

## John A Meggison - Hosea

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Dear friends, we bring you the greetings from Harlow county of Carthage, Missouri, and Neosho, Missouri, and Altamont and Parsons in Kansas. Also, the friends along the way at the various conventions and places where we stopped sent their love along, wish to know that you were remembered in their prayers and also to ask you to remember them. Sister Megison sent her love along and wished to be remembered in your prayers also.

Brother didn't announce the subject, but we often find that it is quite a question to know what to give the friends in the way of discussion. There are so many wonderful subjects in the Bible and all of them are beautiful, full of meat, and full of instruction for every one of us. So as we have only two opportunities, we'll use this time and privilege to study a little about the Book of Hosea. The Lord has blessed us richly in the study of that recently, and we know that you will enjoy it too, as we go over some of the things there. Of course, the book with 14 chapters has too much in it to discuss it all in one hour, and we therefore will be able to concentrate mainly upon the two last chapters, the 13th and 14th of Hosea.

Now the prophecy of Hosea was delivered mostly in the house of Israel, the ten tribes. At the same time the Lord was using three other prophets, Isaiah and Micah, and those three evidently four prophets altogether, and they were running about the same time. He mentions it in Hosea as being in the first chapter. He gives it I'll turn back to that, because he himself gives us the date of his prophecy, the word of the Lord that came unto Hosea, the son of Hirai, in the days of Isaiah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, Kings of Judah, and the days of Jeroboam, the son of Joash, King of Israel. Now there's many things, wonderful things, in every book of the Bible not missing the Old Testament.

They're rich in pictures, types, shadows, prophecies of the things connected with the church. In this particular prophecy, the Lord used Hosea and his relationships to his wife and to Israel as pictures of himself and how he loved Israel, and how because of that deep love he was having patience with them, brought them back time after time, forgave them, reinstated them in his favor, and yet in spite of it all, their repentance was short live, and they were again in a few years just wandering after the habits and ways of the tribes around them. We don't, as we look back upon their activity, we don't see how they could have been so blinded as they were and so like to the nations around them. But that was the fact.

The Lord didn't open to their eyes the things that he has opened up to us. So we realized that they had sufficient for their day, but they didn't pay much attention to it. They paid more attention to the world around them. They had wandering hearts, as the Apostle Paul in the New Testament describes it, and you remember in one of our hymns, the last verse says, keep thou my wandering heart and bid it cease to roam.

And I remember that whenever Brother Russell asked us to sing that hymn, he omitted that last verse. His heart didn't wander, it was fixed and set, and he couldn't sing that. But our experiences tell us that in spite of our determination that we shall not wander from him, that we do catch ourselves doing so once in a while. So we need one another's help as well as the help of the Lord. We'll not have time to go into much of the earlier chapters, except to point out that this book is a rather sad book in the fact that it deals with Israel's lapses, continual lapses, more and more, until the Lord had to just drive them out of the land as he warned them he would.

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Do you remember through Moses, in the 26th of Leviticus, I think it is in the 28th of Deuteronomy, or the other way too, he told them that if they did wander, he'd have to punish them, and he told them that the punishments would be exceedingly severe, and they had those records right before them. But in spite of that, they did observe the habits of all the nations around them and neglected the Lord's word. In fact, he tells us that they had forgotten him, and they had given their whole attention and their whole heart and life and energy to the worship of idols.

Now Brother Russell quotes quite a bit in the studies from the Book of Hosea, because it does illustrate the love of God toward his people, his long suffering patience with them, and his longing to have them returned to him, and also illustrates how his love and his affections are wounded by the wayward tendencies and the wrong actions of those who profess to be his people.

In the 13th chapter, he begins by pointing out the failure of Israel to profit by the things that he'd given them. He said, when Ephraim spake trembling, he exalted himself in Israel, but when he offended in Baal, he died. Ephraim was the principal tribe of the 10 tribes that revolted from Rehoboam and established a kingdom for themselves under Jeroboam, and he led them worse and worse into idolatry, as did practically all their kings, and so as Ephraim was the largest tribe, he is often used to symbolize the whole tent.

So these are about the 10 tribes, and particularly here the thought is that when he was humble minded, when he realized his littleness, stake trembling with fear and respect to the Lord, then the Lord could exalt him in Israel and use him. But when he offended in baal, that is, when he turned to the idol worship and began to take that which the Lord had given him as a blessing and turn it over to the use of the idols. Then in God's sight, he lost his position and place and died, and so that is the way it is expressed here.

