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## *Christ in Hosea*

[Hosea Series, Part 16]

*August 7, 2022*

**Sermon Text:** Hosea 12-14

**Scripture Reading:** 1 Cor 15:50-58

Psa 78:1-4 A Maskil of Asaph. Give ear, O my people, to my teaching; incline your ears to the words of my mouth! (2) I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings from of old, (3) things that we have heard and known, that our fathers have told us. (4) We will not hide them from their children, but tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the LORD, and his might, and the wonders that he has done.

Jesus said that He spoke in parables because His Word is not for

everyone – so that the wicked trample on it and despise it. He spoke in, as the Psalmist puts it here, “dark sayings from of old.” It is only for His true people to have these things opened up to them, just as we see the Lord doing on that old road one day long ago:

Luk 24:27 And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

Christ is in this book of Hosea which we have been walking through these past months. Eight centuries before Christ came into this world, the Lord spoke of His Son through His prophet, and He did so in “dark sayings.” So that it is not until Christ came and not until this New Testament was put in our hands and opened up to us by the Spirit, that we see Christ

preached in every book of the Old Testament.

Let me ask you by way of challenge: *Has Christ opened up His Word to you as He did to those disciples on the road so long ago? Can you see this in yourself* –

Luk 24:31-32 And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight. (32) They said to each other, “Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?”

Because this is what Christ does in each one of His children who are truly His. This is not just a mere parroting or repetition of what someone else has told you, but it is having eyes to see and ears to hear God’s Word.

Let me walk you through Hosea and show you how often we have seen Christ here, and then I want us to focus upon this:

Hos 13:14 I shall ransom them from the power of Sheol; I shall

redeem them from Death. O Death, where are your plagues? O Sheol, where is your sting? Compassion is hidden from my eyes.

### Christ in Hosea

Hos 1:10-11 Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be like the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or numbered. And in the place where it was said to them, “You are not my people,” it shall be said to them, “Children of the living God.” (11) And the children of Judah and the children of Israel shall be gathered together, and they shall appoint for themselves one head. And they shall go up from the land, for great shall be the day of Jezreel.

This of course is an announcement that God’s Promise to Abraham would most certainly be fulfilled. That in all the sobering pronouncements of judgment for their evils, the Lord would still preserve a remnant for Himself in Christ. And here it comes to light by the Apostle Paul:

Rom 9:25-27 As indeed he says in Hosea, “Those who were not my people I will call ‘my people,’ and her who was not beloved I will call ‘beloved.’” (26) “And in the very place where it was said to them, ‘You are not my people,’ there they will be called ‘sons of the living God.’” (27) And Isaiah cries out concerning Israel: “Though the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them will be saved,

Here is Christ in a promise of the New Covenant:

Hos 2:20-23 I will betroth you to me in faithfulness. And you shall know the LORD. (21) “And in that day I will answer, declares the LORD, I will answer the heavens, and they shall answer the earth, (22) and the earth shall answer the grain, the wine, and the oil, and they shall answer Jezreel, (23) and I will sow her for myself in the land. And I will have mercy on No Mercy, and I will say to Not My People, ‘You are my people’; and he shall say, ‘You are my God.’”

Here is a “dark saying” about Christ’s church in the latter days – the days in which we live, the church age:

Hos 3:4-5 For the children of Israel shall dwell many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or pillar, without ephod or household gods. (5) Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the LORD their God, and David their king, and they shall come in fear to the LORD and to his goodness in the latter days.

We even find a dark saying about how all of this is possible – namely, the resurrection of Christ and OUR resurrection in Him:

Hos 6:1-2 “Come, let us return to the LORD; for he has torn us, that he may heal us; he has struck us down, and he will bind us up. (2) After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will raise us up, that we may live before him.

And so we have it in the NT:

1Co 15:3-4 For I delivered to you

as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, (4) that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,

See it? *In accordance with the Scriptures.* Just as you have it in Jonah:

Mat 12:40 For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

And you have a dark saying about Christ's judgment upon the wicked when He comes again to judge the world in righteousness:

Hos 10:8 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."

