

The Minor Profits

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[0 : 00] Well, it's entirely possible that we may finish the prophet Hosea this morning, and I just want to remind you that as we look through it, as it has been in the past, so it will be in the future as we continue on through the minor prophets.

And what is the buzzword of it all? It is this. Conflict, conflict, conflict. The Bible is a book of conflict, and it is because it involves humanity.

And humanity in its fallenness appropriates to itself a dynamic called self-centeredness. And self-centeredness sets the stage for human conflict.

It is inevitable. And stirred into all of that mix is the adversary who is the principal author of conflict that began before Genesis 1-1 ever came into being.

That was Lucifer, the son of the morning, who is later labeled as Satan, the adversary. And it is through his rebellion and his recruitment of one-third of the angels that God created, that eventually being cast to the earth, having infiltrated earth, and having seduced our first parents, Adam and Eve, into handing over the reins of the earth and the supremacy of the earth to him, he now is running the show.

[1 : 32] And we've seen in a number of places where Satan is referred to by our Lord Jesus Christ as the prince of this world. And that is found in John's Gospel, chapter 12, again in chapter 14, and again in chapter 16.

Three different... You almost get the impression that Christ is emphasizing something there, don't you? And Satan is the adversary. The Apostle Paul refers to him as the prince of the power of the air.

And he and his fallen demons, who originally were angels, now they are fallen angels, are those of whom Paul is referring when he talks about the principalities and the powers of the air, the atmosphere.

These are spirit beings. We don't know exactly how they operate, but we know they do. And numerous instances are given of their activities, particularly in the three-year ministry of our Lord that is recorded in the four Gospels.

So now we come to Hosea. And long story short, God has chosen... God has chosen what we may well call an antidote to the sin and rebellion problem.

[3 : 00] And that antidote is to be administered through a person. And the person is none other than the Redeemer, the name of which involves the subject of redemption.

Redemption means to buy back. What is it that is to be bought back? It is that which has been forfeited and lost.

Paradise that was begun in Genesis 1-1 becomes paradise lost in chapter 3. And yet, in that same chapter, we have a promise of a Redeemer, whereby paradise will be regained, and that is through our Lord Jesus Christ, who is labeled the seed of the woman, and that surfaces in Genesis 3 and verse 15.

However, in order to bring this seed of the woman, this Messiah, this Redeemer, into the world, provision has to be made for him.

And that has been done through none other than a genetic stream that survived the flood of Noah in the person of one of his three sons.

[4 : 12] And we are talking about Shem. Shem. S-H-E-M. Shem becomes the father of the Semites.

Only today we call them the Semites. And those who hate these people are called anti-Semitic. And these are the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

And through that line of Shem, eventually the Messiah is going to come. Well, he has come. And he came to the people of the nation who were established principally for the purpose of ushering this Messiah into the world.

And when he came into his own, his own received him not. They rejected him. So the redemptive value that he came to establish has only partially been applied.

And that is, in the death, burial, and resurrection of this Messiah, the application part of that can be applied to anyone, Jew or Gentile, who appropriates the salvation that Christ secured when he died on that cross.

[5 : 25] And when John 3.16 tells us that God so loved the world, he gave his only begotten Son, whosoever believes in him should not perish. The reason that they need not perish is because the Messiah perished.

And he paid for them the debt they owed because of their sin. And God was in Christ reconciling. Reconciling. Redeeming. Reconciling the world to himself. And what that did is it set up a whole basis for anyone, whether Jew or Gentile, to have free and open access to God because the door has been opened.

And that's exactly what Jesus meant when he said, I am the door. By me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved. Jesus became that door, and that door was presented to Israel, the very nation established to bring him into the world.

They rejected him. So the redemption of the earth has been put on hold until the Messiah returns. And when he does, then Israel will be on board.

[6 : 43] That is, those who are left of Israel because two-thirds of them will be eliminated in what will be Holocaust number two. only this Holocaust will be a lot bigger than the one during World War II.

