

Hello. /We will begin our 3rd lecture on the book of Hosea. /The message is from Hosea 4. /Chapter 4 is about bringing Israel, who is like an unfaithful woman, to realize its spiritual condition and repent.

/If Israel had listened to the warnings of the prophets and repented, she would have enjoyed living in God's grace. /However, Israel ignored the prophets' warnings, and Israel's people were slaughtered.

/The title of chapter 4 is "There is no knowledge." /Verses 1-5 are about Israel's sin. /Verse 6-10 are about God's abandonment of his people because they have no knowledge. /Verses 11-14 say that people who do not come to realization will perish. /Verses 15-19 say that without knowledge, Israel has committed adultery, and Judah has sinned. /We will take a look at Israel's sin in verses 1-5.

/Verse 1. Let us read. /Hear the word of the LORD, O children of Israel, for the LORD has a controversy with the inhabitants of the land. There is no faithfulness or steadfast love, and no knowledge of God in the land;

/The prophet Hosea is not speaking his words, but he is delivering the word of God. /Prophets do not speak the words of their mouth, but they deliver the things they have heard from God.

/In the verse, "children of Israel" refers to the tribe that has been created through the grace of God. /The verse is telling Israel, a tribe established by God's grace, to listen to God's words.

/When it says, "For the LORD has a controversy with the inhabitants of the land," it means that God is scolding the people of the land. /God rebukes them by saying that there is no faithfulness or steadfast love or knowledge of God in the land.

/The land of Israel contained nothing that God found joy in, but it was filled with the things he despised. /What does God find joy in? /He finds it in faithfulness, steadfast love, and knowledge of God.

/We believers must live lives that reveal faithfulness, steadfast love, and justice. /In order for us to do this, we must not leave God but communicate with him at all times. /We must also learn the spiritual knowledge of truth, and we need to meditate on it day and night.

/It is required that we must first have a faith that actively tries to put itself into action. /Without spiritual communication with God or the knowledge of truth, the believer's life becomes a mess.

/Lies replace truth, and hatred replaces love. /Instead of righteousness, unrighteousness will exist, and disbelief will take the place of faith. /Verse 2 talks about these results.

/Verse 2. /there is swearing, lying, murder, stealing, and committing adultery; they break all bounds, and bloodshed follows bloodshed.

/A society that abandons God eventually becomes a cursed land. /Lying, killing, and stealing are rampant in this society. /People living here are sexually immoral, violent, and here, bloodshed follows bloodshed.

/When their lives become unclean, the land, the sky, the beasts of the field, and the birds of the air are all cursed. /Even the fish of the sea are cursed, and it follows that they are destroyed.

/Verse 3. /Therefore the land mourns, and all who dwell in it languish, and also the beasts of the field and the birds of the heavens, and even the fish of the sea are taken away.

/The earth's environment changes for the worst when people sin. /Everything in our environment suffers when God's believers abandon the word of God and follow the things of the world. /Society becomes corrupt and enters into a dark and destructive path when the church loses its faithfulness, steadfast love, and trust.

/We believers must be honest and live with love. /We can only stop society's corruption if we righteously live in faith.

/Verse 4. /Yet let no one contend, and let none accuse, for with you is my contention, O priest.

/Leaving God and falling deeper into sin leads to a hardened spirit that does not listen to rebuke. /They may be told words that lead them down the proper path, but they will not listen. Rather, they will contend with the priest.

/A time when spiritual leaders openly rebuke an individual, the church, or a group is a precious time. /Advice or rebuke becomes unnecessary when disobedience grows and the spirit becomes hard. /When this happens, God does not intervene.

/Verse 5. /You shall stumble by day; the prophet also shall stumble with you by night; and I will destroy your mother.

/Because they did not listen to God, they will stumble by day. /God also makes his leaders who have abandoned him stumble by night. /When God says, "I will destroy your mother," he is saying he will destroy their mother nation.

/First, the corrupt people will be destroyed. /Afterwards, the religious leaders will perish, /and finally, the nation of Israel will perish. /This shows how miserable the people who leave God become.

