

The Story of the Bible

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Preacher: Mike Scrivani

[0 : 00] From Hosea chapter 11 verses 1 through 11.

! They kept sacrificing to the Baals and burning offerings to idols.

Yet it was I who tied a frame to walk. I took them up by their arms, but they did not know that I healed them. I led them with cords of kindness, with the bands of love, and I became to them as one who eases the yoke on their jaws.

And I bent down to them and fed them. They shall not return to the land of Egypt, but to Assyria shall be their king, because they have refused to return to me.

The sword shall rage against their cities, consume the bars of their gates, and devour them because of their own counsels. My people are bent on turning away from me, and though they call out to the Most High, He shall not raise them up at all.

[1 : 14] How can I give you up, O Ephraim? How can I hand you over, O Israel? How can I make you like Adma? How can I treat you like Zoabim? My heart recoils within me.

My compassion grows warm and tender. I will not execute my burning anger. I will not again destroy Ephraim. For I am God and not a man, the Holy One in your midst, and I will not come in wrath. They shall go after the Lord. He will roar like a lion. When He roars, His children shall come trembling from the west. They shall come trembling like birds from Egypt, and like doves from the land of Assyria.

And I will return them to their homes, declares the Lord. May God add a blessing to the reading of His Word. Would you please be seated? The mutiny of the bounty occurred on April 28th of 1789. Fletcher Christian led a group of men to seize control of the bounty, which was a British ship that had set sail from England bound for the South Seas.

[2 : 28] Their mission was to go to Tahiti first and to take breadfruit saplings and to transport them then to other islands in the West Indies and plant them there with the hopes that it would make those islands more habitable.

And so it was about a 10-month voyage, could you imagine, from England to the island of Tahiti. And then once they got there, the men worked for six months diligently to accomplish their mission. And once it was completed, the men were ordered by their captain, Captain Bly, to board the ship and head on to their next destination.

There was a problem because a lot of these men really liked Tahiti. They loved the exotic land. They loved the women there.

They took a strong liking to the ease and to the comfort that island living brings. And so late one night, Fletcher Christian, ironically that was his name, led a group of mutineers into the captain's chambers, and they dragged him out of bed.

[3 : 43] And he, along with eight other men who were loyal to him, they loaded them in a small boat and they sent them adrift. And amazingly, Captain Bly was able to pilot that ship 3,600 miles to safety in the Dutch Indies, where eventually they made it back home to London and where they were able to then tell their story to everyone who was there.

Soon after that, an expedition was launched to bring the rebels to justice. And in due time, 14 of the men who were involved in that mutiny were captured, and they faced the penalty of the crime under British law for what they had done.

However, they weren't able to capture all the men. In fact, Fletcher Christian was never brought to justice. He and eight others of those who had committed this mutiny after setting Captain Bly a sail. They had aborted the bounty, and they left themselves to go to the island of Pitkern. They went there. They took their native wives with them, and some of the native men came along with them as well.

And there, on this once deserted island, they established their own colony. One of the first things that these men put their minds together to do was to learn how to use one of the native plants to distill whiskey.

[5 : 09] And they drank a lot of whiskey. And you can imagine that they began to develop habits that form from the consumption of drinking a lot of whiskey.

And so it wasn't long before most of the men, in fact, all of the men but two in that colony, were either murdered or died of some kind of disease.

The two men who survived were Edward Young and John Adams, who is also known as Alexander Smith. Young and Adams, during this time, became very ashamed of the violence that had overtaken that community, that colony, and the horrors that they had witnessed, and that they had also partaken of on that island.

And so as they looked among the possessions of the dead sailors, they found a Bible. And these two men began to read that Bible.

These two men began to believe that Bible. And they began to put what the Bible taught into practice for themselves and for the women and the children who still were a part of that colony.

[6 : 19] And despite their great differences, these men were able to teach those women and children about the Word of God. Twenty years later, this went on for 20 years, uninterrupted, before 20 years later, a ship from New England stumbled upon this island community.

And what they discovered there amazed them. They were greeted by natives who spoke English, who prayed morning and evening, and before and after every meal.

They witnessed that these people lived in harmony and peace with one another. They witnessed that they had memorized large portions of Scripture. One observer even made this comment, in conducting the most trivial affairs, they are guided by the Scriptures, which they have read diligently, and from which they quote with a freedom and frequency that impairs the effect.

