



# Lesson 14

## May 31, 2020

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ABUNDANT HARVEST CHURCH  
SUNDAY SCHOOL

TEACHER: EVANGELIST MONIQUE R FOSTER



# RETURN TO LOVE AND JUSTICE

## BIBLE BASIS:

Hosea 11:1-2, 7-10; 12:1-2, 6-14

BIBLE TRUTH: God exhorts the people of Israel to return to obeying and worshiping Him.

MEMORY VERSE: “Therefore turn thou to thy God: keep mercy and judgment and wait on thy God continually.” (Hosea 12:6, KJV)

LESSON AIM: By the end of the lesson, we will:  
COMPARE: prosperity as a worldly goal with the godly virtues of love and justice; REGRET the occasions where we have made material prosperity a key goal; and PRACTICE love and justice as key virtues.

# LESSON REVIEW

**LIFE NEED FOR TODAY'S LESSON:** People often equate prosperity with righteousness. Is prosperity the standard by which people and society should be judged? Hosea reminds us that love and justice are God's standards.

**BIBLE LEARNING:** God demands that His people follow Him.

**BIBLE APPLICATION:** Christians will return to daily love, justice, and walking humbly with God.

**STUDENTS' RESPONSES:** Believers will commit to obeying God in everything and remaining aware of the ways they continually fall short.

# KEY TERMS TO RECOGNIZE

- Justice – Just behavior or treatment. The quality of being fair and reasonable.
- Standards – a level of quality or attainment. An idea or thing used as a measure, norm, or model in comparative evaluations.
- God’s standards – is perfection. God is perfect and pure, and sin of any kind is an offense to Him. He expects nothing less than perfection.
- Love, “ahab (aw-HAB): to have affection, with the idea to like or to have a close and intimate relationship.
- Backsliding “meshubah (mesh-oo-baw): back-turning apostasy
- Turned “haphak, (haw-PHAK) to change or transform. His heart has turned, meaning he has changed his mind.
- Obedience – In simple terms mean compliance with an order, request, law or submission to another’s authority... “And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death even death on a cross” hence why the bible stresses obedience an essential part of the Christian faith.



LESSON  
SCRIPTURE

HOSEA 11:1-2, 7-10;  
12:1-2, 6-14, KJV

# LIGHT ON THE WORD – HOSEA

- Hosea was one of the Minor Prophets.
- He was an Old Testament prophet of the eighth century ... called by God from the Northern Kingdom.
- He prophesied about the last 40 years before the fall of the Northern Kingdom, warning the Israelites to return to God before it was too late.
- He was an older contemporary of Isaiah and Micah and began his ministry at a time when Israel was prosperous and powerful under King Jeroboam II (790-749 BC).

# LIFE NEED FOR TODAY'S LESSON

- AIM: Student will understand that God demands the obedience of His people.

# INTRODUCTION – DIVIDED WORSHIP, DIVIDED KINGDOM

- The Book of Hosea illustrates a time when the people of Israel had been unfaithful to God through worship. They sought out relationships with Assyria and Egypt that were not approved by God, all in pursuit of military gain, and subjected themselves to improper worship of Baal.
- Throughout the story of Hosea, God has shown His commitment to the people of Israel, and yet they continue to both reject His love and disobey His commands.
- The Northern Kingdom managed to remain vibrant and alive for only two centuries, in large part because its leaders failed to teach the people of Israel how to seek and follow after God.



# CONTINUATION OF INTRODUCTION

- Hosea predicted the downfall of Israel when Shalmaneser of Assyria conquered it and shortly after Judah went into captivity.
- In many ways today's passages show how God is lamenting the frustrations of a people who continued to defile the meaning of worship.
- In chapter 12, Jacob, who later was renamed Israel practiced deceit and yet was the common ancestor of all the 12 Tribes of Israel.
- Jacob, however, diligent in his desire to seek God, wrestled with the angel to receive his blessings. Jacob's ancestors named in this text remained under the belief that their benefits would be a direct result of their success, without help from God.
- Jacob attempted to cleanse his home of idol worship (Genesis 35:2); however, his descendants remained steadfast in their worshiping of idols. As a result, dishonesty, as noted by Jacob's past, became the norm in how people attained their wealth.