Proverbs 29:1 says, "He who is often reproved, yet stiffens his neck, will suddenly be broken beyond healing." /We must not come to a place like this.

/Verse 6. /My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because you have rejected knowledge, I reject you from being a priest to me. And since you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.

/Verses 6-10 are about God's people who are being abandoned for their lack of knowledge. /Verse 6 tells us about the misery that comes with abandoning God and the truth. /To avoid God's punishment, we must have knowledge of God, which is the knowledge of truth.

/Our efforts alone will not be enough. /We need the knowledge of truth. /Romans 10:2 says that zeal for God that is not based on knowledge is useless. /Without proper knowledge, we cannot have proper faith.

/The verse says, "And since you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children." /Israel forgot the law of God and chased after the world, so God decides to forget them. /We need to remember that if we leave the word of God, God will leave us.

/Verse 7. /The more they increased, the more they sinned against me; I will change their glory into shame.

/The more we increase and prosper, the more we must serve God. /If we in our worldly glory sin before God, God will change our glory to shame.

/We need to remember that worldly abundance is not a true blessing. /Many people who increase and prosper leave God and become corrupt. /We need to be careful not to follow these wrong footsteps. /When we grow rich, we must protect our faith.

/Verse 8. /They feed on the sin of my people; they are greedy for their iniquity.

/God is rebuking the religious leaders for their changed hearts. /Because the people started sinning more, they had to give more sin offerings. /In their hearts, the priests were looking forward to their income that would come from these offerings.

/Priests are supposed to rebuke the people and teach them how to properly serve God. /However, because their income grew, the priests did not rebuke the people, but they were only interested in expanding their business. /In today's church, many leaders count the earnings from offerings.

/However, Deuteronomy 23:18 tells us not to bring the wages of a dog into God's house. /What this means is that God delights in clean offerings that come from clean believers' lives.

/Verse 9. /And it shall be like people, like priest; I will punish them for their ways and repay them for their deeds.

/Because the people and priests have become corrupt, there will be no hope from now on.
/The corruption of leaders leads to the corruption of the people. /When the people become corrupt, society becomes dirty. /When society becomes dirty, it ends up being destroyed. /God says that he will repay them for their deeds.

/Verse 10. /They shall eat, but not be satisfied; they shall play the whore, but not multiply, because they have forsaken the LORD to cherish

/Believers who have left God may chase after possessions, but there is no satisfaction.
/They do not repent of their actions. /Although small, anything earned from serving God is solid and long-lasting.

/The things we earn apart from God soon break down, and they cannot be firmly raised.
/In whatever circumstance, we must be satisfied with having faith and learn to live a godly life.

/I will summarize the message from verses 1-10. /First, when the prophet advises and rebukes us, we must accept the words in fear and trembling. /In fear and trembling, we need to have a faith that accepts God's word and rebuke.

/Second, we need to live lives that spiritually communicate with God, lives that are lived according to his truth. /If we abandon God and his truth, we will end up becoming corrupt. /We need to remember that we will be cursed if we abandon God.

/Third, rather than practicing nominal worship or protecting the commandments, we need to live before God with proper hearts. /Finally, it is important that we have a faith that is not corrupt. /We can say that we are spiritual leaders. /We must not become corrupt if we want God's church to firmly stand up.

/I will briefly tell you the details of 4:11-19. /The book of Hosea is a prophetic book that was given to North Israel during the reign of Jeroboam II. /At this time, Israel was a politically powerful nation. /However, Israel served Baal and Asherah in its corrupt faith.

/The entire nation fell into the sin of worshiping idols. /That is why God tries to warn the people through Hosea's married life. /They may have enjoyed power and stability in the world, but because of their spiritual and moral decay, God punishes them.

/The believer must live a life that God delights in. /Life in church, life in volunteer work, and life lived in grace are the things we must participate in. /If we fall into secularism and humanism, God's punishment will come upon us.

/God warns his people through the prophet Hosea. /He wants Israel to return to him.
/Verses 11-14 say that the people who do not come to realization will perish.

/Verse 11. /whoredom, wine, and new wine, which take away the understanding.

