

## In View of God's Mercy... (Hosea 11:1-11 & Titus 3:3-8 & Luke 10:25-37)

30-July-2017

We're looking at Hosea chapter 11 this morning, so please open up your Bibles there. You have an outline to jot down some notes, if that helps you concentrate. Let me ask God for His guidance first. Let's pray...

### Intro

There's a story of a man called Fred who owed his retired Father - \$10,000

Fred was really struggling to pay it back

One day, out of the blue, His Dad phoned him up at work and said,

Fred, that \$10,000 you owe me, don't worry about it, you don't have to pay me back - it's a gift!

Fred was so pleased - he thanked his Dad and hung up the phone

A couple of days later, Fred remembered that his two sisters both owed him \$100 - he phoned them every day for 2 weeks, harassing them to pay him back

Fred's Dad got to hear about this - when his 2 daughters called him up in tears Fred's Dad was not happy with Fred

And he considered whether, he should let Fred off with the \$10,000 after all!

A version of that story is actually in the Bible. In Matthew 18:21-35.

Fred was shown great mercy

But he wasn't very merciful to his sisters, was he?

(pause)

What is mercy anyway?

### [PowerPoint 1-Mercy Definition]

1. Compassion or kindness shown towards an offender, an enemy or other person
2. Discretionary power to be compassionate to someone - even if they don't deserve it
3. Compassion shown to someone whom it's within your power to punish

Hosea chapter 11 is all about *God's Mercy to Israel*

It can be broken up into 3 sections

### [PowerPoint 2-God's Mercy]

*God's Previous Mercy to Israel (vv1-4)*

*God's Mercy in Hosea's Time (vv5-9)*

*And God's Future Mercy (vv10-11)*

### **God's Previous Mercy (vv1 -4)**

In verse 1, *God* reminds Israel of the time when they were a new fledgling nation, in slavery in Egypt, ruled by Pharaoh, and how He called them out of Egypt

### [PowerPoint 3-Previous Mercy]

And treated them like a child - loved them - taught them how to walk with Him in verse 3 - took them in His loving arms and healed them of their terrible time in slavery in Egypt.

He showed them great mercy and compassion - and loved them to bits - like a parent loves a little child - and holds the child to their cheek.

God's reminding Israel - of their history - and how He was merciful to them before

Israel had forgotten what God had done for them in the past and how He showed them great mercy? And in verse 2 - they've gone off sacrificing to false gods!

What about us?

Have we forgotten the previous when God was merciful to us?

Just like Fred in our story - forgot occasions how merciful his Dad was - and didn't apply that mercy to his sisters?

(pause)

### **God's Mercy in Hosea's time (vv5-9)**

Then in verse 5 - God asks Israel - do you really want to go back into that same kind of slavery you had in Egypt - where you weren't under your own rule - you were under a foreign ruler?

### **[PowerPoint 4-Mercy in Hosea]**

Well - that's what's going to happen Israel - because of your rebellion and because you've forgotten the mercy I showed you before - you're going to end up being ruled by another foreign country - this time Assyria

It's not going to be pretty - in verse 6 - there will be battles in your cities and your false prophets - the ones who've led you astray will be wiped out

Because in verse 7 - you're so determined to turn away from me - your One and Only True God - I'm not going to be able to speak highly (exalt) of you anymore

None of that sounds like mercy - does it?

But look at verse 8

God says - How can He give up on Ephraim (the biggest tribe)? How can He hand over, Israel?

It's a bit like a parent with a wayward rebellious teenager

The parent loves the child - but not the behaviour

And it's so hard to give up on your child - your own flesh and blood

So God says in verse 8 - He won't treat them like these 2 cities Admah and Zeboyim - these were cities that were mentioned along with Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis 14 - and destroyed along with Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis 19 - because of their wickedness.

But God says - I'm not going to completely destroy you Israel - like I did with those cities

There's God's mercy - right there!

Yes - there has to be punishment - but not complete destruction!

That's what God is saying in verse 9 -

He won't completely devastate Ephraim like that

Why?

Because as He says in verse 9

He is God - not a man!

He's Holy

God is different to humankind!

How?

Quickly turn to Numbers 23:19 which tells us that:

God is not human, that he should lie,  
 not a human being, that he should change his mind.

Does he speak and then not act?

Does he promise and not fulfill?

So God' doesn't lie - like we do

He doesn't change His mind like we do - and let emotions rule Him like we do!

If He says He is going to do something He does it - we don't always!

If He promises something - it happens! - We don't always keep our promises do we?

So...

Yes God will punish our sin and rebellion against Him -

Yes there will be consequences for that sin and rebellion

But equally - He loves us and He we will also be merciful

### **God's Future Mercy to Israel (vv10-11)**

Because of God's great love for Israel

He makes a promise in verses 10 and 11 of Hosea chapter 11 - so turn back there again...