So, much of the Bible, particularly in the Old Testament, is taken up with the drama of this thing unfolding because the whole of the Bible, guys, the whole of the Bible is a story.

It's a story of redemption. There is a scarlet thread that runs from Genesis to Revelation, and it culminates in the last chapter of the book of Revelation when everything has been summed up and accomplished, and this adversary, who was the original cause of conflict, will have been permanently disposed with.

So, in the meanwhile, we've got a saga that is going on here as to how all of these things are going to be transpired, and through these nations, through, by nations, I mean Israel and Judah, northern kingdom, southern kingdom, through these nations, much of this conflict occurs, and we are going to see, as we pick up here in Hosea, this love story that is going on between Hosea and Gomer, and between God and Israel, and bear in mind, if you will, that the story that is being told is between a man and his adulterous wife, which is designed to be a kind of illustration of the relationship that exists between God and the nation of Israel.

And he is using human beings to set forth this drama in terms that those Jews back then could understand. And I'm sure that some of these people were shaking their head at this poor man, Hosea, how could he be so stupid as to take this woman again after she betrayed him and after she sold her body to these other lovers?

[8 : 54] And what is it with Hosea, anyway? And the same thing with Hosea is what with God. God, I don't know how else to put this, God is hooked on the human race.

God is hooked on Israel. God cannot let go of his chosen people. And fellas, this portrays a picture of love the likes of which we just cannot imagine.

God demonstrated his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. And that means Jesus did not die for his friends.

He didn't have that many. He died for his enemies. Think of that. That's the kind of love that is being portrayed here in Hosea. And frankly, there isn't anything natural or ordinary about it.

It is a supernatural love. There's no other way to explain it. So we've got to jump in here. And much of this is kind of repetitive. And it is the prophet Hosea describing the immorality and the spiritual adultery and idolatry in the nation of Israel.

[10 : 14] And we've just got to jump in, if we may, with verse chapter 10. I've got to get through Hosea because we've got all these other prophets and I'd like to get this finished before the Lord comes.

Let's, let's, let's, well, if you would just, just jump into verse 10. Okay. 1010 of Hosea.

When it is my desire, this is God speaking through the prophet Isaiah, I mean, Hosea. And when he uses the phrase them, he is talking primarily about Israel, the northern 10 tribes, whom he also frequently refers to as Ephraim.

And the reason he calls them Ephraim is because that is the most populated tribe of all the 10 tribes. It was the biggest tribe and I'm not sure about this, but I think that Ephraim is where the capital of the northern 10 tribes is located.

It's in Samaria and I think that's in Ephraim, the tribe of Ephraim. So let's just take off with, if we may, with verse 10. When it is my desire, I will chastise them.

[11:34] And this chastisement is, is a word that is used for training or child training. the Lord does not punish his children.

He punished Jesus so he wouldn't have to punish us. But the Lord does chastise his children and the chastisement is different from the punishment because chastisement is always for the benefit and the ultimate blessing of the recipient of the chastisement.

And it is that which is motivated with love. And he's going to chastise them and the peoples will be gathered against them when they are bound for their double guilt.

And Ephraim is a trained heifer that loves to thresh. He's using these metaphors as animals, the heifer that these people fully understood and he is likening Israel to these stubborn animals.

But I will come over her fair neck with a yoke. I will harness Ephraim. That means bring her back under control. Harness Ephraim.

[12:47] Judah will plow. Now Judah is the two southern tribes all originally belonging to Israel the twelve tribes but remember since the division took place in 931 B.C.

under Rehoboam the kingdom was divided into two sections ten tribes to the north two tribes to the south tribes to the north are referred to as Israel and that's a little confusing because many times in the Bible the whole twelve tribes are called Israel.

Sometimes it refers only to the ten tribes and then Judah is the two tribes of the south one is Judah the other is Benjamin but Benjamin is a tiny tribe Benjamin is where Jerusalem is located in the tribe of Benjamin and Judah is larger Jesus of course born in Bethlehem he is the lion of the tribe of what?

