

Romans Session 143

Israel's Unbelief Is Consistent With God's Prophetic Revelation 1

Romans 9:22-29 (NASB)

²² *What if God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction?*

²³ *And He did so to make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory,*

²⁴ *even us, whom He also called, not from among Jews only, but also from among Gentiles.*

²⁵ *As He says also in Hosea, "I WILL CALL THOSE WHO WERE NOT MY PEOPLE, 'MY PEOPLE,' AND HER WHO WAS NOT BELOVED, 'BELOVED.'"*

²⁶ *"AND IT SHALL BE THAT IN THE PLACE WHERE IT WAS SAID TO THEM, 'YOU ARE NOT MY PEOPLE,' THERE THEY SHALL BE CALLED SONS OF THE LIVING GOD."*

²⁷ *Isaiah cries out concerning Israel, "THOUGH THE NUMBER OF THE SONS OF ISRAEL BE LIKE THE SAND OF THE SEA, IT IS THE REMNANT THAT WILL BE SAVED;*

²⁸ *FOR THE LORD WILL EXECUTE HIS WORD ON THE EARTH, THOROUGHLY AND QUICKLY."*

²⁹ *And just as Isaiah foretold, "UNLESS THE LORD OF SABAOth HAD LEFT TO US A POSTERITY, WE WOULD HAVE BECOME LIKE SODOM, AND WOULD HAVE RESEMBLED GOMORRAH."*

We have looked at first Paul's argument that the setting aside of Israel, and bringing in the Church was consistent with:

1. God's original plan
2. God's Person

Now we want to look at how it is consistent with God's Prophetic Revelation.

Paul uses two quotations from Hosea and two from Isaiah to show that Israel's unbelief and rejection of the messiah and His gospel fit what the prophets had predicted.

Paraphrasing the Prophet, Paul declares that **He**, that is God **says also in Hosea,**

²⁵ *"I WILL CALL THOSE WHO WERE NOT MY PEOPLE, 'MY PEOPLE,' AND HER WHO WAS NOT BELOVED, 'BELOVED.'"*

To understand the full meaning of that truth it is necessary to look at the first chapter of Hosea, where we read,

Hosea 1:2 (NASB)

² *When the LORD first spoke through Hosea, the LORD said to Hosea, "Go, take to yourself a wife of harlotry and have children of harlotry; for the land commits flagrant harlotry, forsaking the LORD."*

It is not clear from the text whether Gomer, Hosea's wife, was a harlot before she married him or became one after the marriage.

In either case, the Lord commanded the prophet to keep her as his wife, despite her adultery, or more correctly because of it.

Hosea 1:3-4 (NASB)

³ *So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bore him a son.*

⁴ *And the LORD said to him, "Name him Jezreel; for yet a little while, and I will punish the house of Jehu for the bloodshed of Jezreel, and I will put an end to the kingdom of the house of Israel."*

Hosea 1:6 (NASB)

⁶ Then she conceived again and gave birth to a daughter. And the LORD said to him, "Name her Lo-ruhamah, for I will no longer have compassion on the house of Israel, that I would ever forgive them."

Hosea 1:8-9 (NASB)

⁸ When she had weaned Lo-ruhamah, she conceived and gave birth to a son.

⁹ And the LORD said, "Name him Lo-ammi, for you are not My people and I am not your God."

Gomer's moral unfaithfulness to Hosea provided a vivid analogy to Israel's spiritual unfaithfulness to God.

By His sovereign design and provision, she would bear Hosea a son whose name means "**God sows**" (referring to the scattering of seeds, as well as to the place where Jehu murdered Ahab's sons)

Hosea then had a daughter whose name means "**not pitied**" or "**not having obtained compassion,**" and another son whose name means "**not My people,**"

Those three names represented God's attitude toward Israel, His chosen but disobedient people.

For a divinely determined period, they would be scattered like sown seeds, unpitied by the world, and forsaken by God.

The Lord goes on to promise, however, that His people will not be permanently forsaken.

Applying the analogy to unfaithful and spiritually adulterous Israel, God says;

Hosea 2:14 (NASB)

¹⁴ "Therefore, behold, I will allure her, Bring her into the wilderness And speak kindly to her."

Hosea 2:19 (NASB)

¹⁹ "I will betroth you to Me forever; Yes, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and in justice, In lovingkindness and in compassion,"

Just as Hosea protected and supported Gomer, even during her harlotries, and one day bought her as a slave on the block in the open market, naked and full of shame, so God someday will redeem Israel.

Until that time, God not only will treat Israel as not being His children but will treat Gentiles, who were not His people, as His people

It is that converse truth, found in ***Hosea 2:23***, that Paul paraphrases;

²⁵ "I WILL CALL THOSE WHO WERE NOT MY PEOPLE, 'MY PEOPLE,' AND HER WHO WAS NOT BELOVED, 'BELOVED.'"