And yet with all of these warnings and punishments, the Lord adds in almost every chapter the assurance that finally there will be a remnant of Israel whom he will subdue and chastise and humble, and that they will be used of him to start the kingdom, that remnant, and it has always been so, hasn't it? In the first age, the age before the flood, there was only the remnant of eight out of all the millions, more or less, that were before the flood, and you remember how also in Israel's time, when the Lord came to them, there was only a small number out of Israel, just a remnant, and here at the end of the gospel age, out of all the great pretenses of Christendom, there's only a small remnant that is the real church of God.

And likewise in natural Israel, number as large as they are over there, gathered still in unbelief in their Messiah, only a small remnant of them will be willing to cling to the Lord, to be humbled and pass through that time of Jacob's trouble, and be used of the Lord as a nucleus to start his kingdom. When one is humble, then the Lord can use them with safety to themselves and as a blessing to others. But when pride enters in, it blinds their own mind and hinders their own blessing and usefulness at the same time makes it unsafe to use them as a messenger, because they always interject some of their own ideas and their own ways. When pride is back in their service, he said, and now they sin more and more, go from bad to worse, and have made them molten images of of their silver and idols according to their own understanding, all of it the work of the craftsman. They say of them, let the men that sacrifice kiss the calves you see.

He points out that their downward course was worse and worse, and that they were making their idols after their own understanding, and that is an important point that he's making there. That when the heart through some dissatisfaction with God. When you feel that the Lord is asking too much, and you wish to withhold some of the things that you consecrated to him.

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That that attitude of mind begets a neglect of the Lord, and a desire to think more about the things that you want and that you desire deeply until you forget the Lord. But as the human mind and nature is of necessity a worshipper of divine things. Implanted in their very nature. They must have some kind of a thing that is superior to them.

And so they make an image in their minds. At least that is more after their own desires, you see? And always the idol is a representation of themselves. You know, in the Greek and Roman idols and heroes that they worshiped. They were always just human passions, deified, that's all.

And the gods were very much like people. Only had more power. But they had just as many bad habits and just as many bad doings as the rest of mankind, and so in the making of their idols, they just represented the great desire. The main desire of their own hearts in the idol.

And likewise, because they made the idol out of their own understanding. The habitual giving away to those things and putting them uppermost in their mind. In turn, made themselves like their idols. So that the two went down together, and the same thing is going on in Christendom now.

He says that they have perverted, therefore their ideas of God. They become twisted, blinded and distorted. We can see all the idols of the nations were just that. Distorted images of what was right and wrong, and it says that all the work of their craftsmen.

That is, they put their best designs. The most beautiful carving. The most beautiful ornamentation and representation that they could at that time, and Christendom is doing the same for much the same reason now. You realize they're building wonderful churches.

And they're building the inside of them fitted up with wonderful altars and pillars and ornamentations and various decorations. All to give a pious air and atmosphere about the whole situation, and indicating that because they have left the Lord. They're using forms and ceremonies and representations to take the place of the Lord, and so we have now a great building of churches all over the land.

And even to the point of asking the devil to help pay for the church. They'll float bonds in the public, you know, and ask anybody, Protestant or Catholic. To buy some of those bonds and help build the church, and they're getting the mind and the idea that it doesn't matter.

So Much what to believe as long as you're honest and sincere about going from bad to worse, and here makes another statement. He says, they say of them, let the men that sacrifice kiss the car. Well, you know, when you kiss a thing, it's an indication of a heart attachment to it, and also when you kiss a superior image or person, that you mean subjection unto that, just as at the present time anyone who goes and kisses the pope's toe is thus indicating that he's in subjection to the pope.

And also here the thought is, let them that, as it words it here, that sacrifice. Let them that enter into these sacrifices who give their best money and talent and their service unto this. Let them indicate their subjection by kissing the calves, and they did. Therefore the Lord says, they shall be as the morning cloud and as the early morning dew that passeth away.

Now this is the third time that he uses the cloud and the dew. Hitherto it has been indicating as here, that it was short lived, that all of their independence and past times, their repentance rather had come back to the Lord. The Lord had blessed them and received them graciously, but it was short lived, and like the morning cloud and the dew, when the heat of the sun arose, when

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temptation or affliction came, all that passed away very short lives, and so here it is, they're like the morning cloud, like the dew that passeth away, and the chaff that is driven of the whirlwind out of the floor and the smoke out of the chimney.

