

LESSONS THIS QUARTER

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|-------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1) 04 Sept 2022 | Amos 01-02 | Listen to God |
| 2) 11-Sept | Amos 03-04 | Turn to God |
| 3) 18 Sept | Amos 05-07 | Seek God |
| 4) 25 Sept | Amos 08-09 | Hope in God |
| 5) 02 Oct | Jonah 01-02 | No Escape |
| 6) 09 Oct | Jonah 03-04 | No Compassion |
| 7) 16 Oct | Hosea 01-03 | The Unfaithful Bride |
| 8) 23 Oct | Hosea 04-07 | The Hollow Promises |
| 9) 30 Oct | Hosea 08-12 | The Sin Harvested |
| 10) 06 Nov | Hosea 13-14 | The Restoration Promised |
| 11) 13 Nov | Micah 01-03 | Leaders Needed |
| 12) 20 Nov | Micah 04-06 | Humble Beginnings |
| 13) 27 Nov | Micah 07 | Hope Found |

INTRODUCTION

- We are so easily distracted from what is really important in life. The lust of our eyes and our appetite for temporal things can stunt our spiritual growth at a minimum, and worst, cause life-long ruin
- When riches & comfort increase man also has a tendency to forget God. So how do we prepare to weather both good times & bad times without forgetting God or forsaking Him?

| Passage | Comments |
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| Hosea 13:1-3 | <p>Ephraim's State is Compared Before & After Idolatry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v1. When Ephraim once spoke, all of Israel listened; But Ephraim's downfall was mostly due to pornography • vv2-3. Ephraim's condition grew worse & worse as they became addicted to sex through Baal worship |
| Quick Note on Addiction Release | <p>Addictions to Pornography, Drugs, Food, TV, Video Games, Sports, and even Work Can Devastate A Life, a Family, even a Whole Society if Left Unchecked</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God holds individuals accountable for their sins: "Sin's desire is for you, but you must master it".....Gen 4:7 • We must be willing to forsake our sins: "choose this day whom you will serve".....Josh 24:15 • We must flee temptation2Tim 2:22 • We must replace bad habits with good: e.g., "stop stealing, and start working and giving".....Eph 4:28 • We must focus on godly things.....Phil 4:8 • Seek help: "call for the elders".....James 5:14 • Confess sins to others appropriately.....James 5:16 • Pursue Righteousness.....1Tim 6:11 |
| 13:4-11 | <p>Ephraim was to Have ONE Addiction – To Serve God</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v4. God was to be the only saving God for Israel • v6. BUT when life became easy, Israel "forgot" God • vv7-11. God's recourse to correct Israel was to turn on them, rip them apart, and totally discombobulate them |
| God's Testing of Israel came in various forms. Would we pass such a test? | <p>God tested Israel with Blessings and with Trials to expose Israel's true heart – Most cases, Israel failed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exod 16:4 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; ...that I may test them, whether or not they will walk in My instruction." • Deut 8:2 "You shall remember all the way which the LORD your God has led you in the wilderness these forty years, that He might humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not." |
| 13:12-16 | <p>God Removes Compassion from the Equation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vv12-13. Israel's sins were national sins needing a quick, decisive, national response that involved war • v14-16. God refused to rescue Israel from their final fate, where even pregnant women were "ripped open" • If you rescue a fool (e.g., an angry person) once, you must do it again & again (they never learn)..... Pr 19:19 |

| Passage | Comments |
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| Tough Question | <p>How should we respond when an atheist claims that God is "a misogynistic, homophobic, racist, infanticidal, genocidal, filicidal, pestilential, megalomaniacal, sadomasochistic, capriciously malevolent bully"?</p> <p>- The God Delusion, by Richard Dawkins</p> |
| Short Answer | <p>Why should an atheist even care since an atheistic view has no morals, no consequences, and no reason for logic. For a more detailed response, see link: Atheist Response</p> |
| 14:1-9 | <p>Yet, God Once Again Begged Israel to Return to Him</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v2. God even gave Israel the words to pray: "Take away our sin, accept our confession, and receive as restitution our repentant prayers" – The Message • v3. Basically God says no government and no technology can rescue the weakest members in society (the orphans) when the worst happens – Only He can • vv4-8. If Israel were to honestly repent and pray the prayer in verse 2, then God would take steps to heal them of their idolatrous and perverse addictions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ v4. His love/blessings will flow freely to them ♦ v5. Israel would begin to flourish once again ♦ v6. Israel's good reputation would be restored ♦ v7. Israel would also be prosperous once more ♦ v8. God would once again produce fruit for Israel • v9. Hosea left us with a few things to consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ A wise man will put the facts together (a wicked man does not consider the consequences of his actions) ♦ God's ways are always righteous, though some may have to pay a horrendous price for the sins of others ♦ The righteous will walk in obedience to God's word ♦ While sinners will pursue the ways of death |

CONCLUSION / APPLICATIONS

- Unfortunately, the righteous sometimes die along with the wicked when God allows the wicked to prevail (Ecc 7:15, 8:14), and sometimes the righteous die because of wicked actions of others
- Yet God is still righteous in all He does, even while allowing personal, regional, and global catastrophes and atrocities
- We should have the same response Peter had when he was asked if he, too, would forsake the Lord when confronted with difficulty: "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life.".....John 6:68

NEXT WEEK: Micah 1-3. Government and religious leaders do not become evil and corrupt leaders over night. Usually, they start with small ethical issues, then they migrate over to whomever pays them the most. Same in Micah's days. The rulers of his day were as corrupt as we see in our day and times.