²⁶ "AND IT SHALL BE THAT IN THE PLACE WHERE IT WAS SAID TO THEM, 'YOU ARE NOT MY PEOPLE,' THERE THEY SHALL BE CALLED SONS OF THE LIVING GOD."

Hosea had already witnessed the Assyrian conquest and devastation of the northern Kingdom of Israel, which occurred in 722BC, some twelve years before the prophet wrote his book.

That pagan nation became the rod of God's anger;

Isaiah 10:5 (NASB)

⁵ Woe to Assyria, the rod of My anger And the staff in whose hands is My indignation,

He used this nation to chastise His rebellious people.

When God removed His protective hand, Israel became subject to the military expansionism of Assyria and thereby became, for a while, not God's people.

Israel was scattered, unpitied, and forsaken by God, just as He had declared.

In 586 BC the southern Kingdom of Judah would meet similar fate at the hands of the Babylonians.

Only after many years of exile in foreign lands would God bring his chosen people back to their promised land.

Even today, He has not yet redeemed them from the slave market of sin.

Now it is important to understand that Paul is here speaking about Israel as a nation and that they will be the focus of his message through the end of the chapter 11.

Paul's purpose is to show that Israel's unbelief was no surprise to God and was in no way inconsistent with His divine plan for His chosen people or for the world.

Paul was also referring to Israel's rejection of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, at His first coming.

Rejecting God's won Son was Israel's supreme unfaithfulness to God, her consummate act of spiritual adultery, in which she still lived when Paul wrote his letter to Rome, and still lives today.

Like her rejection of God in the time of Hosea, Israel's rejections of Christ in the time of Paul was perfectly consistent with God's divine plan.

Israel responded to Christ exactly as the prophets had predicted hundreds of years earlier.

Paul says in effect, "we are not surprised when we see Jewish unbelief and we see them denying the gospel.

We are not surprised when they enter into unbelief and sever themselves from God.

Because through the Prophet Hosea, the Lord revealed what kind of people they would be.

The Prophet saw and understood Israel's unfaithfulness and God's scattering and rejections of her during that ancient time, and through Paul the Holy Spirit applies to New Testament times what Hosea both envisioned and witnessed in regard to the Israel of his day.

In A.D. 70, about ten years after Paul wrote this letter to the Roman Church, the city of Jerusalem, including its magnificent temple, was totally, destroyed by the Roman General Titus, under direct orders from the emperor.

At that time a large percentage of the surviving Jews fled Israel, and in 132 the remainder of them were forcefully expelled by Rome.

They remained a scattered people until 1948, when the modern state of Israel was formed and became recognized as such by most of the world.

Yet the great majority of Jews do not now live in Israel but are still scattered throughout the world.

And that nation still rejects her Messiah and is not yet again the people of God.

But as Paul explains, late in this epistle,

Romans 11:25-26 (NASB)

²⁵ ***For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery—so that you will not be wise in your own estimation—that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in;***

²⁶ ***and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, "THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION, HE WILL***

REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB."

God promises through Hosea and through Paul that those who had become, for a long time, **not My people** would, by His gracious plan, someday become again **My people**.

Now drawing from the same passage in Hosea and referring to that same divine graciousness, the Lord says through Peter,

1 Peter 2:10 (NASB)

¹⁰ for you once were NOT A PEOPLE, but now you are THE PEOPLE OF GOD; you had NOT RECEIVED MERCY, but now you have RECEIVED MERCY.

Here the words refer to the church, God's chosen **people** of this present age.

Paul's focus, however, is Israel. When the Jews rejected God and became scattered, unpitied, and **not My people**, they became just like the Gentiles as far as their relations to God was concerned, scattered and unsaved.

Paul continues to explain that **it shall be that in the place where it was said to them, "you are not My people," there they shall be called sons of the living God.**

Paul again quotes from Hosea, but this time does not paraphrase, using the prophet's own words almost verbatim,

Hosea 1:10 (NASB)

¹⁰ Yet the number of the sons of Israel Will be like the sand of the sea, Which cannot be measured or numbered; And in the place Where it is said to them, "You are not My people," It will be said to them, "You are the sons of the living God."

The place of which Hosea spoke was every place to which the Jews had been scattered.

In those places they have been called **not My people**, but one day they will in those same places **be called sons of the living God.**

As Hosea did with his wife, after the scattering of God's people in Hosea's day, God eventually brought them back.

And after their present scattering, He will again bring them back, not only to their own land but to their true Lord, as **sons of the living God.**

The redemption of Israel will come.

But Paul's emphasis in this passage is not Israel's ultimate restoration to God but her present alienation from God.

As already noted, the apostle's primary point is that the unbelief of Israel, that caused her alienation and scattering was not inconsistent with God's sovereign plan, not His person, or the Prophetic truth as given by the prophets for the people of Israel.

On the contrary, historically, and regarding the time of Messiah, God foresaw and predicted Jewish rejection and its consequences long before it occurred.

Next time we will look at the next prophet Paul quotes, who was a contemporary of Hosea, that being Isaiah.