They had forgotten the Lord, and therefore their experiences were short, and likewise their lives were being shortened by their own disobedience. Now he brings in here a reminder that in spite of the fact that they had been unfaithful, that they had drifted away worse and worse from the Lord, yet he had done his thought. Yet he says, I am Jehovah, thy God from the land of Egypt, and thou shalt know no God but me, for there is no Saviour beside me. See, the Lord had been faithful all along to keep his part of the agreement that Mosaic law covenant and he was still willing and waiting to receive them if they would return. He says in the fifth verse, I did know thee in the wilderness and in the land of great drought.

The Lord blessed them, had patience with them, brought them to all those experiences, and the result was that their worship of him, their love for him was not so very strong, and they were short lived, he said, according to their pastures. So they were filled. They were filled, and their heart was Exalted, therefore they have forgotten me, and that was what he warned them against even before they entered the land, both in Deuteronomy and in Leviticus, when they were come into the land, he said, and the Lord has prospered you, and you have much abundance, and you have many children, and all these blessings of the Lord.

He said, beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, but they had forgotten him, and the result was that they were drifting further and further away from him, and note the result. He therefore, because of this fact, that they have forgotten him. I will be unto them as a lion, as a leopard, by the way will I observe them, I will meet them as a bear that is bereaved of her whelps, and rend the caul of their liver, and there will I devour them like a lion, the caul of their heart, and the wild beast shall tear them.

This is a prophecy, and you notice that he uses here the animals that are represented in the prophecy of Daniel, the seventh chapter, as the Gentile governments. The bear is here, first the lion that was Babylon, and the bear Medo Persia, and the leopard Greece, and they did one after the other oppress Israel, and while they came, people of Medo, Persia let them return.

But nevertheless, in after times they never had their own king, but they had oppression, and after that became Greece, the ruler of them, and you remember in Antiochus Epiphanes in his days how the temple was desecrated and the people of Israel oppressed, and then later the power of Rome came on the scene that's not brought in here, but it was part of their future experiences. Now the bear that is bereaved of her whelps is. You can't console them, you can't comfort them.

They're wild, they're beyond control, and it means that these would be impossible to stop. The punishments of the Lord could not be avoided because they had gone so far, and then he brings in the statement, O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thine help you see the arm? The invitation was still open to them if they'd return.

And they had destroyed themselves by their own lack of faithfulness to the Lord, by their own determination to be like the nations around them. He says, I will be thy kings. Where is any other that might save thee in all thy cities, in thy judgments of whom thou saidst, give me a king and princes. You remember the occasion when Samuel anointed David. First Saul and then David.

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And you remember that Saul, as he's referred to here was unfaithful. He said in the 11th verse, I gave thee a king in mine anger and took him away in my wrath. You see, you're referring back to Saul and his disobedience, and the Lord had to displace him with another that was anointed.

We'll have to go on rapidly. The iniquity of Ephraim is bound up. His sin is hid. That is, as you would bind and put away something you wish to keep for future reference, like some savings put in a bag somewhere and laid aside. The thought is that the iniquity of Ephraim was being filled up and would soon demand an accountant.

And the Lord would have the record there. He says, the sorrows of a traveling woman are come upon him, and they did, just like they're coming upon Christendom now, and for much the same reason. Disloyalty to God.

He says, I will redeem the previous verse. He is an unwise son, for he should not stay long in the place of the breaking forth of children. This is a rather obscure statement, and other translations bring in the thought more helpfully.

Thought being that in the birth of children, the pressure upon the unborn child forces them into the passage in which they're born, and he says here that Ephraim did not seize the situation that would bring him to a full fruition of blessing, and there were other words like it is stated by the poet that there is a tide in the affairs of men, which, taken at the crest, leads on to fortune, but which, neglected, brings loss and decay. The thought. I quoted it exactly in the latter part.

But here's the same thought. That the opportunity was there, but he couldn't recognize it and couldn't take it, and so in that place he lost his position of the Lord's instrument and, and likewise his place in Israel. But in spite of all of these, he says that he has blessings for them.

The Lord is going to have a people whom he can bless and use. As Jesus told the Pharisees in his day, who wanted him to stop the noise of the multitude. He said, if these should hold their peace, the stones would cry out. You see, the will of God is going to be carried out, and he is going to have a representation of the human race that will be humbled in the time of trouble.

The thought is, is each one, Is each individual to the Jewish people? Are they going to be individually? Are they going to be of that remnant whom the Lord will subdue, whom he will test and refine as silver and gold? Is refined, and then will use as an instrument of blessing unto others. They will have that privilege and opportunity in many of them.