This refers in the first place to the time when Assyria would come and wipe out Israel. The wicked

turn to their false gods to cover and hide them, all for naught. And so this points to that Great Day when Christ appears once more:

Rev 6:15-17 Then the kings of the earth and the great ones and the generals and the rich and the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, (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, (17) for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?"

Last week we looked at chapter 11 which opens with this:

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

Who would have thought that this was not only speaking of God's love for Israel in Moses' day, but most fully of Christ being born into this world as our Redeemer and His being protected from Satan's

murderous devices? Yet here it is, opened up to us by Matthew:

Mat 2:14-15 And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt (15) and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt I called my son."

Over and over again, through Hosea and in the midst of all God's declarations of judgment upon Israel for their wicked, hard-hearted, idolatrous evils, we see the Lord's provision of Christ so that the true Israel will be saved:

Hos 11:9-11 I will not execute my burning anger; I will not again destroy Ephraim; for I am God and not a man, the Holy One in your midst, and I will not come in wrath. (10) They shall go after the LORD; he will roar like a lion; when he roars, his children shall come trembling from the west; (11) they shall come trembling like birds from Egypt, and like doves from the land of Assyria, and I will return them to their homes,

declares the LORD.

The book ends with words of the Promise:

Hos 14:4-7 I will heal their apostasy; I will love them freely, for my anger has turned from them. (5) I will be like the dew to Israel; he shall blossom like the lily; he shall take root like the trees of Lebanon; (6) his shoots shall spread out; his beauty shall be like the olive, and his fragrance like Lebanon. (7) They shall return and dwell beneath my shadow; they shall flourish like the grain; they shall blossom like the vine; their fame shall be like the wine of Lebanon.

And with this:

Hos 14:9 Whoever is wise, let him understand these things; whoever is discerning, let him know them; for the ways of the LORD are right, and the upright walk in them, but transgressors stumble in them.

The wicked find the right ways of the Lord to be a path filled with

stumbling blocks. The path of the Lord, living in Christ and walking in Him, is an absolutely foreign route for the wicked. The righteous walk naturally in the Lord's way, but the evil man, the unregenerate man stumbles over the Lord's commandments at every step. It is all foolishness to him and an obstruction to the way he wants to go.

### The Sting of Death

Now, we want to go back one chapter and move in for a closer look at still another dark saying about Christ in Hosea:

Hos 13:14 I shall ransom them from the power of Sheol; I shall redeem them from Death. O Death, where are your plagues? O Sheol, where is your sting? Compassion is hidden from my eyes.

Now, what does Hosea mean by this? He speaks of "ransom" from Sheol and "redemption" from death, and yet the verse ends with "Compassion is hidden from my eyes."

The context of verse 14 is one of judgment. Look at the beginning of this chapter:

Hos 13:1-3 When Ephraim spoke, there was trembling; he was exalted in Israel, but he incurred guilt through Baal and died. (2) And now they sin more and more, and make for themselves metal images, idols skillfully made of their silver, all of them the work of craftsmen. It is said of them, "Those who offer human sacrifice kiss calves!" (3) Therefore they shall be like the morning mist or like the dew that goes early away, like the chaff that swirls from the threshing floor or like smoke from a window.

So what does Hosea mean here in verse 14? Ransom. Redemption. Death. Plagues. Sting. No Compassion???. Dark sayings indeed. It is a difficult verse with some varying translations. For example, the KJV has:

Hos 13:14 I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will

redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: **repentance** shall be hid from mine eyes.

“Repentance” instead of “Compassion.” A note in the Reformation Study Bible suggests that the Hebrew word can also mean “repentance” or “regret,” and then the comment adds: “God will not repent (change His mind) of His intention to vanquish death for His people.”

But that idea does not really fit with the context of God’s judgment upon Hosea’s countrymen.

