**“God’s Loyal Love: Judgment and Mercy”**

Hosea 13:1-16 Key Verse: Hosea 13:14

(notes based on the sermon by Pastor Steve Massey, Hayden Bible Church, 3/14/21)

[NOTE: Are you thankful for a pastor who will preach through those parts of the Bible that most of us would rather skip? I sure am. We need to hear of the holiness of God and the wrath of God so that we can truly understand the mercy of God. Why do we regularly come together as the church? We need these reminders of who God is and reminders of how to rightly respond to Him.] (Q1)

 Hold on to your seats and read Hosea 13:7-8 &16 once again. Is God really like that? What do these startling words reveal about who God truly is? Here’s the point: God’s wrath burns against all sin. IF WE DON’T SEE THE GOD OF WRATH, WE WON’T RUN TO HIM AS THE GOD OF MERCY. The Book of Hosea is about the relationship between God and His people. We are to be His people, loyally and exclusively living for Him. Hosea 13 speaks of the judgment that awaits His unfaithful people.

 Hosea 13:1-3 tells of idolatry that’s persistent and prevalent, juxtaposed with the God of Holiness. What is idolatry? It’s using our skills to serve ourselves rather than exalting God and reflecting His holiness. It’s living for anything that takes God’s rightful place. (Q2) Hosea’s very life was to be a proclamation of what had happened to the relationship between God and His people. God had Hosea marry a whore to represent how far Israel had fallen from the personal, intimate, exclusive marriage relationship that Israel once had enjoyed with their God. The key lesson: divided loyalty to God is no loyalty at all. (Q3)

 Hosea 13:6 tells of a people blessed greatly with good things from God, but suffering from a case of spiritual amnesia. They were forgetting the Giver of these gifts. Can you imagine a people who become prosperous, and then forget that all that they have comes from God? 13:10-11 says that even though they had God as their King, they continued to put their trust in earthly kings (human leaders). Again, can you imagine such a people? (Q4)

 Now read 13:7-8 again. God’s wrath is powerful, deliberate, and severe. Israel mistook God’s patience for “indifference to sin.” Bad mistake. God will judge all who exalt themselves and not Him. God will judge all who seek safety and security outside of Him. God will judge all who sin in any way. Your only safety is to run to Christ. This scripture is meant to provoke people to repentance. We need to know about God’s wrath so that we have a great sense of God’s mercy. The just wrath of God is the context for the good news of the Gospel.

 Hosea 13:14 gives us a glimmer of hope. Notice the words **ransom** and **redeem**. Ransom means bought out of the power of the grave. Redeem means bought out by a close relative from a place of distress. These are words of hope to an incredibly undeserving people. This is what God is revealing about Himself: He is a God of inexplicable mercy. Jesus, the sinless One, did everything necessary to rescue us sinners from the just wrath of God. Read 1 Cor. 15:55-57. Our victory over death is only through Jesus. To unrepentant sinners, God will be like that bear. To repentant sinners, He will ransom and redeem you through His Son, Jesus. The One who hates sin the most is also the One who has provided the way back.

 Jesus came to pay for the PENALTY of our sin. He gave us His Spirit to overcome the present POWER of sin. And one day, He will take us to Himself where we will be far, far away from even the PRESENCE of sin. Let us not pick and choose among God’s attributes. We thank Him for his wrath and His holiness and His mercy. We trust you, Jesus, for your life and death and resurrection that saves us. Help us daily tell others who need to hear these truths. Amen.

(Q5)

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Read Heb. 10:24-25. How can reminders of who God is “spur one another on to love and good deeds”? How can reminders of who God is “encourage one another”?
2. How else would you define idolatry? Give examples of idolatry in 2021 America.
3. Read Psalm 86:11, especially that part about “an undivided heart.” What does that phrase have to do with the other 3 phrases in that verse?
4. What’s the matter with us? Why do most Americans have little to do with God from Monday through Saturday?
5. Who needs to hear these truths from you? Will you begin praying for them right now?

“Glory to His Name” (Elisha Hoffman)

 Down at the cross where my Savior died,

 Down where for cleansing from sin I cried,

 There to my heart was the blood applied;

 Glory to His Name!

 Refrain:

 Glory to His Name,

 Glory to His Name:

 There to my heart was the blood applied;

 Glory to His Name!

 I am so wondrously saved from sin,

 Jesus so sweetly abides within,

 There at the cross where He took me in;

 Glory to His Name!

 Come to this fountain so rich and sweet,

 Cast thy poor soul at the Savior’s feet;

 Plunge in today, and be made complete;

 Glory to His Name!