

G'Day Church Family!

It would be great to have your Bibles opened up to Hosea chapter 8

There's the usual outline in the bulletin to follow and take notes, if you wish

Recap

Just a quick recap from last week

We used metaphors and similes to show what Israel and we are like:

[Powerpoint 1-Metaphors/Similes]

Hosea 7 – What Israel and we are like...

Metaphors:

Ephraim is a flat loaf not turned over (v8)

His hair is sprinkled with gray but he doesn't notice (v9)

Similes:

They are adulterers burning like an oven (v4)

Their hearts are like an oven (v6)

All of them are as hot as an oven (v7)

Ephraim is like a dove (v11)

Israel – they are like a faulty bow

We came to the conclusion that despite what Israel and we are like - God longs to redeem us (Hosea 7:13)

And so we had some metaphors for what God is and what God and His son are like

[Powerpoint 2-God]

What God IS (Hosea 7:13c & Titus 2:11-15)

God longs to redeem them (us) (Hosea 7:13c)

- God is like a pawn-shop ticket
- God's grace is a free gift
- Salvation is Jesus on the Cross
- Jesus is like a Superhero!
- Jesus purifies us like babies' bottles in a sterilising unit!

And so because Jesus purifies us

I left us with some homework

[Powerpoint 3-Homework]

I was once a ...

I am now ...

I want to be ...

I didn't receive any post, or emails, or phone calls, or any papers before church.

So, I guess they're coming - right?

Intro

Despite the fact that God redeems us and purifies us

There's still a problem...

There's consequences for Israel's sin and rebellion against God

And there's consequences for our sin and rebellion against God

[Powerpoint 4a-Verse 7]

That's what Hosea chapter 8 is all about

The key verse is verse 7:

"They sow the wind

and reap the whirlwind..."

So the principle in play here in this verse and in this chapter is

The principle of sowing and reaping

Israel are reaping and will reap the consequences of the sin and rebellion they have sown over many years!

I want to suggest - this morning - that there are 3 laws about sowing and reaping

- and these 3 laws come out of our NT passage from Galatians which we'll be

looking at in a few minutes. The 3 laws are:

[Powerpoint 4b-3 laws]

1. You always reap what you sow
2. You always reap more than what you sow
3. You always reap later than when you sow

Taking a farming example:

1. You sow apple seeds - you get apple trees - not pear trees - and not orange trees - *you always reap what you sow*
2. You start off with tiny apple seeds - and you get oodles and oodles of apples - *you always reap more than what you sow*
3. It will take 4-8 years to grow an apple tree - *so you always reap later than when you sow*

Israel's Sowing and Reaping (Hosea 8:1-14)

So let's look at what Israel sowed in Hosea chapter 8 - and see what they reaped (will reap) as a consequence...

[Powerpoint 5-Blessings/Curses]

And let's also note that in general terms, the Israelites were warned in Deuteronomy 28 - that they would be blessed for obeying God - and cursed for disobeying God

And in fact in Deut 28:49 - God warned them what would happen if they disobeyed Him...

49 The LORD will bring a nation against you from far away, from the ends of the earth, like an eagle swooping down...

And here in verse 1 of Hosea chapter 8 - there is a trumpet warning - like an alarm bell to Israel - that this eagle is coming their way - the Assyrian invasion is looming

So what have Israel done?

[Powerpoint 6-Broken covenant]

In verses 1-3-**They have broken the covenant, rebelled against the law of God and rejected what is good**

They have sowed - rejecting God and His law - and in return they reap rejection from God - they sow rejection - they reap rejection - *you always reap what you sow*

They cry out to God in v2 "Our God, we acknowledge you" - but it's just words because in v3 - they've rejected what is good

They sow rejection - they reap more rejection and also oppression from an enemy - *you always reap more than you sow*

This happened shortly after Hosea's time - when in 722BC - the Assyrians invaded - Israel - *you always reap later than you sow!*

Are we sowing rejection and rebellion of God's law and rejecting what is good? As a nation? As individuals? What will we reap?

