**You Reap What You Sow**

Hosea 8

Last time we spoke about how chapter 7 specifically talked about backsliding. Well, I believe that this chapter talks directly to reaping what you sow. Everything we do has consequences. The sins we commit, the priorities we have, the choices we make, and even the good that we do all have consequences. In the NIV bible this chapter is entitled Israel to Reap the Whirlwind, in other words they are to reap what they have sown.

As we have been going through the book of Hosea we have seen how far away the people of Israel were from God. God calls them an adulterous nation, and adulterous people. They were heavily involved in idol worship, they were heavily involved in religious prostitution. There was lying, there was cheating, there was deception, there was murder and there was bloodshed. Godliness and morality were at an all time low. People living as they pleased, satisfying their own needs, their own lusts, satisfying their own desires. These were the seeds being sown. And God sees what you sow and now it is time for them to reap their just rewards.

*“Put the trumpet to your lips! An eagle is over the house of the Lord because the people have broken my covenant and rebelled against my law.*

Trumpets from that time were made of Rams horns. They were used to sound the alarm when an army was approaching. That is what is happening here. God is commanding that the trumpet sound to gather the mighty Assyrian army to go against Israel for judgment, because they have broken the covenant they had with Him. Now when it says “an eagle” I am thinking that the Assyrians were much more like vultures waiting to devour Israel. Also when it says “over the house of the Lord” it is talking about all of Israel not just the church or temple.

***2****Israel cries out to me, ‘Our God, we acknowledge you!’* ***3****But Israel has rejected what is good; an enemy will pursue him.*

Israel sees what’s about to happen to them and all of a sudden they cry out to God to save them. Let’s put that into the context of a child. He or She continually tries to touch a hot stove. You tell them “No, don’t do that it is hot”, but they keep trying to touch it. You may even slap their little hand to attempt to make them see that they don’t want to do that. However, the first time you turn your back they touch that hot stove and burn their little hand. Then they cry out to you to fix it.

Well, it is the same thing here, but their cry is not sincere because they continually rejected the good that God had taught them and kept doing the bad. Or, instead of doing what was right, as soon as God would have helped them they would have turned right around and went back to what was wrong. They would have touched that hot stove.

The truth is that they did not truly know or acknowledge God. Sadly it is the same way with a lot of church goers today. We must always keep Matthew 7:22-23 in mind. ***22****Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?’****23****Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’*

***4****They set up kings without my consent; they choose princes without my approval.
With their silver and gold they make idols for themselves to their own destruction.*

Hmm .. They set up kings and princes without consulting God first. Kind of sounds to me as though we are supposed to seek Gods guidance before appointing our elected officials. Doesn’t it? I think that when it talks about kings and princes it means at every level, state, local and especially the white house. To choose leaders without the direction of God is not only sinful, it’s foolish. Those who follow their own wisdom in the choice of leaders inevitably get what they deserve. You reap what you have sown.

When it talks about the idols, they have made it is saying that they will not stand. It has brought about their own destruction.

***5****Samaria, throw out your calf-idol! My anger burns against them. How long will they be incapable of purity?* ***6****They are from Israel! This calf—a metalworker has made it; it is not God. It will be broken in pieces, that calf of Samaria.*

 Israel made many beautiful idols out of silver and gold, but they will not stand. In judgment, God will break them to pieces. God is saying that the golden calf made in Samaria literally stinks and is impure like Israel. He is going to destroy them all and show them who the true God is.

***7****“They sow the wind and reap the whirlwind. The stalk has no head; it will produce no flour. Were it to yield grain, foreigners would swallow it up.*

Now follow me carefully with this - Sowing and reaping is a well-known fundamental, physical principle of life. You always reap more than you sow! If I was to go into my garden and plant a potato in the ground – in a few months’ time I wouldn’t reap one potato, I would reap lots of potatoes. That’s the principle here – you always reap more than you sow.

But not only do you reap more than what you sow – you will reap more of the same of what you sow. It’s no good me putting a potato in the ground if what I want is a harvest of carrots. That’s how sowing and reaping works – what you put in is what you’re going to get out again only more so!

This does not only apply to the physical but the spiritual as well. As I said earlier, everything we do has consequences. The sins we commit, the priorities we have, the choices we make, and even the good that we do all have consequences.

Hosea says – ‘look, you’re gonna be sorry, because if you sow the wind – you’ll reap the whirlwind’. Now the vultures at the gate are going to swallow you up.

