

Hosea 13,14**11-21-02*****“I will Love them Freely!”*****1. Intro:**

- 1.1. **Story** - Lady in Pout-au-Prince airport.
 - 1.1.1. Anthropologist degree from Berkley. Lives in Cambridge Mass. Now an artist & writer. Nominal Catholic. And was appalled at my bringing my “American Jesus & American Gospel” to try to change the Haitian culture?” They are just little spirits under one big God. Christianity is so narrow-minded.
 - 1.1.2. God is a Jealous God!(He wants no other Gods before him)
 - 1.1.3. I told her you can’t even hold to your 1st commandment **“no other gods before me”**.
 - 1.1.4. After an hour a young girl who sat down beside me asked if she could interrupt, said one statement. And the Haitian lady stood up & said, **“that makes sense, you should use that next time”** & she left!

2. PRESENT DISCIPLINES! (ch. 13)

- 2.1. **ATTITUDE!** (1-3)
 - 2.1.1. Ephraim was a great tribe(**Gen 48:10-20** – Jacob blesses Eph. & Man. But does the hand switch, rt hand on Eph the younger).
 - 2.1.2. But now Ephraim would become like the **clouds, dew, chaff, & smoke ...i.e. as nothing!**
 - 2.1.2.1. **“Like”** comes up 17 times in these 2 chapters.
- 2.2. **INGRATITUDE!** (4-11)
 - 2.2.1. **Q: How is our culture today as far as gratitude?**
 - 2.2.2. **Starbucks this morning** – Playing “Frosty the Snowman” 7 days before “Thanksgiving”! – ***Can’t we wait till at least the day after Thanksgiving, with the decorations & the music.***
 - 2.2.2.1. I thought, why don’t they play thanksgiving songs?...Wait, there isn’t any secular songs of thanks! (is there?)
 - 2.2.3. **God would be to the people “like”:** a hungry lion; a stalking leopard; & a fuming bear!
 - 2.2.4. He saved them from Egypt. He could have very easily saved them from Assyria.
 - 2.2.4.1. But they trusted their **wealth**, their **kings** & their **foreign policy!**

- 2.2.5. They were “material filled” & thus filled w/pride!
 - 2.2.5.1. In **Prov.30** Agur prayed that he wouldn’t be **so full** so as to deny the Lord; nor **so poor** that he would be tempted to steal.
 - 2.2.5.2. Deut.32:15 “**But Jeshurun**(Israel, “the upright one”) **grew fat**(prosperous) **and kicked**(like an animal kicks, here referring to at God! **Mule/toby**); **You grew fat, you grew thick, You are obese! Then he forsook God who made him, And scornfully esteemed the Rock of his salvation.**”
 - 2.2.5.3. **Prosperity** is often a more dangerous trial than **adversity**.
- 2.2.6. **Therefore they forgot me** – unmindfulness of God.
- 2.3. (10,11) God didn’t want them to have a king, He wanted to be king over them. – But wasn’t he sovereign to stop this?
 - 2.3.1. Westminster Confession ch.3 starts out, “**God from all eternity did, by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely, and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass.**”
 - 2.3.1.1. If he is not sovereign over **all** things, then he is not God at all.
 - 2.3.2. It continues after the colon: “**yet so, as thereby neither is God the author of sin, nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures, nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established.**”
 - 2.3.2.1. By God ordaining all things, He does it in such a way that doesn’t annihilate human decisions or the forces of nature. Yet at the same time the sovereign of God stands over every human event. (R.C.Sproul)
 - 2.3.2.2. Does God ordain tragedies or calamities(like 911)...Yes!
 - 2.3.2.3. Even if this ordination is by mere “permission”, for God to “let things happen”, He is **choosing** to allow them.
 - 2.3.2.4. **Why** He ordained it(we don’t know) & this is where we must be careful. (i.e. God’s judgment on America?)
 - 2.3.3. In **our limited parenting skills** we sometimes have let the child touch the “hot” object after the warning. – Or instead of moving the objects gave the swat when they touched it after the warning.
 - 2.3.3.1. **God’s parenting skills** are not limited. **In fact they are perfect w/every individual, every creature, with nature, & with the unseen realm...all together, at the same time, all the time!**

2.3.3.2. He uses good & evil to accomplish His bidding.

2.3.3.3. The worse evil man ever did, was ordained by God Himself, "Him, being delivered by the **determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have** taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death;"

2.4. **RUIN!** (12-16)

2.5. (13) The procrastinating nation was compared to a baby that wouldn't come out!

2.5.1. (NIV) "Pains as of a woman in childbirth come to him, but he is a child without wisdom; when the time arrives, he does not come to the opening of the womb."