(pause)

In **V4-They set up illegal kings and princes without God's approval -**

[Powerpoint 7- Illegal kings]

Remember when the Northern and Southern Kingdoms split into Israel and Judah The 10 tribes of Israel set up their own King in the North, King Jeroboam - but it was God who appointed David and kings and house of Judah, in the South, as rightful kings of the nation

The 10 tribes were not satisfied with God's kings so they installed their own

They reaped what they sowed - king after king of Israel (North) were not only illegal (not God ordained) but they were all corrupt and ungodly kings - *you always reap more than you sow* - read the books of Kings to find out!

And when they are taken captive by Assyria - they have an even more corrupt and ungodly king to rule over them - *you always reap later than you sow*

Are we sowing anything illegal, corrupt or ungodly? As a nation? As individuals?

What will we reap?

(pause)

[Powerpoint 8-Idols]

V5-6 - **They use silver and gold to make idols** - they even made a gold calf in Samaria. God tells Samaria (capital city of Northern Kingdom) to throw out its calf idol - a reference to 1 Kings 20 when they made a calf idol. Here's how it happened - ²⁶ Jeroboam thought to himself, "The kingdom will now likely revert to the house of David. ²⁷ If these people go up to offer sacrifices at the temple of the LORD in Jerusalem, they will again give their allegiance to their lord, Rehoboam king of Judah. They will kill me and return to King Rehoboam."

²⁸ After seeking advice, the king made two golden calves. He said to the people, "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Here are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt." ²⁹ One he set up in Bethel, and the other in Dan. ³⁰ And this thing became a sin; the people came to worship the one at Bethel and went as far as Dan to worship the other.

This calf God tells them to - in v6 - it will be broken into pieces just like the one the Israelites made in the time of Moses

Using a metaphor - the calf of Samaria - stands as a picture of Israel's idolatry - all their idols of idolatry will be broken in pieces when Assyria invades!

And they will be taken off to Assyria - where there are even more idols and even more false gods to worship - *you always reap more than you sow - and you always reap later than you sow*

Are we sowing idols for ourselves? As a nation? As individuals? What will we reap?

More idols?

(pause)

[Powerpoint 9-Unwise friendships]

In verses 8-10 - **Israel makes unwise friendships and Alliances with Assyria** - and other nations - they want to sow a friendship with them - and become like them - even swallowed up by them - they sell themselves to these nations - and then become part of them - even oppressed by them. *You always reap what you sow - and more besides - and always later*

Are we sowing unwise friendships? As a nation? As individuals? What will we reap?

More unwise friendships?

(pause)

[Powerpoint 10-Empty religion]

Then in verses 11-13-**Israel has empty and corrupt religious worship** - sin altars which are meant to be for presenting sin offerings become altars for sinning - they ignore the laws of God He has written for them - and their sacrifices are not

genuine - just lip service - they've forgotten their Maker and trusted in palaces - even Judah has trusted in fortified cities - instead of trusting in God - their maker

They are consumed by self-reliance - they trust in themselves not God - so God hands them over to themselves - and they are consumed by fire

Do we sow empty religious worship? Do we sow distrust in God and trust in ourselves instead? As a nation? As individuals? Is Sunday a day-off? A leisure day or is it really for God? Are Easter and Christmas just holidays? Is our worship about us or about God? Is our worship empty lip service to God rather than heartfelt? What will we reap?

Response (Galatians 6:1-10)

We need a response to this potential problem of sowing and reaping the wrong things - don't we?

Our NT passage in Galatians 6 has the response

So please turn to Galatians chapter 6 - we'll be looking at verses 1 to 10:

Paul gives 2 choices on how to live

Paul mentions one way - Living by Spirit in v1 and v8 - Living by the Spirit - is the way Paul wants us to live

The other way is - not living by Spirit - but living by the flesh and by worldly desires - which Paul also mentions in v8

And I just want us to focus on verses 7 to 10 this morning

Paul gives the rule in v7

⁷Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.

[Powerpoint 11-Response 2 ways]

Then Paul gives two ways to sow

Sowing from the flesh - in v8 - which reaps destruction which means permanent separation from God which means Hell

So for example...

