

A Shallow Religious Revival

I. Slide1 Announce:

- A. Slide2-4 Larry: Women's ministry. Sunday night of prayer. Save the Date.
- B. Slide5 Worship Night @ CCBC: Todd Harvey, Sunrise Christian Fellowship is hosting.

II. Intro:

- A. Hosea, the heartbroken prophet with a heart warming message.
- B. Slide6 Annie Johnson Flint was one of the greatest *hymn writers* (late 1800's). In her biography, she was **orphaned** as a little girl and taken in by the **Flint family**. She suffered a lot in her life. She got rheumatoid arthritis until she was twisted up in bed for many many decades. She had cancer, she was incontinent on diapers. Then blindness started to overtake her. Before she died she was head to toe with boils. Lying on her bed she needed 8 pillows just to cushion her body. She wrote this hymn...

1. He giveth more **grace** when the burdens grow greater, He sendeth more **strength** when the labors increase; To added afflictions He addeth His **mercy**, To multiplied trials, His multiplied **peace**.

When we have exhausted our store of endurance, When our strength has failed ere the day is half done, When we reach the end of our hoarded resources Our Father's **full giving** is only begun.

Fear not that thy need shall exceed **His provision**, Our God ever yearns His **resources** to share; Lean hard on **the arm everlasting, availing**; The Father both thee and thy load will **upbear**.

His love has no limits, **His grace** has no measure, **His power** no boundary known unto men; For out of His infinite riches in **Jesus He giveth, and giveth, and giveth again**.

2. Slide7 Prayer:

III. Slide8 THE CALL TO REPENTANCE (6:1-11)

- A. Slide9 GUILTY ISRAEL SPEAKS (1-3)
- B. (1) God hurts to heal (eg: setting my broken arm)
 1. Torn – from lion in vs.14.

2. In Ex.15:26 it says, *For I am the Lord who heals you.* This is **Jehovah-Rapha** (rapha = healer), where Israel is assured that God, their healer, will prevent the diseases of Egypt from affecting Israel. Although the name is only used once, God was often called upon and praised as **the healing One**.

a) *He has torn...He has stricken. BUT He will heal...He will bandage us.*

C. **After 2 days** - The Israelites expected only a short judgment.

1. **Slide10** *Number parallelism* is a common **stylistic device** in Hebrew poetry.

a) Job 5:19 *From six disasters he will rescue you; even in the seventh, he will keep you from evil.*

b) Prv. 30:15,16 *The leech has two suckers that cry out, "More, more!" There are three things that are never satisfied - no, four that never say, "Enough!": the grave, the barren womb, the thirsty desert, the blazing fire.*

D. **Slide11** (3) NLT *Oh, that we might know the Lord! Let us press on to know him. He will respond to us as surely as the arrival of dawn or the coming of rains in early spring.*

1. I love these 1st 3 verses...unfortunately Israel didn't follow through.

2. The people seek God to save them from judgment (5:6), **but their repentance is not genuine**. They are simply motivated by *self-preservation* (4).

E. **Slide12** **GOD SPEAKS** (4-6)

F. (4) **Here God has Divine doubts about their sincerity.**

1. **Slide13** It was a **Shallow Religious Revival**.

2. Their loyalty drifted like a **morning cloud** & dried up like the **early dew**. *Here one minute gone the next.*

a) **Their love is not genuine, it is self-serving.** As soon as trouble has passed, they will go back to their old habits.

G. **Slide14** (6) **Mercy** – חֶסֶד (*hesed*) 275 in OT.

H. **I desire mercy/steadfast love and not sacrifice** - This verse summarizes a central teaching of the OT prophets: *God desires and values **internal commitment and character transformation** over **external ritual observances**.*

