**9. History Lessons**

*Read Hosea 11:12-13:16*

In Ch11 we saw that God’s love for Israel was undiminished even though the nation was characterised by rebellion against him. Tragedy was going to strike the nation, but ultimately there was the promise that one day they would hear God’s call (his roar!) and return and be resettled back to their homes. In this longer section Hosea brings before Israel some key figures from Israel’s history to teach them important lessons about their relationship with God in the hope that it will produce a right response to God.

**A. Jacob The Deceiver *(Hosea 11:12-12:6)***

1. Consider 11:12-12:1. What characterises the nation of Israel/Ephraim here?

2. From 12:2 Israel is presented with a reminder of one of her patriarchs, Jacob.

1. From what you know about the life of Jacob, in what ways does he fit the description of Israel we considered in Q1? (If unsure about Jacob, read Genesis 25-35)
2. Hosea seems to be setting Jacob as a positive example to Israel – Jacob was a man who was transformed by God. What does Hosea mention in vv3-5 that served as marker posts in Jacob’s transformation?
3. What then is Hosea’s application to Israel (12:6)?
4. The ESV is more literal than the NIV in 12:6: *…by the help of your God, return…* What does this tell us about Israel’s ability to return/repent? Discuss this principle in terms of salvation and the Christian walk (cp. 1 Corinthians 15:8-10; Ephesians 2:8-10)

**B. Moses The Guardian *(Hosea 12:7-13:8)***

3. There are several references to *prophets* (12:10, 13) in these verses – in particular Moses is in view in 12:13 where he is described as one who *guarded* (ESV) Israel like a shepherd. What did Moses (and the other prophets) do in order to try and guard God’s people?

4. Sadly we see how God’s people responded to that guardianship. The *merchant* in 12:7 is literally *A Canaanite*, which is a damning indictment on God’s people – they had become like the pagans God had displaced from the land.

1. Rather than returning to God, where is Israel’s focus (12:8)?
2. Compare 13:5-6 with the warnings in Deuteronomy 8:10-17. How did Israel fall into this way of thinking?
3. This mind-set is not unique to Israel, but can also destroy the church. Read Revelation 3:14-22 – this is a letter from Jesus Christ to a church.

i. How does the church’s perception of itself differ from Christ’s assessment?

ii. How are they to recover from this?

**C. The Monarchy’s Rise and Fall *(Hosea 13:9-16)***

Chapter 13 opens with a quick review of Israel’s past (v1), present (v2) and future (v3), which is bleak. The key principle they have failed to live by is that besides the Lord, *there is no saviour* (13:4).

5. Where has Israel been placing their hope of rescue (13:9-10)? (cp. Psalm 146)

God granted Israel’s requests for a king (1 Samuel 8), which was not necessarily to be a bad thing for the nation, so long as the king led God’s people in trusting the Lord. Yet Israel’s long list of kings paints a very different picture – the rejection of Saul, the first king of Israel was a foretaste of what was to come (Hosea 13:11).

6. Look at 13:12-13. These metaphors suggest a painfully drawn out process before God’s judgement. Should we think of that as a positive or a negative thing? (cp. 2 Peter 3:8-10)

7. In 13:14 we again see the tension between God’s judgement and salvation. Notice the severe discipline that will fall on Israel in vv15-16, yet the assurance in v14 of deliverance - which the NIV translates emphatically: *I will deliver…I will redeem…*

These verses are quoted by Paul in 1 Corinthians 15. It’s worth being clear on how he structures his thought: Paul first asserts the historical reality of Christ’s resurrection and also the fact that because believers are united to Jesus by faith they too will be raised from the dead. The second half of 1 Corinthians 15 deals with what the resurrection body will be like, but the whole discussion is built on the fact of Christ’s resurrection and our union with Him.

*Read 1 Corinthians 15:50-58*

1. What does Paul say about when Hosea 13:14 will be fulfilled?
2. What hope could Israel have had that death’s victory and sting would be defeated? Where is Hosea ultimately pointing us?
3. What effect should this have on the mind set of a Christian?

*In your group…*

Share points for prayer.

Worship God for his attributes revealed in this passage

Ask God to reveal more and more of who he is to you through his word.

Pray over what has challenged you about this passage of Scripture?

Pray for each other’s needs.