They witnessed that in this community, there was no crime, there was no immorality, insanity, or illiteracy, and it was all accomplished by the reading, the believing, and the applying of God's Word. Let me tell you, no other book, no other document could achieve or have the same effect. And that is because the Bible is not just like any other book, because the Bible is the Word of God.

[7 : 56] It will have an effect on those who believe it, on those who teach it, on those who apply it. And so in our Baptist Faith and Message 2000, this is the statement that we have about Scripture.

It says there, the Holy Bible was written by men, divinely inspired, and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction.

It has God for its author, salvations for its end and truth, without any mixture of error for its matter. Therefore, it says, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy.

It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried.

All Scripture, it says in its last sentence, is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation. In fact, as a church, in our bylaws, in Appendix B, we have a, in our five doctrinal statements, the first statement that we have there is about who we teach God is, and the second statement deals with what we teach about Scripture.

[9 : 10] And so I encourage you, if you haven't read those things before, to do so, and you'll find, if you've been a part of this church, and if you read that document, that we think that the Bible is a very big deal.

But I'll confess to you, that there was a time in my life, that as a believer, I didn't treat the Bible as a very big deal. I was called to ministry at 16 years old, and I went to a Christian university, in part to pursue that calling.

But as I mentioned in last week's sermon, that God's call is rivaled by the world's call, isn't it? And like the prodigal son in Jesus' parable, I rebelled.

I committed, in a way, an act of mutiny over my own life. I didn't think that it was fair that God could tell me what to do. And so I decided that, you know what, I'll steer my own ship.

I'll be the master of my own fate. I'll be the captain of my own soul. My will will be done. And man, I am so thankful that it didn't take long for me to capsized that attempt.

[10 : 25] And I'm thankful that God was there to rescue me from my stupidity, from the mess that I had made of my life. And in fact, I believe that it was he, by his grace, whom I give credit for helping

me to see and making me to see how silly my attempt at mutiny was.

And so on the computer in my office, the screensaver there is a quote from Charles Spurgeon. And I love it. He said, I have learned to kiss the waves that throw me up against the rock of ages. And it's there to remind me of those times and how dumb it is for a man to try to take control of his own life and not trust in God.

So I'm thankful for what God has brought me through and I'm thankful for all that he has taught me through those difficult times. And I think that's why my favorite passage in scripture is Proverbs 3, 5, and 6.

Many of you know that. Trust in the Lord with all of your heart. Lean not on your own understanding and all your ways. Acknowledge him and he will make your paths straight. It's my favorite because I've learned that lesson the hard way and because I need to be reminded that even God can use crooked sticks to make straight paths.

[11 : 45] Amen? And I love it and it's my favorite because I am in desperate need of being reminded of it every single day because every day I'm tempted to believe that I could do it better or that I know more than I actually do.

So we need God's word desperately. Charles Spurgeon another quote from him he said if you wish to know God you must know his word. If you wish to perceive his power you must see how he works by his word.

If you wish to know his purpose before it is actually brought to pass you can only discover it by his word. The Bible is a Christian book and collectively it tells one story and the story that it tells is God's story.

God is the author of it. He is the subject of it. He is the fulfiller of it. He is the hero of it. It's all about him and it's all about his glory.

It's a story that fallen sinful mankind would never write but and for that reason it is a story that we desperately need to hear.

[13 : 02] And so I believe that in Hosea chapter 11 the story of the Bible is told in a microcosm that in these 11 verses and I know there's 12 but I think that 12 better fits with chapter 12 you've got to understand that when the Bible was originally written it wasn't originally written with those chapters and verses.

We're thankful for those but I think that chapter or verse 12 I should say will be covered next week as we go into chapter 12. But these 11 verses tell us the whole story of the Bible in a small scale. In my office I have a model a little replica of Kaufman Stadium Kaufman Stadium where the Royals play. And the layout of it the form of it the structure of it both on the inside of that model on the outside it helps you to see that whole stadium all at one time.

Now it's not anything like actually going there and walking through that stadium and seeing all the intricate details of it but I can look at that model and it can fit in my hand and I can see all of it at one time like I couldn't see if I was to go to that stadium in purpose or in person I should say as if you would do the same it would be the same case.

