

Adult Sunday Bible Study Lesson

October 30, 2022

Hosea 10:5-15

False Hope Exposed and Judged

Situational Context: Hosea continues the theme of Israel's judgment.

Lesson Theme: In apocalyptic language Hosea reveals the devastation coming for Israel.

The verses echoed by Jesus in Luke and Revelation seem to indicate a similar judgment coming upon an apostate church and people.

1. No Place to Hide: Hosea 10:5-8 (ESV) ⁵ The inhabitants of Samaria tremble for the calf of Beth-aven. Its people mourn for it, and so do its idolatrous priests—those who rejoiced over it and over its glory— for it has departed from them.

⁶ **The thing itself shall be carried to Assyria as tribute to the great king.**

Ephraim shall be put to shame, and Israel shall be ashamed of his idol.

⁷ **Samaria's king shall perish like a twig on the face of the waters.** ⁸ **The high places of Aven, the sin of Israel, shall be destroyed. Thorn and thistle shall grow up on their altars, and they shall say to the mountains, "Cover us," and to the hills, "Fall on us."**

Interpretation: The words speak of overwhelming devastation from the Lord. The people would rather die than face further judgments from Him and see the things in which they trusted destroyed.

Supporting Texts:

Luke 23:30 (ESV) ³⁰ Then they will begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall on us,' and to the hills, 'Cover us.'

Revelation 6:16 (ESV) ¹⁶ calling to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb,

Discussion Starters:

What would make a sane person place their trust in idols and material things?

Part and parcel to God's wrath is exposing false hopes, why?

The mountains are tendentially powerful allies, how does this plea reflect their sins?

2. False Hope: Hosea 10:9-10 (ESV) ⁹ From the days of Gibeah, you have sinned, O Israel; there they have continued. Shall not the war against the unjust overtake them in Gibeah? ¹⁰ When I please, I will discipline them, and nations shall be gathered against them when they are bound up for their double iniquity.

Interpretation: God traces their departure from Him to the days at Gibeah. As war came on Gibeah, so war and captivity would come on Israel. Up to now Ephraim (Israel) had been as contented as a young cow that ate while threshing grain. But now God would cause Israel (here called both Ephraim and Jacob) and Judah to do the heavy work of plowing and harrowing under a yoke—a picture of going into the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities.

Supporting Texts:

Hosea 9:9 (ESV) ⁹ They have deeply corrupted themselves as in the days of Gibeah: he will remember their iniquity; he will punish their sins.

Judges 20:4-5 (ESV) ⁴ And the Levite, the husband of the woman who was murdered, answered and said, "I came to Gibeah that belongs to Benjamin, I and my concubine, to spend the night.

⁵ And the leaders of Gibeah rose against me and surrounded the house against me by night. They meant to kill me, and they violated my concubine, and she is dead.

Judges 20:24-25 (ESV) ²⁴ So the people of Israel came near against the people of Benjamin the second day. ²⁵ And Benjamin went against them out of Gibeah the second day, and destroyed 18,000 men of the people of Israel. All these were men who drew the sword.

Discussion Starters:

3. Not too Late: Hosea 10:11-12 (ESV) ¹¹ Ephraim was a trained calf that loved to thresh, and I spared her fair neck; but I will put Ephraim to the yoke; Judah must plow; Jacob must harrow for himself. ¹² **Sow for yourselves righteousness; reap steadfast love; break up your fallow ground, for it is the time to seek the LORD, that he may come and rain righteousness upon you.**

Interpretation: Both kingdoms are in view. This is a positive image of Israel's original calling as a teachable, unmuzzled animal threshing the harvested grain and free to eat as it worked. Jesus also offers an easy yoke to His disciples. A fair neck is, a strong neck capable of arduous work. Israel had not fulfilled the Lord's expectations. The easy yoke of covenant blessings would be replaced by the hard yoke of covenant curses in order to teach them obedience. Sowing that which is right and good brings a harvest of blessing from the Lord. When virgin and fallow ground is plowed, it produces a particularly abundant harvest.

Supporting Texts:

Matthew 11:28-30 (ESV) ²⁸ Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

1 Corinthians 3:6-7 (ESV) ⁶ I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. ⁷ So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.

Discussion Starters:

How do we sow in righteousness?

Why won't God honor human effort?

What is the ground to be broken up?

4. Reap What We Sow: Hosea 10:13-15 (ESV) ¹³ **You have plowed iniquity; you have reaped injustice; you have eaten the fruit of lies. Because you have trusted in your own way and in the multitude of your warriors,** ¹⁴ therefore the tumult of war shall arise among your people, and all your fortresses shall be destroyed, as Shalman destroyed Beth-arbel on the day of battle; mothers were dashed in pieces with their children. ¹⁵ Thus it shall be done to you, O Bethel, because of your great evil. At dawn the king of Israel shall be utterly cut off.

Interpretation: Instead of cultivating a fruitful relationship with God, Israel has planted, reaped, and eaten wickedness and dishonesty. Gal 6:7-9). Because you have trusted in . . . your warriors. The punishment God will bring (a military defeat) is directly related to Israel's sin of depending on its own military power and not on the Lord.

Supporting Texts:

Hosea 8:7 (ESV) ⁷ For they sow the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind. The standing grain has no heads; it shall yield no flour; if it were to yield, strangers would devour it.

Jeremiah 9:23-24 (ESV) ²³ Thus says the LORD: "Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, ²⁴ **but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the LORD.**"

Romans 6:23 (ESV) ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Discussion Starters:

What is so difficult to learn that there is a positive relationship between our sowing and reaping?

If we want to reap grace we should???

What do we want to reap? How then should we sow?