/Here in the verse, whoredom refers to worshiping idols. /The people abandoned God and went to serve idols. /Their hearts that once leaned towards God were now leaning towards idols. /James 4:4 says that friendship with the world is enmity with God.

/The verse says that wine and new wine take away the understanding. /This means that Israel left God and sought after pleasures. /God had given them both old wine and new wine. /Israel walked down the path of corruption with the wine that God gave her.

/Because their faith became corrupt, their minds, morals, and lives became corrupt. /As our lives become more abundant, we must seek the things that give God joy. /God did not record the book of Hosea to admonish the people of that generation.

/He recorded the book to warn us who live today. /We must first seek his kingdom and his righteousness. /Jesus told us to “seek first his kingdom and his righteousness.”

/He promises that all things will be given to us if we do this. /We need to remember these words from the Lord and obey them in our lives.

/Verse 12. /My people inquire of a piece of wood, and their walking staff gives them oracles. For a spirit of whoredom has led them astray, and they have left their God to play the whore.

/The people of Israel left God and worshiped idols made out of wood. /They also did as their idols told them. /The verse says, “Their walking staff gives them oracles,” which means they tried to foresee the future using a staff.

/Depending on the way the staff fell on the ground, the people acted accordingly. /They made their decisions by observing their staff. /They were taking the advice of an insensible, lifeless tree.

/What does Jeremiah 2:27 tell us? /It says that the people say to a tree, “You are my father.” /Habakkuk 2:19 says, “Woe to him who says to a wooden thing, Awake.”

/They were doing something similar to modern day fortune telling. /Believers must never follow these things. /The verse reads, “For a spirit of whoredom has led them astray, and they have left their God to play the whore.”

/They abandoned God and followed idols, pursuing the desires of the flesh. /Immorality always comes along with idolatry. /A city of idols becomes an immoral and corrupt city.

/We can see this happening in Sodom and Gomorrah. /Satan pokes at people’s immoral hearts and leads them to corruption. /Anyone who is drawn to these things will drift away from God’s teachings. /In this way, the people of Israel left to play the whore.

/Verse 13. /They sacrifice on the tops of the mountains and burn offerings on the hills, under oak, poplar, and terebinth, because their shade is good. Therefore your daughters play the whore, and your brides commit adultery.

/The people of Israel worshiped idols on the tops of mountains because they believed the mountaintops were close to heaven. /They practiced immorality where the trees stood. /Israel is a normally a desolate place. /For this reason, a place with trees is a place of beauty.

/This is true for every nation. /The place where there is a great view, where there are mountains and waters, becomes a place for idol worship. /This goes against the word of God. /The Bible strictly tells us not to worship idols.

/The verse says that the daughters play the whore and the brides commit adultery. /Israel's children, under the influence of their parents, also walked down the road of corruption. /Thus their families were destroyed, society became corrupt, and the priests became unclean.

/Verse 14. /I will not punish your daughters when they play the whore, nor your brides when they commit adultery; for the men themselves go aside with prostitutes and sacrifice with cult prostitutes, and a people without understanding shall come to ruin.

/The people have abandoned God and served idols, but God says he will not punish them. /This means that God's judgment is near. /Hope remains when God takes out his whip to discipline us.

/However, if he does not bring out his whip, there is a serious problem. /Jeremiah 10:24 says, "Correct me, O LORD, but in justice; not in your anger, lest you bring me to nothing."

/The verse says, "The men themselves go aside with prostitutes." /The men of Israel, who should be leaders of the nation, became corrupt. /The verse is saying that if they do not listen to the warnings, they will eventually perish.

/We need to remember that the absence of spiritual understanding leads to destruction. /Verses 15-19 are about Israel's adultery and Judah's sins. /Because the people did not have knowledge, they committed adultery and sin.

/Verse 15. /Though you play the whore, O Israel, let not Judah become guilty. Enter not into Gilgal, nor go up to Beth-aven, and swear not, "As the LORD lives."

/Israel was the nation in the North, and Judah was the nation in the South. /North Israel may be corrupt, but it should not let Judah become corrupt. /The temple, the law, and the priests still remained in Judah. /The people of Judah must not abandon God like North Israel did.

