

Good Good Father – Hosea 11

“You’re a good good Father” – What makes God a good Father?

“I am loved by You” – How do you know that you are loved by God?

A “father-child” relationship between God & His people was not something Israel understood in Hosea’s day! God was Creator, Alpha, Omega, Holy.

For God to be called a “Father”, was to give God human characteristics, and to bring Him, the Creator, into close proximity to us, the creation!

There is a distinction between God as Transcendent and God as Immanent!

Transcendent – God is distinct from & superior to His creation.

Immanent – God is present in and relationally tied to His creation.

Which view of God do you normally default to? _____

Both are true of God; two side of the same coin, but what does this look like relationally when it comes to God’s interaction with His people?

Hosea 11 reveals to us a God who is simultaneously both transcendent & immanent, Holy and fatherly, judge & justifier, full of wrath & full of mercy!

“When Israel was a child, I loved him, & out of Egypt I called my son.” Vs. 1

“It was I who taught Ephraim to walk; I took them up by their arms... I led them w/chords of kindness, with the bands of love, & I became to them as one who eases the yoke on their jaws, & I bent down to them & fed them.” Vs. 3-4

These are such tender words from an immanent God & loving Father.

On the other hand, Vs. 6-7 declares, ***“The sword shall rage against their cities, consume the bars of their gates, & devour them because of their own counsels. My people are bent on turning away from me, & though they call out to the Most High, he shall not raise them up at all.”***

These seem to be the words of a far removed & wrathful God, void of love. Is God schizophrenic? How can we understand what is going on here?

How many of you have heard the line from your parent(s) when they were about to punish you, ***“This is going to hurt me more than it hurts you”?***

How can that be true? What did they mean by that? _____

Good father’s/parents wrestle with how to give what’s best to their children

- What to give & what to withhold.
- When to show grace & when to punish.
- How to demand respect & how to be approachable.
- How to be a person in authority w/out being viewed as the enemy.

God is wrestling here in Hosea 11 with these same struggles, emotions, decisions – His transcendence and immanence are being put to the test!

“How can I give you up, O Ephraim? How can I hand you over, O Israel? My heart recoils within me; my compassion grows warm & tender.”- Vs. 8

B/c He is a loving Father, He does not want to see His children destroyed!

“I will not execute my burning anger; I will not again destroy Ephraim; for I am God & not man, the Holy One in your midst, & I will not come in wrath.” -Vs. 9

B/c He is the Holy One, His justice requires punishment for sin, destruction must come upon them, but God in His immanence wrestles w/this judgment!

If God, who knows all things & decrees all things, struggles this much as a Father in His relationship w/His children, to give them what is best, how much harder will it be for us as earthly parents to give to our children what’s best?

Sometimes what is best, what’s needed, is for punishment to come at the hands of a loving parent, who knows that the time of the prodigal’s return will come!

God knew that the time would come when, ***“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, & like doves from the land of Assyria, & I will return them to their homes, declares the Lord.” Vs. 10-11***

Like Simba at the end of “The Lion King”, the time will come when God will roar & all that had been destroyed will become new again, all that had been lost will be found, and the King will be on His throne forever!

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