***8****Israel is swallowed up; now she is among the nations like something no one wants.* ***9****For they have gone up to Assyria like a wild donkey wandering alone. Ephraim has sold herself to lovers.* ***10****Although they have sold themselves among the nations, I will now gather them together. They will begin to waste away under the oppression of the mighty king.*

Even though they had paid Assyria to protect them no amount of money was going to protect them from God. Assyria attacked them and went as far as Judea and everywhere else they were and brought them all back together. Assyria didn’t even want them and let them waste away. The king treated them terribly. They were reaping what they had sown. They are now in exile from the land that God had given them.

***11****“Though Ephraim built many altars for sin offerings, these have become altars for sinning.*

Israel foolishly built many altars for sin. So, it should come as no surprise that those altars became altars for sinning. When we give ourselves opportunity and occasion for sin, it is never surprising when we end up sinning.

***12****I wrote for them the many things of my law, but they regarded them as something foreign.*

In their sin and idolatry, Israel also rejected the Word of God. God had greatthings for Israel, but they seemed like a strangething because their hearts were far from God. It says here that “I wrote for them”. This speaks to us about the *author* of the Bible – God Himself.

Spurgeon said’ “This volume is the writing of the living God: each letter was penned with an Almighty finger; each word in it dropped from the everlasting lips, each sentence was dictated by the Holy Spirit.”

It says that the Bible is full of things of my law. This tells us the *content* of the Bible. The Bible speaks of the greatest and most important things of both life and eternity. There is nothing in this Bible which is unimportant. Every verse in it has a solemn meaning and holds an important message for us.

Most people treat the Bible very politely… When they get home, they put it up in a drawer or on a shelf till next Sunday morning; then it comes out again for a little bit of a treat and goes to church; that is all the poor Bible gets in the way of an use. That is their way of entertaining this heavenly messenger. Do not be that kind of Christian.

Israel considered everything that was in the Word of God to be foreign. This speaks directly to the way the Bible was received by them. In many cases it is the same today. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 2:14, “***14****The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit.”*

The Word of God and the things of the spirit seem like something foreign when we are in sin and idolatry as Israel was. It amazes me how people can reject the Bible and think that science is far superior. There would be no science if it wasn’t for the Bible. Think about it.

What would we know about astronomy if it wasn’t for the Sun of Righteousness or the Star of Bethlehem? What would we know about botany if it wasn’t for the Lily of the Valley and the Rose of Sharon? What would we know about geology and mineralogy if it wasn’t for the Rock of Ages, and the White Stone with His name on it? What would we know about history if we didn’t have the greatest record of the human race. If you want to know about science, it is right here in the Word of God.

***13****Though they offer sacrifices as gifts to me, and though they eat the meat, the Lord is not pleased with them. Now he will remember their wickedness and punish their sins: They will return to Egypt.*

Sure, they still brought sacrifices to the LORD. But it was all just an outward ceremony because they were still steeped in sin and idolatry. Therefore their sin remained uncovered, and God will remember their iniquity and punish their sins.

Israel has now come full circle and is back in Egypt and enslaved. They that were rescued in infancy from Egypt and raised to maturity in the promised land, had thrown it all away. They are all alone without their God to protect them. The pharaoh is going to treat them worse than he did before he let them go. God has remembered all of their sins and is letting them be punished accordingly.

***14****Israel has forgotten their Maker and built palaces; Judah has fortified many towns. But I will send fire on their cities that will consume their fortresses.”*

Israel has forgotten their Maker and built temples, but not unto the LORD who had done so much for them. Therefore, the judgment described in this chapter is coming upon them.

While Israel practiced outright idolatry, Judah was guilty of a more subtle sin. They trusted in their fortified cities they built against the Assyrians. Those cities would turn out to be of no help to them. I will send fire on their cities, and completely destroy them.

God sees what you sow

If your planting seeds of sexual immorality, and your sleeping around – then expect to reap a harvest of sexual disease and unwanted pregnancies.

If your sowing seeds of gossip and discord and hatred, then expect to reap a harvest of conflict in your relationships.

The list could go on forever. But God sees what you sow

Galatians 6:7-8 says, *“****7****Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.****8****Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.”*

Because what you sow you will reap – if you sow the wind you will reap the whirlwind.

Let our prayer always be that we plant seeds that will grow and produce an abundant harvest for the Kingdom of God.