

Hosea – Class Three

Jezreel - The First Conception

Introduction

Let us continue in our searching of the scriptures in Hosea. In our last article we mentioned that the people of Israel in Hosea's time were already the "redeemed of the Lord". They were known as the "people of God" but their lives were filled with idol worship and devoid of God's glory. God's people needed to go deeper into God, into His death and into His Life. The prophet Hosea's union with Gomer (a woman from Israel who lived in harlotry) did not represent salvation at new birth, but salvation from self. Hosea's name means "salvation" in that he is a picture of Christ our Husband who saves us from ourselves by bringing us (through union) into the deeper work of His Cross. Gomer not only entered into union with Hosea as his wife, but she conceived three times bringing forth two sons and a daughter. Each conception represents a believer becoming fruitful in the knowledge of the Lord (*II Pet. 1:8*). In our last discussion we dealt with the importance of comprehending the terms, "knowing, perceiving, conception and fruitfulness" and how they apply to our study in Hosea. As we begin to see the importance of going beyond head knowledge into the intimacy of knowing the Lord as His bride, we will begin to experientially know the love of Christ and become filled with His fullness (*Eph. 3:19*). This knowing of the Lamb we are married to (*Rev. 21:9*) is a process, and the book of Hosea is a wonderful resource to see the process laid out step by step, conception by conception. There is also an order to this process of knowing the Lord and becoming fruitful in our union with Him. For these reasons we are going to examine, in order, each of Gomer's conceptions.

Hosea reveals God's heart of love for His church. Rather than condemning His people in their adulterous state, He joined Himself to them in such a manner as to sow them into His death. The first fruit of Hosea's union with Gomer was a son named "Jezreel" which means "God will sow". Here we see that the planting of the Lord did not begin with the sowing of His life into us, but with sowing us into His death (*Roms. 6:3-11*). It is of paramount importance that we see this order, otherwise fruit-bearing will stop here. We cannot bring forth of Christ through us until we have conceived of our death with Him. We must first realize that we are barren in our own ability to bring forth life, and that it must be Christ in us. All of our hope to glorify God is only through Christ in us (*Col. 1:27*). Romans chapter 7 deals with Paul conceiving of this union into Christ's death in a real way, and finding the only path to fruitfulness. Paul had to conceive of this in order to be a vessel that could eventually bring forth Christ crucified in ever greater measures. It would be one thing for Paul to write about it and preach of it, and another things for him to personally conceive of it and bring forth fruit from experientially knowing the Lord in this application of the Cross.

The First Conception

***“So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim; which conceived, and bare him a son. And the LORD said unto him, Call his name Jezreel; for yet a little while, and I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu, and will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel. And it shall come to pass at that day, that I will break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel.”
(Hosea 1:3-5).***

Let us now continue to look at how “Jezreel” represents Christ Crucified in a specific view that, in the power of the Holy Spirit, we can conceive of and bring forth in our lives. “Jezreel”, is the name of the first child Gomer conceived with Hosea. Jezreel is interpreted “God will sow”. The “sowing” that this first view of Jezreel represents is us being sown into Christ’s death wherein we were crucified with Christ. To truly know, conceive of, and bring forth of this aspect of our union into Christ (which is union into His death) opens the door for all other knowing and fruitfulness. The history of Israel’s king Jehu and his slaughter in a valley named Jezreel is the specific event Hosea refers to when his son Jezreel was born, “And the LORD said unto him, Call his name Jezreel; for yet a little while, and I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu, and will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel” (Hos. 1:4). God’s first interest in dealing with Israel, and Gomer’s first conception as Hosea’s wife is dealing with the way in which Israel apprehends and applies the need for death, “And it shall come to pass at that day, that I will break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel” (Hos 1:5).

Jehu and the Blood of Jezreel

Read 11 Kings 10:1-29

“So Jehu slew all that remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel, and all his great men, and his kinsfolks, and his priests, until he left him none remaining (II Kings 10:11).

“Thus Jehu destroyed Baal out of Israel” (2Kings 10:28).

Hosea prophesized during the tragic and devastating final years of the Northern Kingdom. It was at time of idolatry and harlotry from the living God. The people’s hearts had turned away from God unto Baal worship. They had forgotten their God. Many years before Hosea a man named Jehu had reigned as king over Israel (841-814BC). During Jehu’s reign as king he performed a mighty slaughter in a valley named “Jezreel”. Jezreel is a large fertile plain and inland valley south of the Lower Galilee region in Israel. This valley of Jezreel became the bloody battle-field where king Jehu utterly ended the seed of evil king Ahab, Jezebel, and all the priests of Baal. It is a wonderful picture in type and shadow of the Cross annihilating the old adamic nature. Yet, as with every shadow, it does not give a perfectly clear image of the Cross, but it does point us to realities about our death with Christ and how we are to know that death. Some of these “realities” can be seen in the motivations of King Jehu. Even though God had ordained a specific end to the seed of Ahab and the worship of Baal through the prophecy of Elijah, and God had a prophet anoint Jehu as King, none of these facts justify the method and spirit in which Jehu accomplished these things.

