Weekly Questions Week 1 Professor Response.

Why could God tell Hosea to marry a prostitute to show the Israelites that they were committing adultery with Him? Didn’t this hurt His prophet? While I understand in the vision that God had, it also makes me wonder why God would want Hosea and their children to be hurt in the process?

**I imagine it hurt a lot, just like when Ezekiel is commanded not to mourn his wife when she dies and Jeremiah is commanded not to marry. While our personal suffering matters to God, His purposes also extend to all of His people and sometimes our suffering teaches important truths to others. How many have learned truth from Job’s suffering? Suffering is going to happen anyway, it’s at least a consolation that God can use it still.**

Do you think Jonah is still part of the kingdom of God?

**Interesting question and there is no way to know. The book leaves off without a reply from Jonah about God’s desire for compassion for the 120,000 in Nineveh. Perhaps we are supposed to “finish the story” by putting ourselves in Jonah’s shoes and not having the same prejudices that he had.**

How does the concept of divine justice and mercy manifest itself throughout these minor prophetic books?

**There are several ways in which divine justice and mercy manifest themselves. 1. Repentance changes everything see Jeremiah 18:7,8 whether you repent to the good or to the evil. 2. Intercession can stave off for a time, judgment, as Amos famously cried “O God please pardon, how can Jacob stand for he is small” and God relented. Those are examples of mercy, but many of these prophetic books judgment is on the horizon whether due to cultic violations (following other gods) or social injustice.**

Which point of view do you hold given the three basic systems for interpreting prophecy regarding the kingdom and why?

**Much of this focuses on the concept of the “Millennium” in Revelation 20.**

**Premillennialism is that Jesus returns before a thousand year period in which He reigns on earth and then the final battle with Satan occurs and then the end. Concepts like rapture and the tribulation and a literal future temple are part of this view.**

**Postmillennialism is the view that mankind slowly but surely improves and Christ comes after a golden age of humanity. Few people hold this view after two world wars.**

**Amillennialism does not take the 1000 years as a literal number (Revelation is full of figures/imagery after all) and takes Christ’s reign as now during the church age. Christ will return at the end of this present age.**

**I’d say a majority, but not an overwhelming one of evangelicals are premillennial (like the Left Behind book series), but I hold an Amillennial position for the most part holding most OT prophecies fulfilled in the 1st advent of Jesus though there are some that look at the entire church age (which would include the end before His second coming).**

**Certainly more could be said (we have entire courses on this topic), but that’s a beginning.**

What key role does the theme of “Repentance” play in averting divine judgment?

**Everything! Look at Jeremiah 18:7, 8 and Ezekiel 18 and for good measure look at Acts 2:38 when the crowd realized they had killed the Christ, this is what Peter told them to do.**

Reading the story of Jonah and then reading about him in the Hoffmeier book do you side with the story of Jonah to be factual or do you think it is a story about Israel getting swallowed by its enemies?

**Jesus seemed to treat both Jonah and the repentance of the people of Nineveh as a historical reality. I’m going to go with that.**

In Joel 2:31 he states, “The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.” Do you believe this is a foreshadow of what happened when Jesus was crucified and rose again?

**In its usage in Matthew 24:29 it is used of the time of Christ’s second coming in what is known as the Olivet Discourse. This “apocalyptic language” occurs several times in the Old Testament and can refer to any “day of the LORD” in which God judges the world and Israel. However, there is a final “Day of the LORD” (Christ’s coming a 2nd time) which is the ultimate fulfillment of these words.**

How can Joel 2:28-29 be understood from a non-charismatic perspective? The passage says the Spirit will be poured out on all mankind, and the signs of the Spirit given are miraculous and prophetic. Should this imply that all Holy-Spirit filled Christians should have supernatural gifts?

**The passage literally lists groups of people: men and women, young and old rather than just mankind. There would be the gifts of the Holy Spirit given to all different classes of people Jew and Gentile alike, but this does not same everyone would have the same gifts or would even have gifts at all (see the “ungifted” in 1 Cor. 14). We also know that some gifts were to cease (1 Cor. 13). In Acts 8, the Samaritans become Christians before they are given some gifts, so for a time they definitely were ungifted in that way. This is not to be confused with the indwelling of the Holy Spirit which all believers receive.**

How is it okay for God to command Hosea to sin? God commanded Hosea to remarry Gomer, even though it was against the Levitical law. How can this be justified?

**The question seems to focus on the commands in Deuteronomy 24 about a divorced person not going back to the first husband. However, we do not see Hosea giving Gomer a certificate of divorce. She just left him. Since there was no divorce Hosea could bring her back.**

In the book “The Prophets of Israel” the author points out that “The prophets were not social reformers. They were theological reformers, for their basic motivation was generated with their commitment to the fundamental laws of God. My question for you, “what’s the difference?”

**I think this is a false disjunction. There is no reason why they can’t be both theological reformers and social reformers. How one treats your fellow man is both a social and theological issue. Amos focuses mostly on social issues.**

Wordplay seems to be a nugget that I continue to learn more and more about. From your perspective, do we miss out on a large portion of what the Bible has to say when we miss wordplays in Hebrew?

**Wordplays were mnemonic devices for an oral culture that did not have access to written copies of the prophetic messages. Missing these wordplays hinders us in that we don’t understand as well what would have stood out to the audience as important to remember. Obviously, translations can’t communicate wordplays (or acrostics for that matter) and so learning Hebrew has some exegetical value. That being said there precedent for using translations as most of the time the writers of New Testament quote the Septuagint (Greek) version/translation of the Old Testament.**