2.5.2. Six-year-old son, Alex, was looking at a picture of himself when he was one week old. Upon seeing his **umbilical cord still attached** in the picture, he asked, "**What is that black thing on my belly button?**" His eight-year-old sister, Maria, quickly replied, "**That's your extension cord!**"

2.5.3. It's fascinating to see people **wearing American T-shirts** even when they didn't know what the words mean. One missionary saw a man wearing **a pink shirt with an arrow pointing to his tummy with the words: "Baby on board."**

2.5.3.1. **Here was a baby on board that wouldn't get off board!**

2.6. (14) 1 Cor.15:55 "O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?" (follows the LXX quote)

2.7. (15) **Fruitful** – (Ephraim = doubly fruitful)

2.7.1. Twice fruitful would be fruitful no more.

2.8. (16) What a contrast to Jesus statement in Jn.4:4 regarding Samaria, "**He needed to go through Samaria.**" (i.e. **To meet who?** the woman at the well)

2.8.1. **Result?** "And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me all that I ever did." So when the Samaritans had come to Him, they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days."

3. FUTURE PROMISES! (ch.14)

3.1. **REPENTANCE & RESTORATION!** (1-8)

3.2. **Return** (1)

3.2.1. Praise God we can always heed God's loving call to repentance.

3.2.2. It's never too late to come home!

3.3. Repent (2a)

3.3.1. Take words w/you. – These are obviously not “words only” but we see the action of confession “take away all iniquity.”

3.3.2. This is quoted later in Heb.13:15 “Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.”

3.4. Receive (2b-4)

3.4.1. Receive His Grace(2b)

3.4.1.1. And remember, He is more concerned w/the “sacrifice of our lips”, vs. our “material sacrifices”. {ie. words from our lips that are honest, sincere, genuine, truthful.}

3.4.2. Receive Mercy! (3)

3.4.3. “For in You the Fatherless find mercy” – You know what came to mind on this passage to me. 2 weeks ago we prayed for the Broadman’s going to Russia to adopt young Kasanya.

3.4.3.1. In a very small insignificant village there was a little girl in an orphanage that was basically abandoned by society. When it came time for simply one family member to sign off on the document, no one in the whole town knew her. But, in God the Fatherless find mercy! And mercy was shown!

3.4.3.2. They returned home yesterday w/her!

3.4.4. Receive Healing! (4a)

3.4.4.1. Backsliders may return to the Lord. – “Seek your injured Father’s face!”

3.4.4.2. Own this verse!

3.4.5. Receive Love! (4b)

3.4.5.1. Loving them “freely” = ?

3.4.5.2. It means: no prayers, no tears, no good works, no alms, are an enticement to Him...to love men!

3.4.5.3. It means: Not even the blood of Christ was the cause of His love toward man. It was the fruit of His love, but NOT the cause of it!

3.4.5.4. The Father does not love because Christ died, but Christ died because the Father so loved. (Spurgeon)

3.4.5.5. This fountain of love has its spring in itself! - Not in you, nor in me, but only in the Father’s own gracious, infinite heart of goodness!

3.4.5.6. Spurgeon said, “This sentence is a body of divinity in miniature. He who understands its meaning is a theologian.”

3.5. Refresh (5)

3.5.1. Dew of refreshing!

3.5.2. Lily - Pliny(*Roman scholar and naturalist*) spoke of the **white lily** which grows wild in Israel & is “unsurpassed in its fecundity(*fertility*), often producing 50 bulbs from a single root.” (Pliny Natural History XXI. 5) from *Wycliffe Commentary*.

3.5.3. Roots – The desert will become a fruitful garden where the roots go deep!

3.5.3.1. What was important was “the **Root** of the matter”.Now, only “**Fruit**” is the chatter.The need is to look well to the **Root**,And not just expect instant **Fruit!**3.5.3.2. Prov.12:12 “...the **root** of the righteous yields **fruit**.”3.5.3.3. Mark 11:20 “as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up **from the roots**.”3.5.3.4. Is.37:31 “...take **root** downward, And bear **fruit** upward.”

3.6. Results (6)

3.6.1. Instead of being **stunted**, there will be **growth**. (6a)3.6.2. Instead of **ugliness**, there will be **beauty**. (6b)3.6.3. Instead of **stench**, there will be **fragrance**. (6c)3.6.4. What a difference it is when we **obey** Him! 😊

3.7. Revive (7)

3.7.1. Fruitful again.

3.8. Restored (8)

3.8.1. Not my fruit, but **Your** fruit is found in me!3.8.2. Again, the fruit is 1st found in the root!3.8.2.1. So also is every **good work** 1st found in Jesus, & then brought forth in us.

3.8.2.2. So, if we were not joined to Christ, we would have a barren-bough(bow).

3.8.2.3. Our fruit comes by the gardeners sharp-edged knife, as he thins & prunes our clusters.

3.8.2.4. “My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, **that it may bear more fruit.**”

3.9. Righteous (9)

- 3.9.1. **Wise** - John Wesley said, "When I was young I was sure of everything; in a few years, having been mistaken a thousand times, I was not half so sure of most things as I was before; at present, I am hardly sure of anything but what God has revealed to me."¹
- 3.9.2. **Q:** Will you be a stumbling sinner, or a forgiven sinner?
- 3.9.3. Oswald Chambers said, "Never try to **explain** God until you have **obeyed** Him. The only bit of God we **understand** is the bit we have **obeyed.**" (**walk in them!**)

¹ John Wesley, quoted in New Beginnings, by Evelyn Bence. Christianity Today, Vol. 32, no. 17.