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The Love Of God For His People -poonen - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2007/9/26 21:12

The Love Of God For His People

by Zac Poonen

Chapter 11-14 of Hosea deals with God's love for Israel, the restoration of the nation and the ultimate triumph of love over judgment

"When Israel was a child I loved him and out of Egypt I called My son" (Hosea 11:1). This verse although referring to Israel's redemption from Egypt is quoted in Matthew 2:15 as applying to Jesus returning to Israel from Egypt. This shows how Scripture (since it is the inspired word of God) is capable of more than one meaning!

God knows all about the deceit and unfaithfulness among His people (Hosea 11:12). Yet His tender heart yearns for them saying, "Oh, how can I give you up, my? How can I let you go? My heart cries out within me; how I long to help you! No, I will not punish you as much as my fierce anger tells me to. This is the last time I will destroy you. For I am God and not man; I am the Holy One living among you, and I did not come to destroy" (Hosea 11:8,9). This compassionate God is our Father.

"These people are crafty merchants selling from dishonest scales. They love to cheat. They cheat others and then they boast, 'I am rich. I have got it all by myself. No one knows that I got it by cheating' " (Hosea 12:7,8). There is a lot of unrighteously earned money among Christian businessmen today, which they have cleverly hidden from the eyes of others. Financial success has given them acceptance in the eyes of immature believers and many of them are elders in good assemblies. Outwardly they appear righteous and get honour in their churches. They say, "No one knows that I got it by cheating because my outward testimony is spotless." They are clever merchants who have deceived the people. But they can't deceive God or His prophets. One day God will expose every one of them. True prophets also can see through such people. That is why these rich business people will not get close to a true prophet. Let me encourage you to be a voice for God against such corruption, in your generation.

"It used to be when Israel spoke, the nations shook with fear, for he was a mighty prince; but he worshiped Baal and sealed his doom. And now the people disobey more and more." (Hosea 13:1,2). This is the history of many who started out as prophetic voices for God. As time went on, they compromised with money and the things of this world and sealed their doom. Now people are no longer stirred when they speak.

"O Death, where are your thorns? O Sheol, where is your sting?" (Hosea 13:14). This is a beautiful verse about the resurrection and is quoted in 1 Corinthians 15:55. Hosea finally invites Israel to return to the Lord and even tells them what to say: "Return, O Israel, to the LORD your God, For you have stumbled because of your iniquity. Take words with you and return to the LORD. Say to Him, 'Take away all iniquity And receive us graciously, That we may present the fruit of our lips'" (Hosea 14:1,2) The fruit of our lips is "the sacrifice of praise" as we read in Hebrews 13:15. It is to the place of perpetual praise that God wants to bring all of us finally – the place where we become His worshippers, and where our relationship with Him is more important to us than everything else.

The Lord finally promises us, "I will cure you of idolatry...and My love will know no bounds, for my anger will be forever gone!" (Hosea 14:4). The love of money is the idolatry that is so deeply entrenched within all of us that only the Lord can deliver us from. The love of money is like a big onion. You peel off one layer and there is another underneath and many more layers below that. Only God can show us those layers one by one and free us from them little by little. I once told a carnal brother, "I think your problem is your love of money." But he replied saying, "O no, Brother Zac. I am free from that." I told him, "Well, you must be better than me, because I find that I am still battling it." He did not see his need and so fell away through the love of money later. The one who thinks he stands is the one who falls away first. Do you think you are totally free (as Jesus was) from the love of money? May God have mercy on you if you think so. Ask God to give you light on yourself.

God then says, "I will refresh you like the dew from heaven. You will return and rest beneath My shadow. You will be a watered garden and blossom" (Hosea 14:4-8). This is a promise of the outpouring of His Spirit that will make our lives like

a watered garden.

"Whoever is wise, let him understand these things: The paths of the Lord are true and right, and the righteous will walk a long them. But sinners trying them will fail" (Hosea 14:4-9).

There are only two categories of people: Righteous men who walk along the paths of the Lord - and sinners who do not. Those who are wise will recognize this.

Re: The Love Of God For His People -poonen - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2007/9/27 0:51

Quote:
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God's heart is to see the reviving of the Church. Many look at certain segments of the church and lose hope but God is desiring after and not willing that "any" should perish but "all" come to repentance. Every letter to the churches in revelation include the phrase: **Repent!**

In our day God is giving a 7-fold plea of repentance to the church:

Repent, repent, repent, repent, repent, repent, repent.

May we share God's heart in our day for **His** Church.