

HOSEA

People Who Forgot GOD

by S. Franklin Logsdon

"For Israel hath forgotten his maker." (Hosea 8:14)

"My people have forgotten me days without number." (Jeremiah 2:32)

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CHAPTER FIFTEEN -

PROPHETIC GLIMPSES OF RECOVERY

WE TURN OUR ATTENTION now to those prophecies of Hosea which are yet unfulfilled.

As a preface to this unveiling of the future for the people of His love-covenant, JEHOVAH says: **"I know the thoughts that I think toward you . . . thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end"** (Jeremiah 29:11). There is a future for the Jew; and there is a hope! Let us observe something of this program so certain of fulfillment.

RELATIONSHIP TO BE RECLAIMED

"It shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God" (1:10).

GOD was forced to say, "**Loammi**" (ye are not my people). Now He states that the day is coming when this will no longer be the case. Whatever the appellations attached to these people by GOD and man in their wanderings - and on man's part they have sometimes been most uncomplimentary - they one day will be addressed as "**the sons of the living GOD.**"

We are prone to limit the application of the prodigal son parable to the reclamation of a backslidden Christian. But not so! Perhaps its primary meaning has to do with the restored ancient covenant people. What a welcome is in prospect! What rejoicing! What surprises! With what expressed amazement when they inquire: "**What are these wounds in thine hands?**" (Zechariah 13:6).

The text does not make clear who shall call them "**sons of the living GOD,**" but relationship is the impressive fact admitted. Covenant dealings will be resumed. Joy will abound. A new day will have dawned with the "nightmare" of history obviated. "**Thou shalt arise, and have mercy**

on Zion," the prophecy declares, then adds this assurance, "**for the time to favor her, yea, the set time, is come**" (Psalm 102:13).

RESTORATION REASSURED

"Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together" (1:11).

This specifically prophesied reuniting of the divided kingdom has not to this time been realized, but the integrity of the divine promise makes it inevitable.

"Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that it shall no more be said, the LORD liveth, that brought up the children out of the land of Egypt; But, the LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers" (Jeremiah 16:14, 15).

From the time Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, was carried into Babylon (and died there so ignominiously) until this present hour, the Jews have looked and longed for the re-establishment of their kingdom.

Following the resurrection, when JESUS had shown Himself alive by many infallible proofs, the converted Jewish followers asked pointedly: "**Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?**" (Acts 1:6). Who would be so unwise as to say that they meant the kingdom of GOD within them, or a kingdom of love? No, it was a literal matter in their thinking. Present-day expectation in this regard is reflected in the following excerpts from the Jewish Prayer Book:

"Blow the great trumpet of our delivery, and raise the banner of the ingathering of our exiles and assemble us together from the four corners of the earth.

"And return in mercy to thy city of Jerusalem and dwell in her midst as thou hast spoken, and restore her with a perpetual restoration speedily in our days."

JESUS said: "**Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles [nations], until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled**" (Luke 21:24). Jerusalem is still trodden down. It is not delivered as yet. Why is it not delivered? Because the times of the Gentiles have not been fulfilled. How and when will Gentile dominion terminate? The time, of course, is not revealed, but it will be at the coming of CHRIST.

The manner in which this will be accomplished is presented in symbolic language. A Stone hewn without hands (CHRIST) shall fall on the feet and toes of the colossal image (Gentile powers) that has filled the earth. Current construction is but a monument to unbelief. It must go. The renovation will make way for the Great King and the restored kingdom. His righteousness shall fill the earth. "**Out of Zion then shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem**" (Isaiah 2:3). Then shall the knowledge of the LORD cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

"For great shall be the day of Jezreel" (1:11). Whereas "Jezreel" meant "to scatter" in 1:5, here it means "to gather." That shall indeed be a great day! "**And appoint themselves one head**"

(1:11).

This in no wise suggests that they shall choose or elect themselves a leader. It means rather that they no longer will be a divided kingdom; and as a united people (Ezekiel 37:19) in the land they will acknowledge and approve one head.

That Head can be none other than the LORD JESUS CHRIST. The genealogy of Matthew 1 proves His royal right to the throne, while the genealogy of Luke 3 confirms His legal right.

That JESUS is the King of the Jews is well established. We have the testimony of the angel Gabriel at the annunciation (Luke 1:32); the word of the Eastern scientists at the time of His birth (Matthew 2:2); the inscription of the Roman government at His death (Matthew 27:37); the apostle Peter's quotation at Pentecost (Acts 2:30). The chief priests admitted that JESUS said, "**I am King of the Jews**" (John 19:21). GOD never intended for the Jews to have any king other than His Son.

The late Alfred Edersheim, in *The Life and Times of JESUS the MESSIAH*, stated: "Israel's greatest sin was in asking for a King and rejecting the King."

THE DOOR TO REALITY

"And I will give her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope"
(2:15).

