

Transforming Daily

“ . . . there is no truth or mercy or knowledge of God in the land . . . ”

Hosea 4:1

The book of Hosea is traditionally held as the first book of the “Minor Prophets.” Said to be so because in contrast with the “Major Prophets,” Isaiah, Ezekiel, Jeremiah and Daniel, the writings of the “Minor Prophets,” are shorter in length. The books of the “Minor Prophets” are just as important as the “Major Prophets,” just not as long (with the exception of Daniel). As a matter of fact, the books of Hosea and Zechariah are longer (each having 14 chapters) than Daniel (which only has 12 chapters). The Christian, English Bible (distinguished as such to separate it from the Catholic Bible) designates the “Minor Prophets” as twelve separate books. In the Hebrew Old Testament, the “Minor Prophets,” “The Twelve,” as they are referred to, are one.

The book of Hosea has a single distinct message of God’s love toward His wayward children, Israel. This is demonstrated in that God tells Hosea to go and remarry his wife Gomer. Gomer strayed from Hosea and chased after other lovers who promised her things that are ungodly and less in value than those things of godly value that she already possessed and rejected. Hosea is a typification of God, in this picture, and Gomer is that of Israel. Israel has left following God for chasing after the ungodly things of foreign and surrounding nations. They acted disobediently, disrespectfully and irreverently. So did Gomer. And as Hosea’s love for Gomer is longsuffering, merciful, and faithful, so is God’s love for Israel.

The message of Hosea is specific to him and Gomer as it relates to God’s love for Israel. However, there are a couple universal principles in these pages that apply to the Christian. The New Testament believer is to behave as Hosea did with respect to sharing and showing forth to others the longsuffering, merciful, lovingkindness, and faithfulness of God. He or she is to demonstrate this attitude toward other believers as well as nonbelievers alike. Sounds easy, but it’s not. Also, the believer is to be reminded that it is possible for us to be distracted from the things of God and to be drawn aside by our own disobedient, disrespectful and irreverent ways. For this reason we are to remain vigilant and diligent students of God’s Word.

Are the things of God a high priority in your life? Are you vigilant against the things of the world that would move to undermine your fellowship with God? In Proverbs 29:18, it says (paraphrased) that the people perish for the lack of knowledge of God’s Word (revelation). Are you a diligent student of God’s Word? We need to be because it just might presently be the case, or real close to it, that there is no truth or mercy or knowledge of God in the land.