

## PREACHING THROUGH DANIEL AND HOSEA

Is this true of you? God speaking through Hosea says, "I wrote for him the ten thousand things of my law; but they are counted as a strange thing" (Hos. 8:12). Is God's written Word a strange thing to you, or are you daily becoming more familiar with it?

Daniel was taken into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, twenty years before the general captivity of Judah. He was speedily recognized for his wisdom, his firmness of character, and his God-given ability to interpret mysteries. For seventy years he continued as officer and advisor to Babylonian kings and their conquering Persian successors.

The first six chapters of the book tell of various events in Daniel's life, widely separated in time:

- 1 The capture and training of Daniel and his friends (607 B.C.).
- 2 He interprets Nebuchadnezzar's dream, foretelling events of six centuries of world history (603 B.C.).
- 3 The faithful Hebrews are preserved in the fiery furnace (580 B.C.).
- 4 He interprets a dream foretelling Nebuchadnezzar's madness (570 B.C.).
- 5 Belshazzar's feast, and the handwriting on the wall (538 B.C.).
- 6 Daniel is preserved in the den of lions (537 B.C.).

The last six chapters record four separate visions of Daniel, by which he foretold the successive rise of Persian, Greek, and Roman empires, the coming of Messiah's kingdom, and, by a figure, the resurrection and final judgment. Jesus made reference to Daniel's prophecy in speaking of the coming desolation of Jerusalem and of the final judgment. Many things in these visions appear again in John's visions on Patmos, as seen in the Book of Revelation.

For the prophetic ministry of Hosea we go back from Babylon to the kingdom of Israel, and back from the captivity to the time of Israel's corruption and decline, nearly two hundred years before Daniel. Under King Jereboam II, Israel was wealthy, powerful, and forgetful of God and goodness. Under his six successors,

## PREACHING THROUGH THE BIBLE

four of whom were assassinated after short reigns, it became progressively weaker as idolatry, immorality, and dishonesty increased. During this time and under these circumstances Hosea preached of Israel's terrible infidelity to God's justice and the restitution of the repentant by God's tender love.

The first three chapters of the book deal with Hosea's own tangled and tragic family life, as illustrative of God's patience toward His wayward bride, Israel. The final nine chapters are made up of short discourses in which the theme of sin, punishment, and restitution is developed.

### Sermon Outlines Provided:

- "When God Is With You" (Dan. 3)
- "The Costly Habit of Prayer" (Dan. 6:4-16)
- "I Called My Son Out of Egypt" (Hosea 11:1, 2)
- "Return—With Words" (Hosea 13:15—14:9)

### Other Suggested Sermon Topics:

- "The Lasting Kingdom" (Dan. 2:31-45)
- "A Writing of Judgment" (Dan. 5)
- "Not Our Goodness, But God's Mercy" (Dan. 9:15-19)
- "Who Wants to be Wise?" (Hosea 4:6-10)
- "Flights of the Silly Dove" (Hosea 7:11-16)
- "That Stormy East Wind" (Hosea 12:1, 2)

## QUESTIONS OVER DANIEL AND HOSEA

1. What did God grant to Daniel? (Dan. 1:9)
2. What was the interpretation of the mysterious handwriting on the wall? (5:25-28)
3. What was Daniel's physical condition after seeing the visions? (8:27)
4. What was Daniel to do with the words he had received? (12:4)
5. What kind of a wife was Hosea to take to himself? (Hos. 1:2)
6. How long will God separate himself from His people? (5:15)
7. How should Israel have sown and reaped? (10:12)
8. What is the difference between the reaction of the righteous and the transgressors toward the ways of the Lord? (14:9)

PREACHING THROUGH DANIEL  
WHEN GOD IS WITH YOU

(Daniel 3)

INTRODUCTION — The Story.

Nebuchadnezzar's vision - chap. 2 (esp. v. 47, his adulation of God.)