/We may see corrupt churches in our midst, but we believers must live upright lives.
/Others may become corrupt, but we must not become corrupt. /The Rechabites appear in Jeremiah 35. /They kept the traditions of their ancestors.

/They did not drink wine, nor did they build houses. /Also, they did not sow seed nor did they cultivate the vineyards. /Their ancestors told them to live in tents, so they obeyed.
/God viewed highly of these people for these reasons.

/God makes the promise that “Jonadab the son of Rechab shall never lack a man to stand before me.” /The world may become corrupt, but we have the noble calling to walk the narrow road. /We need to walk down the narrow path, standing as those who remain in the faith.

/When the world becomes dark, we must shine a light. /When the world starts to spoil, we must be the salt of the world. /The verse says, “Enter not into Gilgal.” /Gilgal is a place of significance where the Israelites were circumcised.

/Israel’s shame from Egypt was lifted away in Gilgal. /However, the verse instructs the people to enter not into Gilgal, which had become a place for worshiping idols. /The same goes for Beth-aven. /Beth-aven refers to Bethel.

/ “Bethel” means “house of God.” / “Beth-aven” means “house of vanity.” /In this way, the house of God became a house for worshiping idols. /That is why the verse tells them not to go up to Beth-aven.

/God says, “And swear not, “As the LORD lives.” /This refers to worshiping God in appearance only. The verse is telling us to not do anything that goes against God.
/Swearing is not what is important. /Obeying the will of God is important.

/Verse 16. /Like a stubborn heifer, Israel is stubborn; can the LORD now feed them like a lamb in a broad pasture?

/God sent many prophets to bring Israel back to him. /However, Israel did not obey God. /Like a stubborn heifer, Israel did what it wanted to do. /Israel walked backwards and jumped around like a wild ox.

/Anyone who is stubborn and does not listen to God’s warnings shows signs of destruction. /The verse reads, “Can the LORD now feed them like a lamb in a broad pasture?” /This means that because the people have abandoned God, they will be stripped of their freedom and peace, and they will be placed under oppression.

/We need to use the freedom God has given us to do things that bring God joy. /Because the people abused the freedom that the LORD granted them, God says he will now restrict their freedom.

/Verse 17. /Ephraim is joined to idols; leave him alone.

/Ephraim is North Israel's representative tribe. /Even Ephraim, Israel's most representative tribe, has gone along with the other tribes to abandon God and commit sin. /Ephraim should be united with God, but he formed a strong unity with idols and the world.

/God continued to admonish Ephraim to return, but because he did not return, he decides to leave him alone. /There is the theological term "abandon." / "Abandon" means to leave without intending to return. /This term can apply to non-believers.

/Here, God does not intend to permanently abandon Israel. /It means God will abandon Israel for a long time. /However, God does not permanently abandon his people.

/Verse 18. /When their drink is gone, they give themselves to whoring; their rulers dearly love shame.

/All of Israel's leaders and people became corrupt. /They did not think it shameful to sin. /Rather, they boasted and rejoiced in their sin. /God decides to abandon them for this reason.

/If we are drenched in sin, we become insensitive to it. /That is why people feel no shame after sinning. /Also, because the leaders became corrupt, the people naturally followed the leaders' footsteps.

/I will read you Jeremiah 8:12. / "Were they ashamed when they committed abomination? /No, they were not at all ashamed; they did not know how to blush. /Therefore they shall fall among the fallen; /when I punish them, they shall be overthrown, /says the LORD."

/We must fear these words of God.

/Verse 19. /A wind has wrapped them in its wings, and they shall be ashamed because of their sacrifices.

/The wind in the verse refers to God's judgment that will sweep away everything like a hurricane. /Like the wind that breaks everything in its path, the people will be shattered into pieces. /The people will not be able to resist or turn back, but they will be destroyed as if they are facing a hurricane.

/The people will be put to shame because of their sacrifices. /In the end, Israel, who has betrayed God, will be ashamed.

/Here is the conclusion of chapter 4. /The conclusion is although Israel may commit adultery, Judah must not sin. /This is God's message to us today. /We must be sure to keep this message in our hearts.

/This concludes the 3rd lecture on the Minor Prophets. /Thank you.