Sowing hatred - reaps more hatred

Sowing war - reaps more wars

Sowing judgmentalism - reaps more judgmentalism

Sowing gossip - reaps people gossiping about you

Sowing negativity - you will become negative

Sowing criticism - you will become more critical and even criticized yourself

Sowing evil seeds - leads to more evil - and more evil... the sky is the limit...

Or Paul says - sowing from the Spirit - still v8 - which we can ONLY be done by getting God's Holy Spirit in the first place. How do we get the Spirit? Only by believing in Jesus' death on the cross - when we do - we are born from above and receive the Holy Spirit living inside us. That's why sowing from the Spirit - Paul says will - reap eternal life - because believing in Jesus - gives us the Spirit - which promises us life with God forever. So if we sow from the Spirit it means

Sowing the Gospel - which reaps more believers - which means Gospel is sowed more and more

Sowing love - reap loving people - who love God and love others - which means more love

Sowing compassion - reaps compassion - gives compassionate people - who show compassion to others

Sowing mercy - reaps mercy - reaps merciful people - who show mercy to others

[Powerpoint 12a-Challenge-What to sow?]

So what will we sow?

The Harvest

A farmer asked his worker to sow barley. The worker sowed oats. The farmer asked why he sowed oats. The worker replied, "I hoped to grow barley." The farmer said, "What a foolish idea! Who ever heard of such a thing?" The worker replied, "But sir, you yourself constantly sow seeds of evil, and yet expect to reap the fruits of goodness."

God says to Christians, "Whatever a person sows, that person will also reap"

Therefore Paul suggests a response

- a. Let's not get tired of doing good - in v9
- b. Because the 3rd rule always applies - *you always reap later than you sow* - in proper time - it says in v9 - you will reap a harvest. So if you are someone here this morning who's sowing lots of good stuff - lots of good seeds - and you haven't seen a harvest yet - God promises - there will be a season of harvest - hang in there!

- c. Because the 1st two rules apply - *you always reap what you sow and you always reap more than you sow!*

Therefore Paul says - don't give up - v9

Conclusion/Challenge

Let me finish with an example - of the importance of what we sow...

A story is told of two Scotsmen who emigrated to California in the days when California was first being established. The Scotsmen wanted to have in their new country some reminder of their homeland. One man took with him a **thistle**, one of the national emblems of Scotland. The other man took a **swarm of honeybees**.

As the years went by, many fields for a long distance were cursed with the thistle, which the farmers can't get rid of. But the forests and fields were laden with the sweetness of honey from the bees. Little did those two men think of what would grow out of their selections, either for good or for evil?

Our seemingly insignificant acts mean much more to future generations than we think. We can be a burden or blessing to others through the little things of life, which can either be a help or hindrance – sometimes more than we might think.

Beginnings really matter; we can control beginnings. We can make them what we want. Thoughtlessness may bring trouble to many. Thoughtfulness may bring untold good.—*The Friend (Dayton)*.

With that example in our minds then.

I attended NSW Church Assembly this week - and the new moderator - did a survey at Assembly - asking for a show of hands - of how many people had benefited by having - someone spend some one-on-one time reading the Bible and chatting with them - when they were younger?

I'm going to do that same survey this morning

Let's see...

If you benefited from some one-on-one time when you were younger - where someone spent time reading and explaining the Bible with you? Raise your hand!

(pause)

Now - how many of you think you're going to die some day?

(pause)

So we all need to be thinking about sowing good seeds into a few people before we leave this planet - don't we?

That will make a tremendous difference to our church, to our community, to our nation - going forward!

So here's my challenge for this morning

[Powerpoint 12b-Challenge]

So how about we write down this morning - the name of one person - we're going to commit some regular and consistent one-on-one time to - to share the gospel with, to disciple, to chat, just sit down and read the Bible together and pray together - on a regular basis.

Now this is not just my idea - it's actually Jesus' idea

Jesus refers to this sowing and reaping project

In Matthew 9:35-38 it says:

³⁵ Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. ³⁶ When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷ Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. ³⁸ Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

[Powerpoint 12c-Harvest]

So let's be praying for workers for His harvest

Let's be praying that we are one of those workers

And let's remember:

We always reap what we sow

We always reap more than we sow

We always reap later than we sow

So be careful what we sow?

Let's pray...