King Jehu's zeal was legendary as he rode into Jezreel to slaughter all that remained of the house of Ahab and the priests of Baal (II Kings 10:16). This man Jehu single-handedly tried to cut off and cut out from Israel all that was of the evil seed corrupting them. His heroic attempt was even commended by God (II King 10:30). Yet, after all that bloodshed and battle, King Jehu was unchanged. King Jehu was committed to apply the cross to everyone else but himself! He was keenly aware of the outward lack around him, but unconcerned with his own inward state. Although Jehu raged against all that was evil in Israel during his famous rampage at Jezreel, at the end of his life Jehu was found worshipping false gods, with no heart to walk in the way of the Lord; "But Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the LORD God of Israel with all his heart: for he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, which made Israel to sin" (II Kings 10:30). The great commitment and zeal for the Cross that was found in this man made no difference in his own life. Although he tried to cut sin out of Israel, he could not cut it out of himself. The very things he warred against were found as the guiding forces of his life in old age. How many of us have attempted to "crucify ourselves" and get rid of all the corruption of the flesh and idol worship within? Although our personal zeal to die to self may be legendary, self cannot crucify self. Only Christ could and did crucify in Himself all of the old seed of Adam (Romans 5:10, I Corinthians 15:22). **It is only through union into His death that we will truly be made free from self and alive unto God through Christ.**

Avenging The Blood of Jehu

"And the LORD said unto him, Call his name Jezreel; for yet a little while, and I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu, and will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel" (Hosea 1:4).

There is only one death that God accepts, and that is the death of His Son. God required an "avenging of the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu" - Hosea 1:4. The Word of God declares Christ Crucified, and all that is not out from Him must be avenged, removed, and brought into the Son.

There was a need to avenge the blood shed at Jezreel upon the house of Jehu because of the spirit in which Jehu shed the blood. Because Jehu was not Jesus, he did it out of a wrong motive, even though he was fulfilling the Word of the Lord prophesied through Elijah (II Kings 10:10). Not only Jehu but all of us will be motivated by something other than the spotless Lamb when we seek to deal with flesh apart from Christ's death, whether it be flesh in ourselves or in others. No other death than Christ's death removed the vile seed of Adam. No other sword than the one that slaughtered the Son of God can remove Baal worship from Israel. No other blood than the blood of the Lamb can be shed to crucify an old creation and remove it forever.

Jehu, therefore, can be a picture of man trying to "crucify others and himself" in his desire to rid the land of bad seed (Ahab/Adam). The kind of destruction that comes from our own swords needs avenging for we are the very corruption that we are trying to remove through

death. Yes, the house of Ahab (Adam) needed utter removal before Israel could have functioned as God's home again... but JEHU is not the man to do it. Only the man Jesus Christ could accomplish the task through His death after He joined to us on His Cross. In THAT DAY, the day of His Cross, the true end would come and now has come.

Yes, the destruction of the old man was a valley of death and slaughter, and the field truly was soaked with blood, but was the blood of the Lamb that was shed for us. The battle belongs to the Lord. Only through identification into His death can we defeat the old man, the seed of the old creation. Our weapons must be spiritual and not carnal, therefore our victory will only be found as we embrace and conceive of His death for us through the power of the Holy Spirit. But it is not just a "for us" that Christ's death accomplished, but an "as us" because He was joined to us, and we most certainly died in Him that day, the day of His cross.

Christ Crucified sows Himself into death that others may receive life. In Hosea's time, God's people were uniting with the methods of the foreign nations around them to bring forth increase (Baal was a fertility God). They choose idols above the living God to find answers to their question and help for their needs. This same heart condition still exists today. Instead of being crucified with Christ many want to counsel their flesh back into a false sense of peace. Instead of laying down our lives for one another, we may choose to "talk it out" and "find a Christian compromise" to the unjust situation. Just like Israel of old, many Christians would rather embrace the ways of the heathen nations around them than go the way of the Cross. Gomer stands as a sign to us. In the midst of a rebellious people, laden with her own sin and shame, she was joined with Hosea and brought forth fruit. The answer can only be found in a PERSON and not a method. It's not what we do, but to whom we are joined that makes all the difference. HIS death must become our death in real and practical ways.