1. It's when we attend to **the letter** of the Law *while ignoring the **spirit** of the Law*

- a) *Intentions are more important than actions.*
2. **Mercy** (steadfast love/covenant love/loyal love/steel-ribbed love/unfailing love)
3. This scripture must have been one of Jesus' favorites.
- a) He quotes this 2 times in Mt & adds, *Go & learn this* and the other time *if you only knew what this meant.* [Mt.9:13, 12:7]
4. In Mt. 9:13 He adds *for I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.* Jesus only came to save real sinners.
- a) **Context:** Matthew sitting at his Tax booth, Jesus walks up & said follow Me. **Next,** Jesus is reclining at his table in his house where Matt had invited many tax collectors & sinners who also were reclining w/Jesus at the table (9:10).
- (1) Interesting, statistics from *the Institute for American Church Growth* asked 10,000 believers about their pilgrimage. What led them in? **Slide15 Answers were:** a visitation, **1%**. Special need, **2%**. A walk in, **3%**. A program, **3%**. Sunday school, **5%**. Evangelistic crusade, **5%**. A pastor, **6%**. Friend/relative, **79%** [Matt picked best form of evangelism]
- b) **Are we showing Mercy by sitting at the worlds table?** (Howard Hendricks tell this story) I had a dear brother in the ministry who went down the tubes morally - bad case. By the grace of God he was brought back into fellowship, and by God's grace restored to his ministry. One time when we were fellowshiping together, I said, "I want to pick your brain. I need some help. **Where** are we failing, in your judgment?" He said, "*Howie, when I fell into sin, it was like going down in the surf for the third time. I was looking over at the shore that was filled with believers that I knew, some of whom were crying, 'Isn't that tragic?' Some of whom were cursing, saying, 'You're supposed to know the Word of God; why did you allow that to happen to you?' There were some who were wringing their hands, saying, 'What can we do?' But there was only one who risked the surf to pull me out while I was going down for the third time.*"
5. **The Key** – The inner quality of **Mercy** is far more pleasing to God than the correct performance of rituals.
- I. **And the knowledge of God** - *Salvation is not about what you do, but who you know.*

IV. Slide16 4 IMAGES (1-16)

- A. **Outline:** Hosea the wordsmith gives *4 images/similies* here he uses them to show what God thinks of those who **profess His name** but continue their rebellious way of life.
1. A Hot Oven. A Cake unturned. A Silly Dove. A Faulty Bow.
- B. Judges 20:16 gives us a perfect definition of the word *sin* in the OT. *Among all this people were 700 select men who were left-handed; every one could sling a stone at a hair's breadth and not miss.* [חָטָא (ḥāṭā')]]
1. Slide17 The root occurs about 580 times in the OT and is thus its principle word for **sin**. The basic meaning of the root is *to miss a mark.* (in Gk also)
 2. Israel had **missed the mark...by a mile.** [as you & I]
- C. Slide18 A HOT OVEN (1-7)
- D. (2) **I remember all their sickness** - Your sin is always naked before God. He sees in the dark. *Indeed, the darkness shall not hide from You, But the night shines as the day; The darkness and the light are both alike to You.* Ps.139:12
- E. (4) **Like an oven heated by a baker** - It is not clear whether general breach of covenant or literal adultery is described here.
1. In either case, **Israel's passion for disobedience** was like a fire burning low in an oven while the baker kneads the dough and waits for the leavening process to be completed.
 2. **Like an oven fire**, Israel's passion *might subside* for a short time, **but** it was ever present, ready to blaze forth when kindled (**read vs.6**).
- F. If it refers to *excessive sexual desires*, portraying them as intense fires that **drive** the adulterer, & eventually **consume** him.
1. **Lust is the craving for salt by a man who is dying of thirst.**
- G. Slide19 (7) **Hot like an oven** – [3 main methods in that day]
1. The most primitive method of baking bread was the laying of cakes of dough on **heated stones.**

- a) 1 Kings 19:6 *Then he looked (Elijah), and there by his head was a cake baked on coals (hot stones), and a jar of water.*
2. The **pitcher-oven** – A stone pitcher placed over a fire, w/a hole in the top. Often bread was rolled out thin & placed **on** the oven.
3. Then there were the **semi-public ovens**, or the **public bakers**.
- a) Jer.37:21 *Then Zedekiah the king commanded that they should commit Jeremiah to the court of the prison, and that they should give him daily a piece of bread from the bakers' street, until all the bread in the city was gone.* [only case in which the name of a street in Jerusalem is preserved]
- b) **This** oven seems to be the oven Hosea speaks of (6).
4. Often the bible speaks of **passion** referring to burning or fire.
- a) i.e. *For it is better to marry than to burn with passion.* 1Cor.7:9
- b) **Not** an excuse to **marry right away**...as many use it, **but** it proves that individual doesn't have the other gift (i.e. celibacy).
- c) The desire for **sin** can **smolder** like a fire in an oven **and then blaze** when the opportunity comes.
5. **Slide20 So how do you stomp out passions?** The same way you put out fires, **2 ways**: 1) **Deprive it of oxygen** 2) **Don't feed it nor fan the flame**.
- a) **Deprive it of oxygen** – or *starve the eyes*.
- b) **Don't feed it nor fan the flame** – Look at Job 31:1-12 gives descriptive language on lust. It ends with vs.12 saying, *For that would be a fire that consumes to destruction, And would root out all my increase.* (**destruction** = consuming something, to destroy completely)
- H. **Slide21 A CAKE UNTURNED** (8-10)
- I. **Mixes himself among the peoples** - Israel's reliance on foreign aid (rather than God)
1. **What do you find yourself mixed with?** (mixed is the opposite of **pure**)
- J. **Slide22a ½ Baked** – Cooked more than enough on 1 side **but** completely undone on the other.