Achor means "trouble." And what a dark valley will be the "**day of Jacob's trouble**" (Jeremiah 30:7)! But it will lead to the fulfillment of their hope - to their restoration and to the kingdom. It will be the dark hour before the dawn of millennial joy.

And melody will flood their souls. "**She shall sing**" (2:15). No more wailing walls. No more need to hang their harps on the willows (Psalm 137:2). No more inability to produce harmony due to captivity in a "**strange land**" (Psalm 137:4). The latent chords will vibrate once more. The greatest inducement to this joyful melody will be the removal of all fear. The promise is that He will "**make them to lie down safely**" (2:18). This will be a security unknown to them throughout the centuries under the Nebuchadnezzars, the Caesars, the Hitlers, and the Arab block.

The blighting names of Baalim, which once overshadowed the names of JEHOVAH in their idolatrous departures, will be blotted out as a thick cloud (2:17). Then salutations of orthodoxy will have heart meaning. "**I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; saith the LORD, and they shall say, Thou art my God**" (2:23).

THE PROMISED RETURN

"Afterward shall the children of Israel return" (3:5).

Afterward! Painful as the intervening experiences are, they will be delivered from the destitution of "**many days**" (3:4) to the delight of the "**latter days**" (3:5). Then they will be no longer "**without a king, and without a prince**" (3:4). They will "**seek the LORD their GOD, and David their king**" (3:5).

This David is not Jesse's son. David of old was disqualified by the LORD Himself. He was not permitted to build the temple (I Chronicles 28:3, 4). The Bible does not state that he will be reinstated to reign.

JESUS is referred to as "**the second man**" and "**the last Adam**" (I Corinthians 15:45, 47) with regard to redemption. He is called "David" relative to His sovereign reign on earth. "**The government shall be upon His shoulder**" (Isaiah 9:6).

It should be as easy for the human mind to believe that a divine King, now with a human body, could reign on an earthly throne as to believe that the divine Creator could come into a human body and be nailed to an earthly cross. The apostle Paul believed it. He spoke of "**the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords**" (1 Timothy 6:14, 15).

Isaiah tells us that "**the LORD of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously**" (Isaiah 24:23). In this verse we are told who will reign and where the seat of His power will be. "**And the Lord shall inherit Judah his portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again**" (Zechariah 2:12).

Since some claim that JESUS is on David's throne now, we may point out three prophetic designations concerning our LORD. He is said to be King, Prince of peace and the Chief Shepherd. Each designation characterizes a particular ministry.

- As the King of kings, He will rule.
- As the Prince of peace, He will bring peace to this restless world.
- As the Chief Shepherd, He will feed and care for His sheep.

But, in each instance, it is an earthly scene. Heaven does not need a King to rule, a Prince to bring peace or a Shepherd to feed.

- There the residents never hunger nor thirst.
- There the very atmosphere is one of sublime peacefulness.
- There the need for ruling is nonexistent.

JESUS must come back to this earth to fulfill this threefold need and to make good His promise.

"COME, AND LET US RETURN unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight. Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth" (6:1-3).

Anyone reading these words would know that the statements concern another day - a future time. They are incongruous with the thinking of an apostate people, such as we have seen in the foregoing pages of this volume. They are most inappropriate for those who are "**bent to backsliding**" from the LORD (11:7).

They would have been nothing short of mockery coming from the lips of those who spent their silver for idols and had forgotten their Maker (8:14).

THE RENEWED VISION

"**Come, and let us return unto the LORD**" (6:1) are words, which when sincerely spoken, will bring the Father's welcome to the "prodigal son." They will be uttered! Of this we are certain. They will spring from a changed heart.

They will issue from repentant souls. They will denote a different attitude. They will betray a renewed vision. They will signal a revival spirit.

They will own their judgment as being of the LORD, both deserved and just. "**He hath torn . . . he hath smitten,**" they will agree. "**Thou art good, and doest good,**" the psalmist of old confessed. "**It is good for me that I have been afflicted**" (Psalm 119:68,71). Nor is there any complaint here. There is confidence, however, that He who tore will heal; and He who smote will bind them up. This is more than the product of their faulty reasoning. It is the promise of divine revelation. the LORD will make all things right at His coming.

The people will assert: "**After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight.**"

While it admittedly hangs on the most frail thread, there is a hint that these days are periods, that one (the time of their dispersion) is past, that the "**time of Jacob's trouble**" is about to end, that the third day (national resurrection) is about to dawn. They know they will live in His presence - "**in his sight.**" For both inspiration and courage, they assure themselves: "**Then shall we know** [experience], **if** [because] **we follow on to know the LORD**" (6:3) Their assurance is further strengthened as they say; "**He** [the LORD] **shall come unto us as** [gently as] **the rain**" (6:3).

The rod of judgment will not then be in His hand.

~ end of chapter 15 ~

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