So on a very small scale I'm able to see it. And so I believe that that's what is happening here in Hosea chapter 11 on a very small scale God is using his prophet Hosea to tell us the whole story of the Bible.

[14 : 36] And so here's the main idea for this morning's sermon. The Bible is God's story. It is one book with one plan of redemption for sinners. This redemption is accomplished from initiation through execution to consummation by God's grace alone.

From predestination to glorification the Bible is the story of God redeeming his people for his glory. And as such I believe that it is the privilege and the duty of every believer to diligently read and to study and to apply the word of God in all aspects of their lives.

And so first of all we see in Hosea chapter 11 in verse 1 that the Bible is a story about rescue. It's about rescue. Again look at verse 1 when Israel was a child God says I loved him and out of Egypt I called my son.

We covered this a couple weeks ago but it's worth going over again for sure. Because throughout the Bible we see that God rescues his people from their sin.

We see that in the very beginning when Adam and Eve sinned God promised them after declaring decreeing his curses he promised them that one day one would come who would crush the head of the serpent and the rest of the Old Testament traces that seed that promised one that Messiah who

would come and one day rescue his people from the curse of sin.

[16 : 19] We trace that seed from there to Noah in fulfilling his promise to send the seed of the woman who would crush the head of the serpent if you remember God rescued Noah and he rescued his family from the flood and he preserved them as a remnant that they would be fruitful and then refill the earth after the waters receded receded but even that fresh start wasn't able to undo the curse of sin.

later on we are introduced to Abram who would become Abraham God chose him God promised that he would make his descendants more numerous than the stars of the heavens that promise began to be fulfilled as Israel was multiplying in the land of Egypt after they had been moved there by Joseph there in Exodus chapter 1 verse 7 it says the people of Israel were fruitful and they increased greatly they multiplied and they grew exceedingly strong so that the land was filled with them but just like in Eden God's plan was opposed the people of Israel were enslaved by Pharaoh and they suffered under his cruel and oppressive reign and in their despair they cried out to God and they pleaded for rescue that he would rescue them from their bondage to sin to slavery and the Bible says that God remembered his promise and then from there the Lord you remember revealed himself to Moses in the burning bush and he raised that man up to be a mediator and deliverer for his people and through Moses

God rescued his people from Egypt by his mighty hand and by the blood of the spotless lambs that was shed and that they took shelter from as the angel of death passed through that land the climatic deliverance of Israel at the Red Sea caused all the people to celebrate their rescue and in response to this mighty work of salvation Moses you remember led the people in a song of praise to their God who rescued them from slavery Exodus 15 11 and 18 who is like you they praise God who is like you oh Lord among the gods who is like you majestic in holiness awesome and glorious deeds doing wonders the Lord will reign forever and ever I love a quote by Timothy Keller he said of this exodus of this time imagine he says you were in Egypt just after that first Passover if you stopped an Israelite in those days and asked him who are you and what is happening here they would say

I was a slave under a sentence of death but I took shelter under the blood of the lamb and escaped that bondage and now God lives in our midst and we are following him to the promised land and he says that is exactly what the Christian message still is today the exodus of Israel from their bondage in Egypt points towards an even greater exodus of God's people through the cross of Jesus Christ Colossians 1 13-14 says he Jesus has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved son in whom we have redemption the forgiveness of sins so we understand that the story of the Bible is a story about Jesus Christ who through his life and through his death and through his resurrection has rescued sinners from their bondage to sin and to death he is our great rescuer however the Bible is also a story about rebellion verse 2

God rescued them but the more they were called the more they went away they kept sacrificing to the Baals and burning offering to idols though God had rescued Israel from Egypt their response time after time to him was to rebel against him choosing instead to go their own way choosing instead to worship their own gods thus breaking the first commandment that they had that they would have no other gods besides the one true living and holy God let me tell you we continue to see this today don't we but instead of people worshipping some other false god the false god who they end up worshipping in our society especially is themselves don't we see this there is a great desperation on the part of people in our culture to be the story to be the focus to get all the attention to get all the glory haven't we seen this play out this week in our world in our news with