# BIBLE LEARNING

AIM: Students will find that God is gracious with His people yet demands pure worship and proper obedience.

# I. ISRAEL'S DELIVERANCE

(HOSEA 11:1-2)

- God has, in many ways, envisioned the relationship that He maintained with Israel as similar to that of a parent and a stubborn child.
- God reemphasizes the love He possesses for His children despite the many times that the children of Israel continuously disobeyed God even after being brought out of Egypt (vv., 1-2).
- God continued to restore the people of Israel, and in many ways, this sets up the narrative for Messiah that would come and offer reconciliation and hope.

REVIEW THE SCRIPTURES: CHAPTER 11: 1-2

# SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

## QUESTION 1

Who is the “they” in this passage?

## QUESTION 2

What does the hope of a Messiah (Jesus) offer to the future of the people of Israel?

# LIGHT ON THE WORD

## The Case Against Israel

- God chose to put His love on the people of Israel. He treated them like a child, lavishing His blessings and love upon them.
- However, in their disobedience, Israel turned to other gods, sacrificing to them and directing their faith to false deities in opposition to God.
- In an effort, to turn Israel back to Him, God sent prophets time and again to preach a message of repentance.
- Yet, they kept turning to false gods. The image of a loving Father jealous for the love of His children is a powerful one throughout the Bible. Here, the loving Father must discipline His child for disobedience.

## II. GOD'S AFFIRMING LOVE

(HOSEA 11:7-10)

- God reminds the Israelites what happened to Admah and Zeboiim, who both perished with Sodom and Gomorrah, yet He refuses to allow that to happen to the people of Israel.
- God remains adamant in His refusal to destroy Israel by reaffirming love and not anger. Instead of God's wrath (which would have been justified), He states that His "heart is turned within me, my repenting's (compassion) are kindled" (v. 8).
- This is a reminder to the people of Israel of God's divine position. We cannot place our definitions of human characteristics onto how we understand God's behavior.
- God is infinitely larger than we could imagine, so when we not God's love despite our disobedience, we cannot attempt rationalize it with our human understanding. God believed in the return of faithful people (vv.10-11)
- REVIEW HOSEA 11:7-10

# SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

## **Question 3**

Who were Admah and Zeboiim and why does the Lord use them as an analogy?

## **Question 4**

How do we come to understand God's divine love through His relationship with the people of Israel?

# LIGHT ON THE WORD – GOD’S WAYS ARE NOT OURS

- While God is angry with His people, He will not pour out His fierce anger on them. As humans, when we are passionate and our emotions are out of control, we often forget all reason and act on those emotions.
- Yet God in this passage explicitly states that He is no human. His love for Israel abounds even while He is angry with their disobedience and allegiance to foreign gods.
- While His people continue to disobey Him, He is committed to holding His end of the bargain.
- God’s commitment to His people and the covenants He makes with them is unparalleled.
- While humans may break their promises all the time based on what the other party does, God will not.



# III. THE PUNISHMENT OF ISRAEL

(HOSEA 12:1-2)

- At different times, Assyria and Egypt each conquered Israel and held their people captive, yet Israel still tries to make alliances and trade deals with them.
- Israel continues to use all forms of deceit and violence in pursuit of power. In many ways, these actions remain in direct conflict to the bondage that they were set free from as a people.
- Pursuit of their wishes and desires caused the people of Israel for their deceit and the deceit of his descendants who believed that their successes came from their works.
- God is now calling to bring a charge against the people of Israel; however, this change is coming from His continued love for them.

# SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

## Question 5

What does the wind signify in this passage?