God promises that there will be a time when His beloved children - Israel - will come back to Him with fear and trembling

**[PowerPoint 5-Future Mercy]**

He will be like a roaring lion - and they will be like little lion cubs - hearing Daddy Lion calling - and coming back to Him - that's in verse 10

He says in verse 11 - they will come back from Egypt - back from slavery and back from exile in Assyria - like little sparrows and doves - and He will settle them back in their homes again

What we must realize is that when Israel is exiled to Assyria - 10 tribes are dispersed - and lost. They don't exist today. What's left in Israel today - is the remaining two tribes of Judah and Benjamin.

But what God is promising here is future mercy - future restoration for Israel. When?

We don't know when!

But Revelation chapter 10 describes this future restoration

Verse 3 of Revelation 10 - is a fulfilment of verse 10 in Hosea 11 here!

Israel will be restored when Jesus returns!

(pause)

### **God's Mercy to Us (Titus 3:3-8)**

Well that's all very well for Israel

What about us?

According to God's word

**[PowerPoint 6-Mercy to us]**

The payment for our sin is death (Romans 6:23)

Our sin means we die physically one day - and die spiritually - because sin breaks our relationship with God

How do we get mercy?

There's a story of a mother asking Napoleon to pardon her son

Napoleon told her that her son had committed the same offence twice and that justice demanded that her son be put to death

The mother explained: "But I don't ask for justice - I plead for mercy"

Napoleon replied "But your son does not deserve mercy"

The mother cried: "It would not be mercy, if my son deserved it, that's why I ask for mercy"

Napoleon said: "Well then, I will have mercy on your son"

And he spared the son's life!

(pause)

We too - don't deserve mercy!

Which brings us to our NT passage from Titus 3:3-8

Please turn there now...

Verse 3 describes our sinful rebellion:

Foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another.

Verse 4 describes God's response to our sinful rebellion, through Jesus:

The kindness and love of God our Savior appeared

Despite our sinful rebellion - God shows kindness and love in sending Jesus

And verse 5 says:

He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit

That's mercy!

### **Our Response (Luke 10:27-35)**

So what should our response be to this mercy?

If you were down at Soldiers Beach and you got caught in a rip and you were drowning - and someone came and rescued you from drowning - you'd never forget it would you? You'd tell the story over and over? You'd be forever grateful - wouldn't you?

Jesus has saved us from drowning in our sin -

[PowerPoint 7-Our Response]

Yet if we're honest -

Are we really that grateful?

(pause)

The apostle Paul - writes a terrific chapter - in Romans - chapter 12

It starts with these words:

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy,

And then it goes on to describe what our response should be to God's mercy

We're not going to look at that chapter this morning - you can read it at home this afternoon

But I want to pick up on Paul's words

"In view of God's mercy"

In view of God's mercy - what should our response be this morning?

Well that's where our 3<sup>rd</sup> Bible passage this morning comes in - from Luke chapter 10:27-35...

Please turn there now...

Jesus tells a parable in response to a lawyer who asks the question

"Who is my neighbour?"

And it's a surprising parable

A man is beaten up on the road to Jericho and left for dead

A priest comes along and doesn't help the injured man

A religious Levite man comes along and doesn't help the injured man

So the lawyer guy's probably thinking Jesus is going to say - a lawyer or a Pharisee comes along and helps

But no - Jesus says - it's actually a Samaritan who comes along and helps!

The lawyer guys probably thinking

Are you kidding Jesus - a Samaritan! We Jews - don't even talk to Samaritan's

In fact - Jews and Samaritans hated each other!

If Jesus told the parable today

He might say

A Catholic Priest came along and didn't help the injured man

Then a Presbyterian minister came along and didn't help the injured man

But then the person who helped - depending on who our society hates most

It might be Muslim who stopped and helped

Or a bikey - or a transgender person, or a LGBTI person and so on!

You pick!

(pause)

And notice in the parable Jesus doesn't answer the lawyer's question

"Who is my neighbour?"

Jesus actually asks His own question

"Which one of these three was a neighbour?"

So the point is

It's not so much - us asking ourselves "who our neighbour is"

But asking ourselves - "Are we a neighbour to everyone"

That's our response this morning

In view of God's mercy

In view of God's mercy - in allowing Jesus to die a cruel death on a cross - for our sins -

Will we be a neighbour to everyone?

And not be selective!

Will we respond in mercy - by showing mercy to everyone - just as Jesus has shown extraordinary mercy to us?

(pause)

Look how the lawyer answers Jesus question - "which of these three was a neighbour?"

The lawyer can't even bring himself to use the word - "Samaritan" - the lawyer simply says "the one who had mercy on him"

But look at Jesus' command to the lawyer

"Go and do likewise"

In other words - go and be like the Samaritan

That's what our response should be this morning

In view of God's mercy - Go and do likewise - Go and be like a Samaritan!

(pause)

So here's 2 challenges this morning

1. This week and beyond - look for opportunities to be a Samaritan - in showing mercy to someone - we may well lead them into a saving relationship with our Lord Jesus
2. Write down the name of someone - you will show mercy to. It will be liberating and exciting and pleasing to God!

Let's pray...