But because some of them will lack in faith and still be unfit for the Lord's use, they'll just pass out of the picture. But the Lord will use the remnant just as he has in ages past. He says, I will ransom them from the power of the grave, I will redeem them from death. O death, I will be thy plagues, and O grave, I will be thy destruction, and repentance shall be hid from mine eyes.

You see, when this is carried out, it will be the final act of God's blessing, and he will not withdraw it again. When Israel returns unto God, this time he'll stay faithful, because the punishments will be severe enough to leave only the remnant that are loyal to the Lord. Then he goes on. Though he be fruitful among his brethren, yet an east wind shall come. The wind of the Lord shall come up from the wilderness, and his spring become dry and fountain dried up.

He shall spoil the treasures of all pleasant vessels. He points out there that a play upon the name Ephraim. It means fruitful, and the statement is, though he be fruitful, though he seem to be

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prosperous among his brethren, nevertheless, as he says, the wind of the Lord, the influences of war and desolation that will come through the Lord's ordering, you might say, and through his being faithful to his part of the covenant. They will come, and all the pleasant vessels will be taken from them.

As he says in another place, that which I have given them shall depart from them, and that is going on now in Christendom too, and he goes on to picture the depth of the trouble that was going to at that time come upon Israel. Samaria shall become desolate, for she hath rebelled against her God. They shall fall by the sword, their infants shall be dashed in pieces and their women with child ripped up.

And we see that literally did occur with the conquering nations that passed over them and pretty near destroyed them.

We're going over these things because the same thing is happening in Christendom now. The same departure from the Lord, the same sort of materialness is coming into the minds of many, and more and more trade and business and lack of faith is being manifested in the world in Christendom. Particularly in the next chapter he brings in, and we wish to dwell more upon that, because there are the blessings that are foretold with which he will start the kingdom. He says, o Israel, return unto the Lord thy God, for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. No, they didn't gain anything.

They degraded themselves more and more by their idol worship. But you see here he points out the still waiting invitation of a loving, patient God, who will love them sufficiently to deal with them, even though time after time they were unfaithful in the knowledge, as his wisdom foretold, that out of all of this a remnant would be found that could be used of him, and that that remnant would be used to wake up the others and make them ashamed, so that even the rebellious ones will return unto the Lord their God also. But it is the remnant that will be used to bring that about. He says, o Israel, return unto the Lord thy God. Thou hast fallen by thine iniquity, by the evil practices that he insisted on doing.

And then he tells them, take with you words, and here is emphasized the importance of words. The wise men sense the importance of them. Writers realize the importance of words, of the proper words to use to carry as near as possible to the thought that you wish to have the other one to whom you're talking receive. In many cases you use language that you intend to convey to them a picture of what's in your mind.

But quite often the picture they get is entirely different because the language was ambiguous or it could be stood understood in some other way, and so we need to be careful of our language to the best of our ability. You remember, Paul told Timothy and Titus, both of them, to be careful in their use of words, to have the language seasoned with salt, to speak like the oracles of God, and the invitation is the same to us, to watch our words so that they'll be uplifting and influential to those about them, and if something comes up that, as it were, rouses our ire, to be careful and think before we speak, that we do not say things that we'll afterwards be ashamed of and have to ask forgiveness for.

We find that the power and influence of the Holy Spirit will gradually control the mind and the light and the words and the actions, until those tendencies grow less and less and the influence of the Holy Spirit stronger and stronger, until the, you might say, chain of action that followed from the old misuse is broken, and a new chain of reactions from the mind to the activities of life is formed. To

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take an illustration, there's a musician, a young, a boy that wants to be a musician, and the teacher tells them they must practice. Well, practice means several hours a day, and while they do it, why, their arms will ache and their fingers won't respond. They'll have to look for the keys and hunt for them.

But if they're persistent, if they really want to learn the music, they'll keep at it in spite of the aches and the pains and their slow progress until after repetition and repetition, they find that when they see the note, that note will start a chain reaction in the mind and the fingers, until automatically the finger finds just the note on the piano that you're thinking about or that your eye sees on the page, and it becomes automatic, so that you can play hard pieces like the classical music and play it with expression and with readiness. How did you get that way? By practicing, by repetition, by refusing to let the things that hurt and the things that didn't seem to want to work as you wish them nevertheless to force them to work that way, and it's the same with us in the operation of God upon the mind and the heart. If we still want to gain that crown, if we still want to enjoy that perfect holiness which God has, if we want to share our fellowship with him in the future, then we'll keep at it.

