

Israel's Disobedience and God's Redemption

HOW DOES GOD FEEL ABOUT BELIEVERS' DISOBEDIENCE?

Focal Verses • HOSEA 11:1-11

Aim for Change

By the end of the lesson, we will IDENTIFY the ways God is like a loving parent to His people, feel REMORSE for times we reject God's love, and COMMIT to return to God when we have strayed away from His love.

In Focus

Katrina, Alex, and their family just wanted some warm food. Their father Marcus had lost his job and their mom, Felicia, was sick. They wanted to eat and would volunteer to clean up in exchange for food. The twins left their two-bedroom apartment and their two siblings to find the family food.

They stopped at a church a few blocks away and asked if the church was still serving meals. The church said they were but the kitchen closed in 20 minutes. Katrina and Alex ran back to tell everyone, but their mother was too weak to go inside. Their father stayed with her and told the other kids to go. The children thought they would ask to take food for their parents.

To their surprise, they were told they could not take extras. Katrina and Alex managed to sneak bread and fruit in their pockets. The church's sign read, "We Are A Caring Church."

Alex said, "They sure don't represent the care of God too well. Maybe the church down the street with the broken sign that simply read 'All Are Welcome' might mean it."

Have you ever met or experienced rejection from people who claim to love the Lord? How are churches and believers guilty of saying they love the Lord, but not always displaying their love in genuine and meaningful ways?



Keep in Mind

"When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt"
(Hosea 11:1, KJV).

Focal Verses

KJV **Hosea 11:1** When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.

2 As they called them, so they went from them: they sacrificed unto Baalim, and burned incense to graven images.

3 I taught Ephraim also to go, taking them by their arms; but they knew not that I healed them.

4 I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love: and I was to them as they that take off the yoke on their jaws, and I laid meat unto them.

5 He shall not return into the land of Egypt, and the Assyrian shall be his king, because they refused to return.

6 And the sword shall abide on his cities, and shall consume his branches, and devour them, because of their own counsels.

7 And my people are bent to backsliding from me: though they called them to the most High, none at all would exalt him.

8 How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together.

9 I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim: for I am God, and not man; the Holy One in the midst of thee: and I will not enter into the city.

10 They shall walk after the LORD: he shall roar like a lion: when he shall roar, then the children shall tremble from the west.

11 They shall tremble as a bird out of Egypt, and as a dove out of the land of Assyria: and I will place them in their houses, saith the LORD.

The People, Places, and Times

Hosea. The prophet Hosea was an eighth-century B.C. prophet. He was one of the five prophets (Hosea, Amos, Jonah, Elijah, and Elisha) who prophesied to the Northern Kingdom. The Kingdom of Israel was split into the North (called Israel) and South (called Judah) during the reign of King Rehoboam (1 Kings 11). Hosea's ministry occurs during the reign of King Jeroboam II. Jeroboam II's reign was known as a time when the rich got richer, the poor got poorer, and the Israelites followed after false gods. Hosea prophesied about the last forty 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 southern prophets Isaiah and Micah.

Background

The book of Hosea illustrates a time when the people of Israel had been unfaithful to

God through worship. Throughout the story of Hosea, God has shown His commitment to the people of Israel, yet they continue to both reject His love and disobey His commands. The Assyrians eventually conquered the Northern Kingdom because of their continued rebellion against God (2 Kings 17). 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 twelve tribes of Israel. Jacob, however, sought God and wrestled with the angel to receive his blessings. Jacob's ancestors, who are 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 worship of idols. As a result, dishonesty, as

noted in Jacob's past, became the norm in how people attained their wealth.

How can generational problems impact our lives today?

contrast, present the Israelites as a rebellious nation, refusing to obey their God.

Why does God continue to care for us despite our disobedience?

At-A-Glance

1. Israel's Deliverance (Hosea 11:1-2)
2. Care & Disobedience (vv. 3-6)
3. God's Reaffirming Love (vv. 7-11)

In Depth

1. Israel's Deliverance (Hosea 11:1-2)

God has, in many ways, envisioned the relationship He maintained with Israel as similar to that of a parent and a stubborn child. God re-emphasizes 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 set up the narrative for the Messiah that would come and offer reconciliation and hope.

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

2. Care & Disobedience (Hosea 11:3-6)

These verses show God as a loving parent. Verse 3 shows that God is the one who teaches His infant child to walk and guides them with His hand (so they will not fall). However, Israel disregards that God has held them up. Verses 4 continues to show Israel's dependence on God. He is the one who lifts the yoke of bondage from His children's necks. God cares for His people; the imagery of Him here is one bending down to feed His flock. This passage may be a metaphor for how God led His people out of Egypt and then fed them with manna when they wandered in the wilderness. Verses 5-6 in

3. God's Reaffirming Love (Hosea 11:7-11)

God promises that He will not abandon His people or destroy them as He did to Admah and Zeboim (NLT: Zeboiim). Admah and Zeboim were territories destroyed by God when He let out His wrath against Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 10:19; 14:2-8). God reinforces to His children that His "heart changed" and "compassion is aroused." This depiction of God is consistent with His loving and kindness towards His children, who are prone to rebel (2 Chronicles 7:14). God reinforces that He will not destroy His people (vs. 9). The repetition of the promise should not be overlooked. God wants His people to understand that He will not destroy them again. And just in case they still doubted, He tells them that He is God, He is not a man; He is divine, and He will not destroy them. The following two verses show God calling with a roar for His people, and His people responding and obediently following God. The people are notably scattered, for they come from the West, Egypt, and Assyria. When the people return, God settles them in their homes. In other words, God restores His people to their promised land. (vv. 10-11).

Search the Scriptures

1. How does Israel turn away from God (Hosea 11:2)?
2. Usually, people run from the roar of a lion. What will hearers do when they hear God's lion-like roar (Hosea 11:10)?

Discuss the Meaning

1. Note the times in your life when you found yourself disobeying God and idolizing other things. How did God extend His love and mercy to you even then?

2. How do you understand success in any area of your life related to your relationship with God?

3. Do you find yourself forgiving and loving those who initially reject you?

Liberating Lesson

Individuals and corporations in this country continue to profit from deceit and improper business practices. These individuals and corporations find themselves hoping to obtain worldly wealth and prosperity. Meanwhile, they continue to widen the wealth gap globally. Their desire to achieve power, status, and wealth by human means has allowed them to lose sight of the destruction that they are causing to the working class and poor people. God still calls individuals in love and strongly rebukes them in many ways. God desires all His children, even those who operate in deceit and material wealth, to bring justice and restore good order. We often find ourselves seeking to obtain the material wealth of millionaires, meanwhile forgetting the reasons God blesses us with wealth in the first place. We have been given wealth to extend back the same love God has shown us, share it among the least of these, and work toward restorative economic justice.

Application for Activation

Always seek God daily in every aspect of your life. Ensure you keep God at your life's head (Matthew 6:33). 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, seek to trust God to continue being a provider in your life and not trust in your own ability to provide.

Follow the Spirit

What God wants me to do:

Remember Your Thoughts

Special insights I have learned:

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