Later, perhaps near the time of Zedekiah's final revolt, he sets up image and demands worship of it.

Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah refuse to worship the image, before or after personal threats.

Punishment inflicted, and they are saved from it.

Nebuchadnezzar convinced and again acknowledges God.

Two types of characters in the story.

I. THE VACILLATING KING: NEBUCHADNEZZAR.

— History records prowess not only at arms, but in building roads, cities, palaces and gardens.

A. Respectable, and of a certain nobility of character— this not enough. — So he becomes typical of respectable persons without real faith.

B. Impressed by the spectacular— as Daniel's interpretation of the dream. (As "Christians" impressed by glory of special days, pageantry, revival, "faith healing.")

C. Humble when bewildered, he worshiped when he was favored, but forgot when way was smooth. — So the way of half-hearted religion is downward.

D. Became progressively forgetful of God, self-assertive, and finally blasphemous (see 3:15 end).

E. Again "converted" by the spectacular, he became an outspoken advocate of Jehovah worship.

II. THE FAITHFUL HEBREWS.

A. No former noteworthiness

1. Had lost their own names and became Shadrach, Meshach, & Abednego. (Daniel kept his Hebrew name against "Beltshazzar"— Dan. 1:7).

2. Had been faithful companions and helpers of Daniel.

## PREACHING THROUGH THE BIBLE

- B. The test—threat of destruction
  - 1. Their faith grew out of what was past—there was no promise of security. — See vv. 16-18, for a remarkable confession.
  - 2. Complete faith in God's power—hard to see in the face of immediate force. — Faith did not depend on God's favor to themselves.
  - 3. Complete respect for God's will. Cf. Esther "If I perish, I perish" (Esther 4:16).

### III. THE BLESSING IS FOR THE FAITHFUL.

- A. No indication of God's blessing on Nebuchadnezzar for his belated surrender. — He concluded his days, son reigned two years, was assassinated; end of dynasty.
- B. God's presence saved the Hebrews.
  - In the furnace—the fourth, "like unto the Son of God," was present.
  - "Lo, I am with you" is a promise dependent on obedient faith.

### CONCLUSION —

Not all God's saints have been delivered from affliction and death, but all can know the glory that makes all suffering seem small (II Cor. 4:16-18).

PREACHING THROUGH DANIEL  
THE COSTLY HABIT OF PRAYER

(Daniel 6:4-16)

INTRODUCTION —

A. Jesus in Gethsemane

When Judas planned to betray Jesus, he knew where to find the Lord, at prayer in the Garden (John 18:2). Knowing all this, Jesus still went to pray!

B. Daniel in Babylon, centuries before this.

When his enemies sought to destroy Daniel, they knew how to entrap him in his habitual times and manners of prayer. Knowing all this, Daniel still prayed!

I. THE EVENT RECOUNTED IN DANIEL 6.

A. Darius' beureaucracy established (vv. 1-3).

1. Contact with the people through 120 satraps.
2. Executive branch, three "commissioners" (NASB).
3. Daniel the most distinguished of the three.

B. Jealousy developed (vv. 4, 5).

1. Daniel resented as a foreigner (v. 13).
2. Daniel's goodness, Daniel's rebuke to evil.
3. Daniel resented for efficiency, dependability, integrity.
4. Daniel resented especially for Darius' favoritism.

C. The trap laid (vv. 6-9).

1. His religious devotion made him vulnerable. For it he would risk. In it he might seem to offend.
2. Proposal made to exclude petition to any but Darius.
  - a. Appealed to Darius' vanity. Seemed a way to unify the kingdom.
  - b. Based on false claim to unanimity ("Everybody's doing it"; not so!).
  - c. Proposal excluded God, from the consultation, and from trust.

D. The response of Daniel (vv. 10, 11).

1. He knew the plot, but was not deterred from life-long practice.
2. He knelt, visibly; and prayed, audibly.
  - a. Gave thanks to God for things Darius might have claimed credit for.