1. This represented something that was **useless**, & that would **make you sick...**
as it did God.
 2. Laodicea was simply *lukewarm...* **but** Israel here was a cake/bread $\frac{1}{2}$ of which was raw?
 3. **Slide22b** Don't be a $\frac{1}{2}$ *baked* Christian...that's when someone doesn't allow their religion to go deep into their lives, **but** is only *a surface thing*.
 - a) Ask your soul whether this is your case. Are you **thorough** in the things of God? Am I **sanctified** spirit, soul, body? Is there the **appearance of holiness** in one place of your life & **reigning sin** in another?...**if so**, you will be a cake not turned.
 - b) **Slide22c** Have you met someone **burnt** on one side of their Christianity & **doughy** on the other? (eg. as zealous as a Pharisee in one area & yet so liberal in another)
 4. **Our prayer...** *Oh Lord, cook me through on both sides. Show me my doughy weaknesses. Show me the areas I'm charred in, my pet hobby horses I continue to study & ride.*
 - a) **Now** be ready for the Lord *w/His heavenly spatula* to flip you and your life **completely over**.
- K. (9) **Grey hair...& he does not know it** – they didn't notice their own grey hairs growing in (didn't have good mirrors like we do). Then you run into someone who hasn't seen you in a while, *Wow, you're grey!*
1. Israel had no clue they were in **national old age**.
 2. Israel was losing their strength **but** was ignorant of the change.
 - a) Like Samson who, *did not know that the LORD had departed from him*.
 3. **Slide23** **Sin adds to your trouble, subtracts from your energy, & multiplies your difficulties.** Daily Bread (Oct.10. 2001)
- L. **Slide24 A SILLY DOVE** (11,12)
- M. **What do you usually think of when you hear dove?** (beauty or peace)
1. Here it suggests *a helpless creature, easily deceived & senseless*.
 2. **Slide25** The dove is a symbol of ignorant innocence (Mt.10:16 Jesus said, **be wise as serpents and harmless as doves**).

- a) Instead of seeking God, Israel foolishly gambled on foreign alliances, wavering between Assyrian & Egyptian loyalties.
- 3. Israel had forsaken God, her only true source of national security.
 - a) She does not know where to turn: she was unstable, flitting about from one political ally to another. Looking to **Egypt** down south, **Assyria** to the east... *but not to God.*
- 4. So, God is going to *bring her down like birds of the air* (12).

N. *Slide26,27* **A FAULTY BOW** (13-16)

O. *This is not only useless...but down right dangerous.* (also used in Ps.78:57)

- 1. God had trained **Israel** to Fly Straight & how to Hit the Target.
- 2. **The one who puts his trust in a weapon like this, will fall to his enemies. You cannot depend on a weapon like that.**
 - a) Dan & I were once shooting a Skill Builder course/timed course at Front Sight. *All our 9mm ammo was malfunctioning/every 3rd round.* (raining, cold, gloves) We both got real proficient at clearing our malfunctions, **but** it sure wasn't dependable, & had to buy different ammo for our test at the end.
- 3. **Can God depend on you?** Are you dependable?
 - a) **An arrow** needs to be: *straight, sharp, balanced, & have flight-stabilizing vanes.* (And so we need to be)
- 4. **In the battle against evil, are we a weapon God can depend on?**
- 5. **So what do we do?** (Let's take advantage of having the end of the story & jump ahead to 14:1,2,4-6)

P. **Ending Prayer:** Lord we count on... *Your Mercy for our past mistakes. Your Love for our present needs. Your Sovereignty for our future.*