## Question 6

Would it have been better to have the people of Israel destroyed to understand the seriousness of their actions?

# LIGHT ON THE WORD – FUTILITY OF FOREIGN GODS

- Both Israel and Judah (the Southern Kingdom) were guilty in the eyes of the Lord. While Judah's sin seemed lesser, they nonetheless followed after foreign gods. The passage refers to the sin of Israel as "wind," meaning their sinful pursuits have come up empty and futile, just like the wind blowing.
- Their willingness to send olive oil, an important and valuable export, to Assyria cemented their status as followers of foreign gods. Their disobedience had reached a tipping point in God's eyes.
- As Christians, we must remain sensitive to how we follow idols every single day. Seeking money, comfort, approval, and pride are time-tested paths to following idols. God demands that we find our ultimate satisfaction in Him rather than vain idols.

# IV. SEEK GOD'S LOVE AND JUSTICE

(HOSEA 12:6-14)

- God urges the people of Israel once again to return to the ways of love and justice. They must put away the deceit and harm they have displayed since their release from Egypt.
- The boasting of riches and wealth is not rooted in justice or love, nor does it carry weight in God's kingdom.
- God reminds the Israelites of the Festival Booths, a time when they spend a week living in tents to honor God's protection when they wandered the wilderness for 40 years.
- However, God warns the people of Israel that if they continue to live in such a way that glorifies material success and idol worship, they would be sent back to the tents and placed in bondage.

REVIEW CHAPTER 12:6-14

# SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

## QUESTION 7

God wants you to prosper and be in good health. He does not want you to be overtaken with the love of money and success. Why do you think the Lord abhors material gain being your central focus?

## QUESTION 8

How can one obtain wealth in a way that is still affirming of God's love and justice?

# LIGHT ON THE WORD – RETURN TO OBEDIENCE

- How can the children of Israel return to God? Through Obedience!
- But what does this obedience look like? Returning to the Lord means a commitment to loving others, practicing justice, and finding one's hope and trust in the Lord alone.
- Otherwise, the Lord will punish Israel, sending them back to live in tents. A primary sin of which the Israelites need to repent is on how they deal with money.
- They had been flaunting their material wealth and taking advantage of the poor. God reminds them of where they came from and how far they have come.
- As Christians, it is too easy to fall away from the ways of God. We forget to do the things He has commanded us to do. Every day must be an opportunity to return to obedience.

# BIBLE APPLICATION

AIM: Students will commit to acting justly, especially in the area of finances.

- We can often find ourselves seeking to obtain material wealth while forgetting the reasons why God blesses us with wealth in the first place. We have been given wealth so that we may extend the same love God has shown us, redistribute it among the least of these, and work toward restorative economic justice.

# STUDENTS RESPONSES

AIM: Students will seek God daily in every aspect of their lives.

- Always seek God daily in every aspect of your life.
- Ensure that you are keeping God at the head of your life (Matthew 6:33).
- Ask yourself what are you faithful to?
- What do you find yourself idolizing?
- You can also examine if the blessings that God has provided you should be redistributed to those around you in need.
- Lastly, trust God to be the Provider in your life and not to trust in your own ability to provide.



# STUDENTS' RESPONSES

AIM: Students will stand on the side of the oppressed in society.

- Whose pain do you feel the most? Is it children, the elderly, the homeless, immigrants, the poor, victims of racial discrimination, the falsely incarcerated, the over-policed, those affected directly by climate change?
- Find one way to stand on their side, which is to stand on God's side. Perhaps it can be through donating to an organization that deals with those issues. Perhaps it is to protest a store that uses problematic images in its marketing materials. Take an issue that is close to you and pray about it. Ask God to direct you as you choose to stand with those people and God's Word.

# NEXT WEEK'S SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

**LESSON TOPIC:** THE CALL OF WISDOM

**BIBLE BASIS:** PROVERBS 1:1-11, 20-22, 32-33

**TEACHER:** Evangelist MONIQUE R FOSTER