No matter what the pains or the aches are, or the disappointments or the bitter experiences, we'll keep at it until the old chain of action and motion has died away from disuse, and we built up into the mind and heart a tendency to use good words, good thoughts, good actions, and never will be able to reach perfection. But we will get more and more into the habit of being able to be used by the Lord's messenger as the Lord's messengers. You remember the Lord's statement of Jeremiah was that if thou wilt take the precious from among the vials, thou shalt be as my mouth. You see there it means study to be able to differentiate between the truth, between that is in harmony with the word of God, and between those that depart even a little from the word.

And if we practice that, then the time comes when the Lord says that I have use for thee and a place for thee, and you know, it'll be just a privilege of service. As the lord in Zechariah 3, dealing with Joshua said that I'll read it because it is very important, the wording of it. There he, the angel of the Lord, protested unto Joshua, saying, thus saith Jehovah of if thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, that is, the things I've delivered over to you, then shalt thou also judge my house and keep my courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that Stand, stand by activities, you see in God's service to distribute his blessings to the creatures whom he loves and that he has in store for them to be given ages after ages and dispensations for the hand of God will always open up to his creatures in the ages to come to give them greater blessings and greater joys. So here he asks, take with you words.

The wise man in Ecclesiastes 12:10 said that he had many good things, wise sayings to give his people, and therefore he chose suitable words, and in the margin it says, words of delight. That's a precious, a beautiful saying, is it? Words that bring delight to your mind, that suggest things that are beautiful and noble and uplifting.

And so he chose words, and I think the word of the Lord has chosen words and expressions in the Bible. Many of things are perhaps beclouded by the translation. But as you go behind that, you find beauty of expression and beauty of the choice of words that indicates the wonderful plan and thought of God behind it, and it's up to you.

Those things were written and sent for your delight, and so here, and he tells them, because they do not know how to pray. You know how it is with people in the world. They come to the minister or the priest or to a Christian and say, pray for me.

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I can't. They don't know how to. They've been away from the Lord, don't know even how to ask the Lord to pray for them. They don't realize that if they just pray as little words as they can use, the Lord will hear them if their heart is sincere, and then he tells them what kind of words to take.

And turn to Jehovah and say unto him, take away all iniquity and receive us graciously. You see the acknowledgment of iniquity, and for asking forgiveness of the Lord, so will we render the calves of our lips. Here he's using the praise and songs and prayers and expressions of worship to the Lord, likening them to the sacrifices that were used in the tabernacle, and then he expresses their cry in the third verse.

Asher shall not save us. We will not ride upon horses. Neither will we say any more to the work of our hands. Ye are our gods, for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy. You see, they had not only sent letters and ambassadors to Assyria to come and help them, but they had even taken some of the large gold out of the temple and given it to the king of Assyria to pay him for help.

But as stated in one of the other chapters, they sent to the king Jareb to help, but he couldn't help. It was beyond help, and so they lose their confidence in their Gentile neighbors, and Israel now will have experiences ahead of them that will break down their confidence in any help from outside and likewise break down their confidence in their own selves, until the only door that is open to them will be turning to the Lord and confessing and asking him to save them and deliver them. That is referred to in, I think it is, Hosea, the second chapter, where he says he'll give them the Valley of Achor as a door of hope.

It will humble their minds and break their pride, but it will make them willing to be directed and used of the Lord. So he goes on to say, we'll not ride upon horses. That's their expression. They believed what they wanted to and worshiped what they wanted to. But they get tired of that in this time of trouble.

They realize it'll bring them nothing but ruin. So they'll be willing to say, as Micah puts it, and as Lies puts it, he says that they'll come and say unto the Lord, let us go up to the Lord, to the house of the Lord, to the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways. You see, they're tired of their own ways then, brokenhearted with all their great plans and all their highest ambitions just in wreckage before them.

Neither will we say any more to the work of our hands. Ye are our gods. They realize that any representation of God will bring them farther away from God, that they need no intermediary save the one whom God has appointed, namely the Lord Jesus Christ, and to add, anything in is just a hindrance and a blockade, as it were. For in thee, the fatherless find mercy, not merely the literally fatherless.

But they had left their own Father, and the Father, that is, the human directors and help they had proved utterly useless to them, and so they come like fatherless people, asking the Lord to help them, and they find there the mercy that he said would be theirs when they should return with their whole heart, and he said, I will heal their backsliding.