## PREACHING THROUGH THE BIBLE

- b. Made supplication to God, in violation of decree.
- 3. To change his custom in time, posture, voice, or subject of prayer would have constituted surrender to lesser authority, and dethronement of God.
- E. The trap sprung (vv. 12-16)
  - 1. Report to Darius.
  - 2. His effort to avoid casting Daniel to the lions.
  - 3. His yielding to the unchangeable decree.
- F. The trap broken (vv. 17-28)
  - 1. Did Darius pray to God during a sleepless night?
  - 2. Inquiring at dawn, he rejoiced in Daniel's deliverance.
  - 3. He punished the accusers, and decreed that "men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel."

## II. THE COST AND THE WORTH OF PRAYER

- A. Time consuming and inconvenient in a busy life.
  - But Daniel accomplished more with the rest of his time than others did with all.
- B. Subject of resentment among his peers.
  - 1. It marked him as different, and it rebuked their carelessness.
  - 2. Even so, it was part of the character that won him highest respect and favor.
- C. Provided occasion for a plot against him.
  - But it provided the foundation for failure of that plot.
- D. Endangered his life; but it overcame that danger.
- E. It was occasion of acute distress to Darius, his friend.
  - 1. Parallel: Does a family man have a right to make his service to God the cause of distress and material sacrifice to his family?
  - 2. It established in Darius a respect for God, which he shared with the kingdom.

## CONCLUSION —

Victory from Daniel's praying came only after he accepted the cost, without seeing the victory.

## I CALLED MY SON OUT OF EGYPT

(Hosea 11:1, 2)

### INTRODUCTION —

The Exodus from Egypt a focal point in Israel's history. As well try to record American history without the American Revolution as to review Israel's history without the Exodus.

So Hosea (in time, halfway between Moses and Christ) spoke of God's dealing with His people in terms of the Exodus: "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt." This became prophetic of Christ (Matt. 2:15).

At several points in Biblical history Egypt became a place of refuge for God's people; though Egypt was an indifferent and sometimes reluctant host, and her land a place for coming out!

### I. GOD CALLED YOUNG ISRAEL OUT OF EGYPT.

#### A. Israel was a child.

1. The sojourn in Egypt occupied four hundred years, beginning with the man Israel and seventy of his clan; and ending with the departure of a million.
2. Israel went into Egypt as a family, and emerged as a people, ready to become a nation.
3. They had yet to develop the nationhood that comes with freedom and responsibility.

#### B. "Then I loved him."

1. God's love for Israel brought them into Egypt. Joseph said to his brothers, "God did send me before you to preserve life" (Gen. 45:5).
2. God's love called them out of Egypt. He heard the cries of their affliction. He also saw the need to preserve their identity, and their faith in Him.

#### C. "I called my son out of Egypt."

1. Hosea uses the Father-son relationship between God and His people more than others do, but see also Deuteronomy 8:5 and Psalm 103:13.
2. Moses was involved in that "calling out."

#### D. "As they called them, so they went from them" (v. 2).

1. Like a naughty child, Israel ran away from the pleading Parent.

## PREACHING THROUGH THE BIBLE

2. At times they wanted to go back into Egypt: They missed the Egyptian onions in their diet (Num. 11: 4-6). They brought with them relics of Egyptian religion—the golden calf. They missed the security that went with their servitude.
3. At times they went into idolatrous relation with other peoples, denying the God who sustained them.
- E. Most of us have “Egypt” from which God calls us.
  1. Slavery to sin.
  2. Bondage to the job, business, social relationship that offers security, but denies free responsibility.
  3. Ties to human tradition prevent freedom in Christ.