Judah he's from the tribe of Judah so Jacob will Judah will plow Jacob will harrow for himself sow with a view to righteousness reap in accordance with kindness break up your fallow ground for it is time to seek the Lord now fellas you know as well as I do that this whole book of Hosea is to be interpreted directly and historically of the nation of Israel and of Judah and I do not dispute that in fact I would go to the mat for that but there are always applications and principles that are abiding that are pertinent to all times and places and here is one of them when the text says it is time to seek the Lord is there an application here for the US of

A it seems that all we have been doing particularly for the last 10 or 20 years is finding different ways to get God out of everything to eliminate him completely the effort that is going on to secularize this nation is incredible and it seems that the only religion that there is any sympathy for is the religion of inclusivism that sees everybody on that same equal plane so that there is no single faith or belief system that is viable or that is acceptable or that is legitimate this is called this is called religious pluralism it sounds so good everybody's on the same plane all trails up the mountain lead to the top doesn't make any difference how you go and that legitimizes

[16:14] Islam it legitimizes Catholicism it legitimizes Protestantism it legitimizes Buddhism it legitimizes Hinduism it legitimizes everything and that is enormously appealing to the majority of the people after all doesn't the Bible say that God loves everyone it is amazing how they can find these passages when they serve their purpose but of course they'll only cherry pick those things that apply to what they want to prove and you can do that someone has said you can make the Bible say anything you want it's all in how you interpret it so we've got a situation here where in the United States and fellas this is something I've been dealing with mentally and there is something I guess there is something in me probably in my fallenness would like to say maybe there isn't any application here because

God is concerned and the one he has chosen to use and is going to use in the future is Israel and we don't find any place in the Bible where the United States seems to be involved in prophecy or anything like that so maybe we ought not to be concerned about because God's efforts for the redemptive thing is focused upon just Israel but what are we going to do with Jonah to whom was Jonah called Nineveh Gentiles probably wasn't a Jew in the city of Nineveh until Jonah got there

and God had a directive for these non-Jews these Ninevites and why did he call Jonah to go to them it was because Nineveh's wickedness had come up before the Lord what in the world does that mean does anybody's wickedness escape

God anywhere anyway anytime no but the only conclusion that I can draw from that is that the wickedness and the evil of Nineveh reached a point that God was no longer willing to tolerate and that's why he sent Jonah with that message you got 40 days to turn around and if you don't the axe is going to fall that was the message Jonah delivered and it was had to have been and does this mean there was no wickedness going on any place else of course not but it does mean that the evil in Nineveh had reached a crescendo and God was no longer his long suffering has expired no longer is he going to tolerate it and how close are we to that I do not have any idea of what numbers were involved in the evil in

Nineveh but I know what's involved here and we've got we've got two real big ones two real big ones and number one is our devaluation of human life the greatest scam the greatest scam that has been perpetrated upon this nation is one that says the murder of the unborn and even the newborn is the definition of women's health care God help us over 50 million over 50 million have been eliminated and don't you think for one moment that it was for any reason more than the convenience of the woman health care has got little or nothing to do with it but when it is couched in terms of women's health care pray tell me who in the world can be opposed to women's health care well that's where we are and if time had run out for

Nineveh 40 days I am not a prophet nor the son of a prophet I think the United States of America is already on extended time but I'm not setting any dates I wouldn't be foolish enough to do that but but one can only wonder how where are we in comparison to Nineveh where or when or how could we reach that threshold that God will allow the curtain to come down on the US of A and the item that I distributed this morning I ran out of the copies but I think most of you got it about our national obituary this is sobering stuff fellas and but you know what this is this is conflict this is the ongoing nature of conflict this is the way it is and and well let me let me get back to the text okay wow it is time to seek the

[22 : 42] Lord until he comes to rain righteousness on you you have plowed wickedness you have reaped injustice you have eaten the fruit of lies that could also be translated you have eaten the fruit of fake news if there is any place where truth is in embarrassing lack of supply it's in Washington D.C.