I will love them freely for mine anger is turned away from him. You see, the Lord here is reiterating the promise that he gave long before they entered the land of Canaan and became a nation, and now he's saying it again, that he will bless them as they'll come with their whole heart. I will heal their backsliding, and how would he heal it?

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How does the Lord Heal one's backsliding. You get so in the habit of sliding downhill because it's an effort to resist it, and you get in a habit of non resistance and you just go with the crowd downhill. Backsliding. The Lord will heal that.

For one thing, he brings some great cataclasm into your life. Something that breaks your pride and your hope and your ambition and turns you to the Lord, and then he tells you how to heal. Get the healing from him, and as we described it, there it is, this gradual displacing of old habits by as it is expressed, transforming the mind and filling it with the Lord's spirit and ways.

Mine anger is turned away, you see, the blood, the merit of Christ will then be applied to Israel natural and to the world of mankind, and the sprinkling and the blessing of all the families of the earth will begin. I will be as a dew unto Israel. Here again he brings in the morning dew, but this time as a blessing, as a refreshment, as something that is giving of life and of hope back to the world again.

He shall grow as the lily and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. These are expressions that are used elsewhere in the Bible. In the Song of Solomon he says, that is, the church says that I am the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valley. The rose indicating the red or sinful condition of the natural, and yet the new creature, like the lily of the valley, pure and beautiful in the Lord's sight.

And they literally then would have the symbolism of purity, whiteness, righteousness and beauty in connection with it. Because righteousness is beautiful. You remember, I believe it was read this morning in some of the statements that the brothers gave, that it would be our desire to dwell in the temple of God and behold the beauty of holiness. Holiness has a beauty. It isn't attractive to the world, but to those who have learned to partake of it and to practice it more and more.

It grows more and more beautiful until just for the sake of being righteous and true, they learn to love it so much that if there were no punishment, they wouldn't go the other way. They've learned to love that pathway of the Lord's righteousness and truth. I will be as the dew unto Israel. He shall grow as the lily. But while the lily is beautiful and pure and lovely, it has but a small root.

The winds can blow it away or the storms can uproot it. But he says they shall have the roots like Lebanon, like the great trees, the cedars of Lebanon, and they have strong trunks and A wide spreading root that feeds upon the waters of the streams and fountains of Lebanon. So here we have the picture that Israel shall not only become beautiful under the Lord's direction and an exhibition of his loveliness, but also have strong roots thoroughly established in such a way that he cannot be torn up again, that they never will turn to evil again, and that is good. His branches shall spread and his beauty shall be as the olive tree and his smell as Lebanon.

These are beautiful illustrations or pictures. See the statement here is the branches. Well, what would be the branches of Israel? There would be things, you see, that he didn't have originally, but things that spread out, and they would be the Gentile nations that join Israel under the new covenant.

And his influence, you see, will spread through the Gentile nations and they'll all become the Lord's people till every knee shall bow and every tongue confess, and gradually, as shown by other Scriptures, all the various families of the earth will be brought in and adopted into the 12 tribes, tribes of Israel. So his branches shall spread and his beauty shall be as the olive tree. That is not merely beautiful, for the olive tree is beautiful, its leaves always green. But also it's a useful tree.

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It furnishes the light and the food and the medicine, the nourishment in various ways as well as used with the holy anointing oil to picture the Holy Spirit.

So his beauty shall be useful, you see, and of benefit to the Gentile nations around them, and his smell, that is the influence or odor that goes out, will be like Lebanon. What does that mean? Well, we sensed it in Asiloma this year, and in the year 1923, we jumped into the car and took a drive up here into New England, around Boston.

And as we came out from the west and entered into the trees and the beautiful hills and valleys of Pennsylvania and western New York, there was a different quality in the atmosphere. I remember when from New England I went down into Kansas and I felt the air was dead down there. It didn't have the light in it somehow. Of course, it was in August, it was a hot time, but we could see the difference, and the family noticed the difference.

The air was full of more vitality, more somehow or other of that not merely pleasantness, but life giving quality of the pine trees and the evergreens that were there, and so here he says that that smell, the odor, the influence that goes out from Israel will be life giving, invigorating, helpful to all of the Gentile nations because they'll be under the Lord's directions, and will go out in his manner and his way, they that dwell under his shadow. The next verse says, would be the Gentile nations, you see, as they come in, and he says, they shall return, yes, the whole human race.

