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 kingdom of Ahab.*

V31. 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." (Apparently God spoke to him about this; but he "took no heed.")

He had obeyed God and was commended 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 2 Kings 10:32.**

This is the blood for which God said, in **Hosea 1:4** *"I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu."* All the blood offered on the altars of Bethel and Dan by Israel would be avenged on Jehu. For his refusal to repent of idolatry God would avenge the blood Jehu and his predecessors offered to their idols in Jezreel upon Jehu's house. Jehu's lineage was extended to the fourth generation and ended in the Assyrian siege. Israel was no more.

The question is; have you chosen the shrines of Jezreel over the sanctuary in Jerusalem? The answer is yes. We all have. We have walked that broad way to Jezreel and bowed down unto their golden calf. There is one narrow road leading to Jerusalem and few there be that go in thereat. For these few God has *"avenged the blood of Jezreel"* To avenge means to exact satisfaction for a wrong by punishing the wrongdoer. We know that no amount of payment by the sinner can satisfy a holy God, not even an eternity of suffering in hell for then we would have done only our duty and God would owe us nothing. Jehu had nothing with which to pay for his sins. God's elect are made to see the same inability and flee to the God who has the right and power to avenge the wicked. It is from Christ, God the Father exacted satisfaction for the sins of all he represented. Laying the sins of his elect on Christ, who put them away by satisfaction, God the Father is avenged.

God has found satisfaction in one who is qualified and who did satisfy all the demands of God's law and justice required of sinners. He paid the debt owed by every sinner in his house. Just as God would avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu, Christ made satisfaction to God's law and justice for everyone in his house. Jehu's house was without a proper Altar, (Christ is our Altar) proper sacrifice, (the precious blood of the Lamb) and a suitable Priest who offered up his sinless humanity upon the Altar of his Deity once for all.

Because of his finished work, Hebrews 13:10, *"We have an altar, "whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle."*

"Call his name Jezreel for I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu and cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel." **Read Hosea 1:6.**

Why would God no more show mercy to Israel; because he would exact justice from Jehu. God required of Jehu what he requires of every sinner who has no Surety and Substitute, eternal death. Jehu had two choices, Jezreel or Jerusalem. Israel had two choices; the shrines in Jezreel or the sanctuary at Jerusalem. Both chose death.

Where do you worship? The woman at the well said to Christ; *“our fathers worshipped in this mountain, (Samaria) you say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.”* Jesus answered, *“Woman, believe me, the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye now not what. We know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is when the true worshipper shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to serve him.”* God is spirit and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.” The Spirit, in truth will always lead sinners to worship in Jerusalem.

Sinners departed from the Lord:

1. Choose the shrines of jezreel over the sanctuary in Jerusalem.

2. Trust the bow of the soldier over the blood of the Savior. V-5

“I will break the bow of Israel in the Valley of Jezreel.” The bow is a weapon of war. It is used offensively and defensively. Broken, it is no good to anyone.

I believe Hosea is speaking of a figurative bow, not a literal bow. **(See Hosea 1:7)** This bow is that in which sinners take comfort and assurance. It is that whereby sinners justify themselves based on something done by them or in them. It is that selfō righteousness every sinner trusts in before regeneration. This is that weapon Israel trusted and rested their hope in. Their bow was the pagan altars in Bethel and Dan. These altars spoke nothing of a Just God and Savior. They spoke nothing of substitution, satisfaction and imputation. They spoke nothing of a righteousness imputed which is the sinner’s whole salvation. How do I know this to be so? I lived in Jezreel 40 years. I was in false religion forty years before I heard of an imputed righteousness. What did I trust until then; my own self-righteousness? I continued this until God broke my bow. He took away my comfort and made me look away from my own ōworks of righteousnessö to his righteousness wrought out by his obedience suffering and death. He made me look to his blood and away from my bow.

Israel trusted in their bow to stand them in good stead with God. They worshipped with great zeal and dedication those idols made by Jeroboam. They had a zeal for God, *“but not according to knowledge, (Romans 10:2) For they, being ignorant of God’s righteousness and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God.”* Matthew 7:22 foretells their end. *“Many will say to me in that day; Lord have we not prophesied in thy name,*

and in thy name cast out demons, and in thy name done many works?” Then Christ will answer; *“I never knew you, depart from me ye that work iniquity.”*

The bow of Israel was not sufficient to save them from the wrath of God to come. Any bow that can be broken is deadly and is not to be trusted. God said, **(Hosea 1:5) I will break the bow of Israel.** It will not stand the judgment of God. Why, because their bow was the bow of a soldier and not the blood of the Savior. It has no saving efficacy. Theirs was not the blood of the Lamb which taketh away the sins of the world. It was not the blood of the God-Man Mediator. It was not the blood God told Israel in Egypt, *“When I see the blood I will pass over you.”*

The blood of Jezreel atoned for nothing. The rivers of blood offered by Israel at Bethel and Dan covered not one sin. Those who participated in this worship were deprived of the knowledge of the true and living God. That's what happens when sinners *“depart from the Lord.”* They are not exposed to the truth. Truth heard, understood and believed is the means God uses to breaks our bow. How do we know when our bow is broken? When we forsake the soldier and his bow for the Savior and his blood. When we forsake our righteousness for his.

Do you trust the bow of the soldier or the blood of the Savior? God has destroyed the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel.

Sinners departed from the Lord:

1. Choose the shrines of Jezreel over the sanctuary in Jerusalem.
- 2 Trust the soldier and his bow over the Savior and his blood.

3.Prefer the merit of their labor over the mercy of the Lord. V 6-7

There are two ideologies men hold concerning salvation. They are salvation by grace and salvation by works. The heart's desire and bent of all the unregenerate is salvation by works. Coupled with the sinful nature of the natural man and his darkened mind is the need to do something to rectify the sins he has committed. Totally foreign to him is the fact that God has already redeemed all he will save. Only the knowledge of this will cause the sinner to abandon his works and look otherward? **Hosea 1:7.** Mercy, which is salvation by the Lord **their God** and not the bow. *“Lord, propitiate for me”* is the cry of every sinner saved by the grace of God. Their question is that of every justified sinner: what can I, an undone sinner offer to a holy God? And just as quickly the answer: nothing.

Sinners departed from the Lord know nothing of his mercy and grace and will never learn of them at the shrines in Jezreel. They will learn to sharpen their arrows and repair their bow. They will learn war. Those saved by the Lord their God will engage in the battle already won. They *“run to win.”*

God has said, *“I will break the bow in Israel.”* Has he broken your bow? Until he does, men will trust in it and as long as you trust in the bow you are departed from

the Lord. May I encourage you to the sanctuary in Jerusalem, trusting the blood of the Savior, pleading the mercy of the Lord over the merits of your works?
The merit of my labor is death; the mercy of my Lord is life everlasting. Read v-7.

By Winston Pannell