[22 : 04] Jussie Smollett have you been following that an example again I think of a microcosm of what is happening on a large scale in our community is a desire for people in our world to be famous to be known to be prestigious to have things to be loved and so we'll come up with all different kinds of things lies and what have you to try to get that attention on ourselves Jesus likewise faced rebellion during his earthly ministry not just from those who were who were boldly opposed to him to his face but from his own step siblings from his own disciples remember on the eve of his crucifixion they rebelled against him they left him alone as he said that they would while he was crucified Jesus was betrayed not only by those who sought his death but by those who said that they loved him another reason

I believe that we should believe that the Bible is God's word is because mankind would never write such a book about himself because we're not the heroes of this story far from it in the Bible our sins

our flaws are on full display and here's the thing we're no different from those rebels recorded in the passages of scripture because we too have rebelled Romans 3 10 through 12 as it is written none is righteous in case you don't understand what none means no not one no one understands no one seeks for God all have turned aside together they have become worthless no one does good not even one we have rebelled against God and our rebellion comes with consequences so the story of the Bible is a story of rescue rebellion it's also a story about rejection and this is what we see in verses 3 through 7 of Hosea let me read those again yet it was I

God says who taught Ephraim to walk I took them up by their arms but they did not know that I healed them I led them with cords of chiteness with the bands of love and I became to them as one who eases the yoke on their jaws and I bent down to them and fed them they shall not return to the land of Egypt but Assyria shall be their king because they have refused to return to me he says the sword shall rage against their cities consume the bars of their gates and devour them because of their own counsel because of their own rejection my people are bent on turning away from me and though they call out to the most high he!

shall not raise them up loving parent who lovingly has trained his child to walk and who has provided that child with all the things that a child needs love nourishment!

encouragement compassion patience when I think of that it reminds me of a cartoon strip that I saw a long time ago baby blues Have you guys ever read that cartoon strip and in that strip in each panel it's a mom and she's spending a typical day with her kids so in the first panel you see that the mom is up early and she's she's cleaning and then the kids wake up and they make a mess of everything that she cleaned in the next panel you see that the mom follows the kids around and she's picking up everything that they've made a mess of and as she dumping everything out right making it a mess again another panel depicts the mom's shirt being used for all different kinds of things by these kids they use it as a napkin to wipe their mouths they use it as a rag to blow their nose on she answers the phone and they're yelling and screaming and she can't hear the conversation that she's having right everywhere she around she never gets a moment of peace by herself all day long and finally in the last panel of that comic strip somebody asked the mom and she's bleary eyed her hair is messy she's got stains all over her shirt and the woman asks the mom what is motherhood like and this woman and

[27 : 14] I mean it's a comic strip but you know they depict her with this genuine smile on her face and she's looking off with these eyes of love and pride and she says motherhood is wonderful and when I think of that comic strip when I think about these verses I'm reminded of the mom that I had I I'm reminded of the wife that I have and the type of mother that she is to our children and how much love they have for their kids and though we are rebellious and sinful and dirty and despicable and ungrateful children God loves us still however as we see there are times when our misdeeds have added up to the point where

God must execute his justice I know a couple who had a daughter who treated them horribly horribly there was no doubt that this Christian couple they loved their daughter all throughout her childhood they took her to church even into her teen years and she grew up and she rebelled hard against her parents while she was a teen she had multiple pregnancies! and gave up those child for adoption she had multiple abortions her parents would go out of town they returned to a house that was destroyed because it had been partied in all the time that they were gone she had trashed the place her mom became the treasurer of the church and her daughter found her checkbook and she tore out checks from the back and she stole money from the church and all of these things brought tremendous shame upon these parents they loved her but she would not listen to them she would not obey them and so what she needed was tough love as we call it you guys know what tough love is it's love but it's love accompanied by hard truth they loved her but she needed to know what the truth of her life and her condition was and they could not stand by and watch her continue to do this to herself and to them she was out of control and so they did what a loving parent would do as

God does for his rebellious people when necessary and they exiled her from their house house and I'll tell you that things didn't get better for her right off the bat but eventually they did she got married they had children she was saved she began going to that church again became a member of that church that she had stolen money from and they loved and accepted her and she turned her life around not perfect but so much better than it was before so we see that God will use exile for a purpose to purify his people and during their time of exile the Israelites would finally repent of their

idolatry they would finally get rid of their worship of false gods though they would have a problem with making a god out of their religious systems but God used that to purify them so after reminding Israel of all that he's done for them in verses 3 and 4 and after reminding them how they've rebelled against him and spurned his love repeatedly things take a turn in verse 5 and they learn about their coming punishment for what they've done just as God had rescued them from their slavery so now he says that he would send them right back to it being exiled from the promised land that he had given them just as God remember exiled Adam and Eve from the garden of sin and he placed a flaming sword to prevent their return so God would also bring the sword of Assyria upon Israel for rejecting his grace and that understand could have justifiably been the end of Israel's story but remember back in Genesis 3 God made a promise but before we continue on