He says, the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come unto Zion, and everlasting joy shall be their portion. They shall revive as the corn and grow as the vine. The corn here isn't what we know as corn, it's the grains, particularly rye, wheat, and barley, and so forth, and he says that these shall revive, that is, grow up, mature, and bear fruit, and grow as the vine that is bring forth the fruitage that God wants. Now, in Isaiah 5, in John, 15th chapter, you remember, the Lord uses that figure in Isaiah, natural Israel.

And in the 15th of John about spiritual Israel, and Israel is likened to a vine there, and then he tells us of the vine of the earth and of the true vine. Now on the doors of the temple, in Herod's day the doors were gilded, and on this beautiful gateway and entrance to the temple, there was a picture of a vine and the fruitage of the vine, using that as a symbol of Israel, and Jesus evidently referred probably to that feeling of the national emblem.

He said, I am the true vine. You see, there was a false vine. Israel had proved false, and again in Christendom we have in Revelation 14 the statement that the vine of the earth will be cast into the winepress of the wrath of God, and certain direful results will follow the loosing of the control of the masses by those in charge, and anarchy would reign for a short period. But he says that they shall return and grow as the vine.

They'll then bring forth fruitage after the Lord's pattern. In previous chapters of Hosea, he said that Ephraim and Israel brought forth fruitage. All right, they prospered as the Lord did prosper them under Jeroboam ii, and they regained practically all the cities in the land that they'd had under Solomon. But even with that they misused the blessings again and went worse than before to idols. But he points out here that they shall grow this time, and they'll bring forth the Lord's fruitage that he intended.

Not wild grapes this time, but the grape and the fruitage that the Lord can use, and he says, the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon, you see, as it were distilled into the real spirit of the message, the scent, the influence, the order that will emanate from Israel in those days will be such

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as will reinvigorate the world and lift them up and give them an attractive influence that will draw them toward the Lord. Ephraim shall say, what have I to do anymore with idols? And Krishna will be saying the same thing, in other words, and that the reason will be that they have found their idol worship and their ways of selfishness and greed brought them only ruin and desolation on every hand, that even the things that they revered the most would be in wreckage about them. I remember some years ago I received a letter from the National Geographic Society in which they had pointed out in their magazine that their members were serving without pay for the good of the common people and were giving their energy, their money, and their time into making up the expeditions and so forth of that magazine to bring the knowledge of the earth to the people.

And I wrote to them thanks about the matter and appreciation, and in it I pointed out that it was good to see a company of people serving without pay, for no selfish reasons, but for the good of others, and that the kingdom of God would bring that training to mankind. But that between was a time of trouble in which many things that we now hold sacred and great institutions that are the pride of man will nevertheless be strewn in wreckage about the entrance and portals of the new kingdom, and it was good to look beyond and to see the blessings that were in store for those who would serve the people righteously and faithfully.

So Ephraim says, what have I anymore to do with idols? And notice how it is put here. I have heard him and observed him. I am like a green fir tree. From me is thy fruit found.

You see, the statement is that he is heard. There's been a message, an invitation go out from the Lord. It is the gospel that will be preached to all the world. Not this time merely for a witness, but then to offer them the open salvation and the blessings of restitution, and that message will go out.

And here it tells us that Israel heard that message, and they answered it. I have observed him. That is, I've answered the message. I have returned unto the Lord, and he has received me, and he says, I am like a green fir tree.

That is now there is the promise of light, fir everlasting by the greenness of the tree, and green mean, full of SAP, full of life, and from me is thy fruit found. That is here the fruit that the Lord has been looking for will be realized that Israel first and then the other nations will bring forth character and graces of the Spirit and love and expressions of it amongst one another until The Earl the earth has become as God said, that I will make the place at my feet glorious.

And when something is spoken of as glorious from God's standpoint, it will be meaning a place that is wonderful to live in, a place every word and every influence about you will be that of joy and peace and satisfaction, contentment and rejoicing in the Lord. Isaiah puts it that way in the 65th chapter, where he said, behold, I create a new heavens and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembered, neither shall it come into mind. But rejoice with me in Jerusalem, and my people shall join her. Over and over again it says, indicating as he says, the former troubles will be forgotten, and when the joys are so great and the happiness so complete that all the former sorrows and aches and troubles and sicknesses are forgotten, that means that the joys are so deep and so lasting and so full that the others are like just the dark greens of nightmares in the night, in the night of sin.

One has written a poem about this.

He goes on to say that I have observed him. As one translates it, I will regard him meanings not merely that they have heard and that they have responded, but that they will continue to observe

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the Lord, to regard him to, as it were, guide their lives by his ways and his law.