## II. GOD CALLED HIS SON, JESUS, OUT OF EGYPT (Matt. 2:13-21).

- A. The experience in Egypt was an incident of early childhood; Jesus grew up in Israel.
- B. God’s care sent Jesus to Egypt, and called Him away.
  1. The dream warned Joseph of Herod’s murderous intent.
  2. Another dream instructed Joseph of Herod’s death.
- C. Called out of Egypt—What if Joseph and Mary had decided to stay in the land of the Nile?
- D. Joseph and Mary obeyed more readily than the “naughty child” Israel. — They returned to Nazareth as directed.
- E. Application—Have you ever experienced a lapse in your relation to church, brethren, Christian development?
  1. Reasons may have been good, as false teaching in the home church.
  2. Don’t linger in Egypt after Herod—whatever drove you away—is long dead!

## CONCLUSION —

Lay hold now on God-given freedom, responsibility, and growing up in Christ!



PREACHING THROUGH HOSEA  
RETURN — WITH WORDS  
(Hosea 13:15 — 14:9)

INTRODUCTION —

What can I do for my nation? — the question of every sincere patriot when his native country is in danger.

Hosea's question, when he saw the decadence and danger of Israel, over a period of fifty years, beginning 2600 years ago.

- A. Israel's gradual lapse into heathenism.
- B. Strong reign of Jeroboam II followed by six brief weak reigns and then a fall to the Assyrians.

I. SIN, JUDGMENT, AND PUNISHMENT.

- A. Hosea charges Israel with corruption of religion.
  - 1. It began with corruption on the part of priests.  
*Apply* - Christians are priests.  
How do we use God's day? His name?
  - 2. It ended in heathenism, idolatry, debauchery — as an unfaithful wife.  
*Apply* - Moral failure, with its eternal stain.
- B. Hosea charges carousal in the king's house (ch. 7).
  - 1. Roger Babson interprets economic and political problems as being problems of *character, spirit, re-birth*.
  - 2. Truth takes a holiday — but will truth come back to school in diplomacy?
- C. Commercial dishonesty is charged (Hosea chs. 11, 12).
  - 1. Sharp dealing in which weakness is exploited.
  - 2. How are *we* using the present world situation?
- D. "*According to their pasture, so were they filled; they were filled and their heart was exalted; therefore have they forgotten me*" (13:6). — Prof. Walter M. Horton, Oberlin Seminary, "If a generation should skip the knowledge of the Bible, it would be calamitous. — It has been skipped."
- E. "And they have not cried unto me with their heart; but they howl upon their beds; they assemble themselves for grain and new wine; they rebel against me."

## PREACHING THROUGH THE BIBLE

"It is thy destruction, O Israel, that thou art against me, against my help" (13:9).

"They sow the wind and they shall reap the whirlwind."

### II. RETURN.

A. Human effort inadequate—"Surely now shall we say, We have no King, for we fear no Jehovah; and the king, what can he do for us?" (10:3). — We will no longer say to the work of our hand, "Thou art our gods."

B. Return personally.

1. We can't heal the evils of all the world this morning, but we must let God heal our own evils.
2. We can confess our own sin, and accept Christ as our Forgiver of sin.

### III. RETURN WITH WORDS.

A. We need a definite commitment to keep us from too-easy wavering.

1. "Your goodness is a morning cloud, and as the dew that goeth early away. Therefore have I hewed them with the prophets; I have slain them by the words of my mouth."

B. We need the spiritual cleansing of open confession. Before men we confess ourselves as sinners — to Him we confess the sin.

C. We need to glorify God with our confession.

### IV. HEALING AND BLESSING—A RETURN TO GOD.

A. We have hopes for our nation.

1. That the work of men's hands shall be for building.
2. That homes may be united, and broken lives restored.

B. We have hopes for ourselves.

1. A calm courage in the face of all danger.
2. Unstained enjoyment of life, not dimmed by hate, jealousy, or guilt.
3. Assurance beyond—"I have all things, and am full."

### CONCLUSION —

The price is a gift received; acknowledged with words.