

# A Glimpse Into The Heart Of God

Hosea 11

Today we get a true glimpse into the heart of God. We know this because in this chapter everything is written in the first person. I think your going to find that this chapter offers us a unique view of the tenderness of the LORD toward His people. I know that He is speaking to Israel here but I don't think that this applies just to them. It applies to all His children.

Before we get started on today's scriptures, I think it is important to note that Moses reminded the people that the LORD 'did not set His love upon' them for any other reason than 'because the LORD loves' them.

*Deuteronomy 7:7-8 says; <sup>7</sup> The LORD did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples. <sup>8</sup> But it was because the LORD loved you and kept the oath he swore to your ancestors that he brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the land of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt.*

He does not love us because we deserve His love, but He loves us because of what He has accomplished on our behalf through the Lord Jesus Christ. Does that not apply to Easter and what this day means? Let's dive right in.

*"When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son.*

Right off the bat God calls Israel, His people, His child and says that He loves them. He then makes the reference to bringing them out of Egypt to kind of show just how long He has loved them. Then God referred to Israel as His son. But if we take a look at Exodus 4:22; <sup>22</sup> *Then say to Pharaoh, 'This is what the LORD says: Israel is my firstborn son,.* So Israel was not only a son but a firstborn son.

Do you see a sort of direct connection here that God is making between Israel and Jesus? What about what God said to Jesus in Matthew 3:17; <sup>17</sup> *And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."*

Why would God call Jesus His son and Israel His firstborn son? Well, it is because Jesus was His son and Israel was His first-born nation or chosen people. So, Israel was the chosen of God and Jesus was the ultimate manifestation of all that God wanted Israel to represent. What He wants us as His people to represent.

Now we must remember also that Israel was called out of Egypt under Moses but also Jesus was called out of Egypt under Joseph. Matthew 2:15 says; <sup>15</sup> *where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: "Out of Egypt I called my son."*

Another comparison between Jesus and Israel.

<sup>2</sup> *But the more they were called, the more they went away from me. They sacrificed to the Baals and they burned incense to images.*

Israel had barely left Egypt when they began to complain. God called them out of bondage and slavery and they immediately began to make sacrifices to other gods and burn incense to their carved images.

<sup>3</sup> *It was I who taught Ephraim to walk, taking them by the arms; but they did not realize it was I who healed them.*

This scripture brings to mind, for me anyway, that of a parent taking a child by the hand and supporting that child as it takes its first steps.

God does so much for His people that they are unaware of. How quickly we forget the LORD who saved us, is the same Lord who led us even through the wilderness of our own sin. Often, we attribute our blessing directly from the hand of God to some other source. I mean, I could take you out to lunch or give you some cash and you're going to thank me, as you should, but do you remember to thank God for using me to give you that blessing?

This is what Israel is doing. They have forgotten what God has done for them and He is hurt.

<sup>4</sup> *I led them with cords of human kindness, with ties of love. To them I was like one who lifts a little child to the cheek, and I bent down to feed them.*

This is like a father with mercy and love leading them along the way. God told them that He was the one who removed the yoke of bondage from them and lifted them up and kissed them on the cheek. Telling them that they are His people. Not only that but I sent you manna from Heaven to feed you when you were hungry.

God is reminding them of what He had done and how they have gotten to where they are. How often do we forget what Jesus did for us so we could get to where we are? What I think we need to see here is the Lord reaching down in order to draw us up. John 6:33 says; <sup>33</sup> *For the bread of God is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.*” Through his kindness and love He gave us His Word to feed us.

<sup>5</sup> *“Will they not return to Egypt and will not Assyria rule over them because they refuse to repent?”*

In this sense, it wasn't so much the sin of Israel that got them into trouble. It was their stubborn refusal to repent after their sin. For that, God would make sure that destruction and exile waited for them.

Now I have to say that some scholars think that this scripture means that Israel will not return to Egypt but face captivity and slavery in Assyria and later face a second exodus. It is possible to read this that way but I think that since it says in earlier chapters that they will return to Egypt that it will happen. I think this shows that Israel will be captive in both places. First in Egypt and then in Assyria.

<sup>6</sup> *A sword will flash in their cities; it will devour their false prophets and put an end to their plans.*

God is going to send armies against their cities and destroy them. He is going to put an end to their false prophets and all their evil plans. Do you not think that this is going to happen to us in the end? We are the country with the most false teachings when it comes to the Word of God. Now we are exporting these false teachings into foreign countries. Do you not think at some point God is going to devour them and destroy our cities? This is why I think that the U.S. is not mentioned in Revelations.

*<sup>7</sup> My people are determined to turn from me. Even though they call me God Most High, I will by no means exalt them.*

This scripture indicates that at one time Israel had a close relationship with God. Now that is in the past, and their profession is simply empty. They call to the Most High in a formal sort of way, but they did not exalt Him with their lives.

Here the thing. When we would give up on God, we should not be surprised when God exposes us to the consequences of our own sin. Romans 1:28 says;

*<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, just as they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, so God gave them over to a depraved mind, so that they do what ought not to be done.*

As a result, God will not hear us. If we are “bent upon backsliding from” the LORD then even our ‘prayers’ become a mockery to Him.

Now listen to the pain that God is feeling.

*<sup>8</sup> “How can I give you up, Ephraim? How can I hand you over, Israel? How can I treat you like Admah? How can I make you like Zeboyim? My heart is changed within me; all my compassion is aroused.*

How can I give up Israel? How can I hand them over to Egypt and Assyria? Or what about how can I give up my people? How can I hand them over to Satan? My compassion for them is great. Though the dark clouds of judgment are on the horizon, God takes no pleasure in the chastening about to come upon Israel.

God says, “I can’t bear to allow My people to be caught up in the destruction that will come upon all the nations, as Admah and Zeboiim were caught up on the destruction that came upon Sodom and Gomorrah.” Gods heart is full of pain over this.

*<sup>9</sup> I will not carry out my fierce anger, nor will I devastate Ephraim again. For I am God, and not a man—the Holy One among you. I will not come against their cities.*

Such is God’s mercy that He will not execute the fulness of His anger against His Ephraim, His Israel, His chosen people. Though their sins deserved it, God will not wipe out Israel. He will leave a remnant, and will restore His people. He is not like

man that holds on to anger, He is God. He would much rather we come to repentance than to take out the fullness of His anger on us. He is loving and merciful.

Luke 19:10 says; <sup>10</sup> *For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.*”

We are the remnant of His people, and He wants to save us by His mercy and grace instead of giving us what we deserve.

<sup>10</sup> *They will follow the LORD; he will roar like a lion. When he roars, his children will come trembling from the west. <sup>11</sup> They will come from Egypt, trembling like sparrows, from Assyria, fluttering like doves. I will settle them in their homes,” declares the LORD.*

God had it in mind all along not to cast off Israel forever. They shall follow Me and I will roar like a lion. When I roar they will come from everywhere. Do you see here that they without us would not be complete. We as believers are all His chosen people and He will settle us in our homes in Glory.

Here we are on Easter Sunday, and we can see from these scriptures is into the heart of God. He doesn't want to destroy us but would rather have all come to repentance and show love and mercy. He doesn't want to give us what we deserve but rather restore us and settle us with Him in Heaven.

That is why He sent His son to the cross and He arose again so that we can be called His chosen people, His children. So that when He comes back and roars like a lion we can all be gathered unto Him.