At the back of a certain book, the writing of a commentator on the book of Hosea, I found these verses, and I want to read them. Hast thou heard him, seen him, known him? Is not thine a captured heart, chief among 10,000? Own him joyful? Choose the better part.

Idols once they won thee, charm thee lovely things of time and sense gilded Thus doth sin disarm thee honeyed, lest thou turn thee hence. What a strip the seeming beauty from the idols of the earth. Not a sense of right or duty, but the sight of peerless worth not the crushing of those idols with its bitter void and smart, but the beaming of his beauty, the unveiling of his heart, who extinguishes the taper till they hail the rising sun, who discards the garb of winter till the summer has begun. Tis that look that melted Peter. Tis that face that Stephen saw.

Tis that heart that wept with Mary can alone from idols draw. Draw and win, and fill completely, till the cup o'erflows the brim. What have we to do with idols who have company with him? And you could see, as he points out in that, that the thing that, as it were, breaks you away from the idol, destroys your dependence upon it, and fills you with something better is that you have had a vision of the glory of God. You remember Isaiah had such a vision, and it made him realize his own imperfections and sinfulness, and pray for deliverance from it.

And the Lord sent the angel with the coal, live coal from the altar, and touched his lips, and the angel told him that his iniquity was purged and his sin departed from him. You see, there's the picture of the imputation of the merit of Christ from the brazen altar of sacrifice in the court, and it does cleanse the heart and cleanse the mind, and it is done by the washing of water, by the word as is pictured in the labor, and it is done likewise and increased, and the appreciation grows through the sacrifice of those things that sometimes are very dear to the heart and mind.

But nevertheless, if we turn them over to the Lord, he gives us in return a vast deal greater, richer and better thing. You remember here in the 49th or 54th of Isaiah, I guess it is 54. I want to read you that passage 49. You're probably familiar with it, but I want to call your attention to some things in it. He says, lift up thine eyes round about, and behold all these gather themselves together and come to thee.

And thee is the church in the glory of the kingdom, in the resurrection morning as thou live, saith the Lord, thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all as with an ornament, and bind them on thee as a bride doeth. That is, as the 45th Psalm puts it, that instead of thy fathers, they shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth. Instead of thy fathers, from Abel to John the Baptist, they shall be privileged to be thy children, and thou, the church, will be privileged of the Lord to make them as princes in the earth. They'll be among the children, the first children of the new Adam, the new father of the race. For thy waste and desolate places in the land of thy destruction shall even now be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants.

And they that swallow thee up shall be far away. Notice this statement. The children which thou shalt have after thou has lost the other shall again say in thine ears, the place is too strait for me. Give place to me that I may dwell. I remember in Haverhill, Massachusetts, when I was car portering there, I think it was 1907, that one of the families to whom we sold the books were very sincere.

They love the children a great deal, and they accepted the truth. But they didn't hardly dare or willing somehow to consecrate, to give up the earthly things. For they said, we love our children

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and we don't want to be in heaven and leave them behind upon the earth. They said, we want to be with them, and we had to point out to them that if they consecrated their hearts to the Lord and the lives under his care, and the Lord would show them a better way to bring up their children, would enable them have greater wisdom to lead them aright and to fill them with the right ways.

And that also they would not only the Lord would bless them in this, but on the other side, the veil, the Lord would return those children unto themselves as their own again, and also those children would learn that at one time their father and mother had been invited to accept the heavenly call, and the children would learn that they didn't do it, that they didn't have appreciation enough, and they'd be kind of ashamed of them for a time. You see, neglected privileges do have and bring a responsibility, even if they aren't accepted.

But when accepted, they bring not only responsibilities, but privileges and joys and a deeper and growing satisfaction that you've at last found the right way and the ways of life, and he goes on to say that right here, just the same as we told that couple, that the Lord restores those things that were given up, and with them a great many more, of not merely the same kind, but of greater value and riches.

He says, thou shalt say in thine heart, who hath begotten me thee, seeing that I have lost my children and am desolate, a captive, removing to and fro who hath brought up these? And behold, I was left alone. These, where had they been? Or they were in the grave, waiting till the resurrection morning, and he goes on to say the blessing that shall come to them.

Thus saith Jehovah. Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles and set up my standard to the people, and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders, and kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers. They they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth and lick up the dust of thy feet.

And thou shalt know that I am Jehovah, and they shall not be ashamed that wait for me, and so here you see that it.