In fact, I think another interpretation makes more sense. It is this (from G.K. Beale/D.A. Carson, Commentary on the NT Use of the OT):

“The text [vs 14] is part of a prophecy of judgment upon Ephraim....Four rhetorical questions appear in vs 14. The first two expect a negative answer:

- Shall I ransom them from the

power of Sheol?

- Shall I redeem them from Death?

NO! is the obvious answer. God’s judgment is pronounced and certain.

NOTE: The ESV (and the KJV) does not put these first two questions in *question* form but as statements. “I shall ransom, I shall redeem,” but the question form expecting the answer “NO!” fits the context of judgment.

NOTE: When translating the OT, we must take care that we do not read the NT clarity back into the OT text. That is to say, translators must translate the Hebrew in the context of Hosea’s day. You cannot take the NT’s use of Hosea and then conclude, “O, well this is what Hosea meant – just as Paul says in 1 Cor 15.”

The next two questions are the Lord’s call for Death to come upon these wicked, unrepentant idolaters:

- O Death, where are your plagues?
- O Sheol, where is your sting?

“Death and Sheol, come upon these people. Bring your plagues. Bring your stinger against and upon them.”

But then...

1Co 15:54-57 When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.” (55) “O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?” (56) The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. (57) But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

*Paul turns the summons to death into a taunt! [Beale, Carson] The questions now sneer defiantly at death’s impotence in the face of God’s powerful act of mercy and forgiveness in Christ. If in Hosea Death is called on to punish sin, Paul shows that such a role is no*

longer needed. Death’s dominion over the whole earth has been ended. It’s sting is drained of power.

Christ has nullified the power of death over His people by dealing with the Law’s demands. He fulfilled the Law’s demands. He became a curse for us on the cross and He perfectly obeyed and fulfilled the Law for us. Our sins are atoned for. Satan has no more grounds to accuse anyone who is born again, who is in Christ.

The dark saying of Hosea 13:14 has been brought out into the light. Death and Sheol (Hell) have no claim upon the Christian any longer. And the complete, full fulfillment of all of this is yet to come when Christ shouts, and we are raised from the dead.

1Th 4:16-18 For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. (17) Then we who are alive, who are left, will



be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. (18) Therefore encourage one another with these words.

## Hail Sovereign Love

Jedidiah Brewer, 1776

### Verse 1

Hail Sovereign love which first began,  
This scheme to rescue fallen man;  
Hail Sovereign free eternal grace,  
That gave my soul a hiding place.  
Against the God who rules the sky,  
I fought with hand uplifted high,  
Despised the mention of His grace,  
Too proud to seek a hiding place!

### Verse 2

Enwrapped in thick Egyptian night,  
And fond of darkness more than light,  
Madly I ran the sinful race,  
Secure without a hiding place.  
But thus th' eternal Counsel ran,  
"Almighty Love, arrest that man!"  
I felt the arrows of distress,  
And found I had no hiding place!

### Verse 3

Indignant justice stood in view,  
To Sinai's fiery mount I flew,

But Justice cried with frowning face,  
"This mountain is no hiding place!"  
'Ere long a heavenly voice I heard,  
And Mercy's angel soon appeared.  
He led me on with gentle pace,  
To Jesus Christ, my hiding place.

### Verse 4

Should storms of sevenfold vengeance roll,  
And shake this earth from pole to pole;  
No flaming bolt could daunt my face,  
For Jesus is my hiding place.  
On Him almighty vengeance fell,  
That must have sunk a world to hell;  
He bore it for a chosen race,  
And thus became their hiding place.

### Verse 5

A few more rolling suns at most,  
Shall land me safe on Canaan's coast  
There I shall sing the song of grace,  
To Jesus Christ, my hiding place!  
Exalt the Lord, His praise proclaim,  
Let ev'ry saint now raise His name  
Forever more we'll see His face,  
The Face of Christ our Hiding Place