A New Headship

Gomer must first see that she is no longer under the headship of Jehu but Hosea. In order for the people of God to be saved from their wicked ways, they need to be joined to Another. Jehu was a king in Israel during part of Hosea's prophecy. He represents man's way of dealing with sin and evil in the land. It was a false Cross done in another Spirit than that of Christ Crucified. If Israel was joined to that cross under that king, then surely the blood was yet on their own hands. Whatever is in the king flows into his kingdom. Likewise, whatever is in the head is meant to flow into the body. If there was to be any hope for Israel, she must first marry her Savior (Hosea's name can be interpreted "salvation" and also "Jesus"). Her only hope is that what is in Him will flow into her. For that to happen she must conceive of His Word, and in so doing receive of His Spirit and way. This is what Gomer represents to Israel and to us today. Gomer is someone who was hopelessly off in sin and self, as far from God as she could be. But Hosea married her, and through oneness Hosea began to sow his mind and spirit into her.

Final Thoughts

Before we can partake of the real Cross, our false crosses and fleshly ways must be cut off. The people of God in Hosea's time may have borne the name of the one true God, but they followed Baal in their ways, and the headship of Jehu in how they dealt with sin and flesh. Is it that much different in today's Christian culture that surrounds us? How much of what is declared as Gospel truly lifts up Christ Crucified as the way? Do we really allow the Lamb to be our Head and to give us His mind and spirit in how we proceed, or do we simply go with the flow trusting that it must be ok because everyone is doing it or because we have the correct terminology? Back in Hosea's time and now today we need union with our Crucified Husband, union into His way, His Nature and His Cross. In order for that to happen we must cry out for conception and not just information. We must press in to know Him in a way that goes past knowledge into union and life, like Gomer represents. No matter what our condition, Jesus died so that He could sanctify us in Himself to the uttermost (Hebrews 7:25). Once these basic first steps are taken... union and conception... there is potential for a total conversion and abundant fruit. The enemy of union with Christ is the belief that we are righteous enough to do it for God instead of through God. The enemy of conception is satisfaction with information, inspiration, illumination or anything else short of His Life revealed in us. If we do not cry out and press in to know Christ in these first steps, our journey into Hosea must end at chapter one. To him that is faithful with little, more will be given. Every conception in the book of Hosea is a progression in knowing Christ Crucified as Life. Next we will look at "Lor-ruhamah" Gomer's second child. May the Lord increase your faith as you find encouragement in the heart of Jesus for His Bride. His deep desire is to bring us into His fullness, to have those who will receive His mind and spirit and be as those that bear His nature in this world. Remember, each step in this progression is vital to the next step.

Jezreel

*I see a field drenched with blood
Not my own but the precious Son's.
All battalions and cannons lay
Besides the soldiers that died that day.*

*None could conquer such a foe.
Though we with valiance try to do so...
Strong with vengeance we seek to slay
The evils of mankind each day.*

*But our bloody fields make earth's pang's grow
As from the soil she cries and groans.
Such death to her will never bring
What can only come from the Son's sowing.*

*So great Jezreel appears to bear
Vengeance upon King Jehu's snare
Who sought to purge the land from sin
with sword in hand, swung upon both priest and kin.*

*The carnage lay, the slaughter complete,
The sword full of blood and meat.
An end had come, like Elijah shared,
But somehow Jehu himself was spared.*

*Ahab's seed lay there dead,
his seventy sons had lost their heads.
Priest and friend found no escape,
The sword upon Baal's prophets would devastate.*

*But do not be deceived my friend
To our flesh there is no end
Until the Cross of Christ is seen
All our struggles are in vanity.
Only He can purge this land
Through the death of a Lamb
Sowing Himself on a Tree
After He joined to you and me.*

*His Blood was shed and wet the soil,
Eradicating evil's toil
A generation crucified,
The Seed of Adam in Him died.*

*We died with Him that bloody day,
He fought our battle all the way.
God will sow His Son for us,
And we are sown in His true Cross.*

Jezreel...

The Wounded Land

*The fire burns
The sword a silver streak
As Cross is applied even unto king and priest*

*The bow is broken
Its mark is met
As Ahab's seed is devoured and rent*

*Their ashes speak
Rendered flesh bellows,
"Shall we be found slain
to return to Assyria's fellows?"*

*God forbid the course of such battle
Should lead us back to adamic babble*

*The dead shall live
Yes live in His sight
As Christ revives by Spirit's delight*

*The Son shall rise and we shall be healed
As His Life fills this wounded lands fields*

Lesson Three Homework

1. Explain the spiritual significance behind Gomer's first conception named "Jezreel"
2. Why is it vital to first conceive of Jezreel before you can bring forth more fruit unto God?
3. In what ways is Romans chapter 7 a picture of Paul conceiving of Jezreel?
4. Why did God want to avenge the blood of the house of Jehu?
5. In what ways can our methods be just like Jehu's?
6. Explain specifically why Jezreel had to be the first conception. Also comment on why Jezreel was a son and not a daughter.
7. In your own words, describe how this sharing affects your own personal union with Christ in relationship to your becoming fruitful in the knowledge of the Lord.