[32 : 35] I want to say something else that I think is important to say here 1 Peter chapter 2 verses 7 through 10 let's look at that together so the honor is for you who believe but for those who do not believe the stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone and a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense they stumble because they disobey the word as they were destined to do but you are a chosen race a royal priesthood a people for his own possession that you may proclaim the excellences of him who has called you out of darkness and into his marvelous light once you were not a people but now you are God's people once you had not received mercy but now you have received!

mercy so we must understand to every human being Christ is either the means of salvation if they believe or he is a means of judgment if they reject him there is no other hope for mankind there is no other means of rescue from sin and death than through Jesus Christ and if you believe that there is hope of restoration for you man is presently in exile from the kingdom of God and only the grace of God regenerates and can restore him so we see that the Bible is also a story about restoration verses 8 and 9 things take a dramatic turn what a twist to the story here how can I give you up oh how can I hand you over oh Israel how can I make you like Adma how can

I make you like Zobim my heart recoils within me my compassion grows warm and tender I will not execute my anger I will not again destroy you frame for I am God and not a man the holy one in your midst I will not come in wrath they would be exiled you have to understand but Israel would turn back to God Jesus Christ is the king of kings who himself came to rescue a people for his praise and redeem rebels that were lost he emptied himself of his divine prerogatives and the eternal infinite son of God became an infant then as a man after passing through the waters of baptism and endowed by God's spirit the son of God was led into the wilderness to battle Satan the archenemy of God's people the devil the ancient serpent sought to stop

Jesus at the outset of his ministry but where Adam and Eve had failed where Abraham and Moses and all the judges and all of the kings and all of the prophets where all of Israel had failed where all of us have failed Jesus succeeded the way forward from there for Jesus Christ led directly to the cross just as God himself had promised through his prophets the servant of the Lord would rescue and save by suffering in the place of rebels like you and me and just as the Lord promised in Genesis 3 15 the seed of Eve would one day crush the head of the serpent but his heel would be bruised on the cross Jesus bore the awful curse of sin and was sacrificed as a substitute for sinners he was exiled he was forsaken by

God for our sins he bled he died in our place for our sins but even the curse of sin and the power of death could not keep our king of kings in the grave Jesus rose again demonstrating that he was precisely who he said that he was and now 2,000 years later the Lord Jesus Christ continues to summon rebels to turn from their sins to trust in him we don't deserve any of this Israel didn't deserve God's sudden change of heart this was all enacted purely and solely by God's amazing grace 2nd

[37 : 41] Corinthians 6 1-3 working together with him then we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain for he says in a favorable time I listen to you and in the day of salvation I have helped you behold now is the favorable time behold now is the day of salvation we put no obstacle in anyone's way so that no so that no fault may be found with our ministry and so for us today Christians God is summoning lost sinners to salvation and he's using us to do that trust in him trust in him and you will be saved and you must do so now today is your moment today is your opportunity today is the day of salvation salvation because lastly we see the bible is a story about great return man

I love this these two verses these two verses get my blood pumping they shall go after the lord this is the part I love he will roar like a lion when he roars his children shall come trembling from the west they shall come trembling like birds from Egypt and like doves from the land of Assyria and I will return them to their homes declares the lord the story of scripture begins with God ruling and reigning as king over everything and with a people who were to live for his praise and glory and so it is fitting that the Bible ends with the promise of the risen reigning Jesus Christ returning rescuing judging and making all things new including the restoration of his people to glory when the king returns the worldwide rebellion against his good and right holy reign will be crushed once and for all the lion from the tribe of

Judah will roar redeemed sinners will come trembling from all nations we will return to him we will give praise and blessing and honor to him the former things will have passed away no more death no more pain no more tears no more corruption no more shame no more guilt no more death and the best thing of all is that God's people will live eternally in God's presence as they were meant to do before forever and so we say as Christians come Lord Jesus come now please today you