it is amazing how reckless men can be with the truth now fellas just want to make a simple distinction here there are our politicians who mislead us and that's okay I mean that's not okay but it's not intended when you mislead somebody when you mislead somebody you do it unintentionally you think you are giving them the real scoop even though it may be wrong your heart is right and your intentions are right but you're wrong and what you tell them is misleading that's one thing that's excusable for the simple reason that we're all capable of being wrong and exercising poor judgment and making faulty assumptions that we shouldn't make but we do it with the right motive so that's excusable but then there is the plain simple flat out lie which the one telling knows full well it is a lie and he still wants people to believe it and follow that lie that is inexcusable that's the falsehood that's being talked about here and that's what we're dealing with now it is you have eaten the fruit of lies what that means is the leadership of these people of Ephraim fed them lies and the people ate it they believed it and when you believe a lie the tendency is to act on it now if all you do is believe it but you don't do anything with it then it's kind of inert and doesn't go anywhere but when you act on it and step out on the basis of that lie believing it to be true then disaster follows and that's exactly what we're doing now we've got a lot of people in leadership who are feeding the public lies and you would be amazed how downright gullible the public can be if there is anything that this nation is really suffering from it is an uninformed public and fellas the thing that is so amazing about that is that there have never been so many avenues for the dissemination of information as there is today and there has never been so many people so poorly informed as today where how does that compute that is amazing and you know right here in these minor prophets

I don't even recall which one it is now I knew it when I was a younger man but I don't know where it is now maybe it's Daniel maybe it's not even in the minor prophets I think it's Daniel but anyway he said this that in the latter days knowledge shall increase I want you to note it doesn't say wisdom will increase it just says knowledge shall increase wisdom is the judicious application of knowledge and wisdom is what we're lacking we've got knowledge coming out our gills it's not knowledge we

need it's the wisdom you have eaten the fruit of lies because you have trusted in your way in your numerous warriors now nobody is more pro-military than I am and I say that as a proud veteran and I have no qualms about that and I know that I think Ronald

Reagan was right when he said peace through strength you've got to be strong enough so that no one will be stupid enough to take you on and the United States has been that for quite some time but fellas the salvation of this nation is not in our military and it's not in our missiles and it's not in our Star Wars defense and all the rest and yet that's where America tends to put it you know our bombs and our things are bigger than theirs and more than theirs and that's where we take a lot of our comfort and consolation and we ought not trust okay you've trusted in your warrior in your numerous warriors or mighty men your military experts and as I've said my hats off to our military experts I consider them heroes or potential heroes but they are not the base or the source of our deliverance therefore a tumult will arise among your people hey do we have a tumult today do we have a tumult today or what demonstrations factions it's incredible what's going on out there in the public different causes being espoused and different levels of violence being perpetrated upon people tumult will arise among your people and all your fortresses will be destroyed he's talking about the fortresses and the defenses of

Israel these northern ten tribes because they were buttressing everything and yet it's all going to be to no avail because the Assyrians are going to come down overrun their fortresses defeat the people reduce them to cannibalism and carry them away into northern captivity as Shalman destroyed Beth Beth Arbel on the day of battle when mothers were dashed in pieces with their children this is a form of human brutality that is unspeakable this harkens back to world war two when German soldiers Nazi soldiers threw Jewish babies one one to another and caught them with their bayonets unspeakable cruelty this talking about mothers dashed in pieces with their children some translations refer to that as women being ripped up with their children can you think of anything more barbaric than that than for these to insert a knife into the vagina of a woman and slice her up to her baby and then we're talking about a brutal cesarean operation and then murdering the baby as she writhes in pain and watches it fellas this is an unspeakable unimaginable kind of brutality these are human beings doing this to human beings where did we get the capacity for that this is evil this is thus it will be done to you at

[31 : 11] Bethel because of your great wickedness at dawn the king of Israel will be completely cut off now this was prophetic when it was uttered of course it's history now been long since fulfilled but this was prophetic at the time well we're not going to finish Hosea because the ladies have just told me that we are finished we we are finished because you are famished okay so anyway we'll we'll try our best to finish Hosea next week alright thank you all for your kind attention