

Exegetical Analysis — Hosea 11:1

1 – When Israel was a youth I loved him, And out of Egypt I called My son.

אֲכִי נָעַר יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֶחָבָהוּ וּמִמְּצָרִים קָרָאתִי לְבָנִי:

When doing study of scripture it is helpful to understand how Hosea would have understood the text and where he based his intertextual idea from. The reference that Hosea is making is actually a reference back to Exodus.

Exodus 4:22 NASB

Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the LORD, "Israel is My son, My firstborn.

"This parallel helps us see why Hosea talks about God's love in the Exodus in the first place. Israel's time in Egypt parallels Israel's upcoming time in exile. That being the case, just as God loved Israel and delivered them the first time from Egypt, so he will deliver them a second time from the exile in a new Exodus. There will be a repeat performance. God states this at the end of Hosea 11. He cannot give up his son because he loves him (v. 8). Consequently, the Lord will deliver the nation out of exile (v. 11). Again, why does Hosea talk about the Exodus? It is not merely a lesson in history. In the flow of Hosea 11, it shows how God's love in the first Exodus will drive a second Exodus from exile."

— Abner Chou, The Hermeneutics of the Biblical Writers, Learning to Interpret Scripture from the Prophets and Apostles, (Kregel Publications, a division of Kregel Inc., 2450 Oak Industrial Dr.NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49505-6020., 2018), 107.

So, first we must understand the contextual nature of the passage in its original context, which CT's ignore, and then we can evaluate the understanding that stems from Matthew as Hosea *also* looks forward as well to the Messiah.

This parallel comes from God's son (Israel) and God's Son (Davidic King). This demonstrates a correspondence and link between sonship.

Hosea 3:5 NASB

Afterward the sons of Israel will return and seek the LORD their God and David their king; and they will come trembling to the LORD and to His goodness in the last days.

As we see, Hosea links together exodus language with the coming Messiah.

"Hosea picks up on this line of thought. He connects the new Exodus with a new David. Throughout the book, Hosea describes how the new Exodus will occur."

— Abner Chou, The Hermeneutics of the Biblical Writers, Learning to Interpret Scripture from the Prophets and Apostles, (Kregel Publications, a division of Kregel Inc., 2450 Oak Industrial Dr.NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49505-6020., 2018), 108.

"Thus, when Hosea talks about a new Exodus in Hosea 11, he has already established this liberation is led by a new David. In fact, Hosea's description of the new Exodus in Hosea 11 tightly correlates with the work of the new David in chapter 3."

— Abner Chou, The Hermeneutics of the Biblical Writers, Learning to Interpret Scripture from the Prophets and Apostles, (Kregel Publications, a division of Kregel Inc., 2450 Oak Industrial Dr.NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49505-6020., 2018), 108.

The erroneous nature is not to understand the ties between the Exodus, and the Davidic parallels made here by Hosea. Which is what leads to this assumed Christocentric Hermeneutic.

"Let us return to the original topic. Did Hosea speak better than he knew? Did his text only focus on history (the Exodus)? Did his text only focus on Israel (as opposed to the Messiah)? We might have viewed Hosea 11:1 as a history lesson; however, Hosea's writing is far more complicated. His theology merges two major implications of the Exodus developed in the Old Testament: Exodus to future deliverance (new Exodus), and Exodus in relation to the Davidic dynasty. In bringing

these two theological themes together, Hosea portrays how God's love for Israel in the first Exodus will drive a new Exodus, led by a new David. To be sure, Hosea 11:1 and its entire context do not explicitly predict what happens in Matthew 2."

— Abner Chou, *The Hermeneutics of the Biblical Writers, Learning to Interpret Scripture from the Prophets and Apostles*, (Kregel Publications, a division of Kregel Inc., 2450 Oak Industrial Dr.NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49505-6020., 2018), 108.

Matthew 2 is facilitated by this passage, as he tries together the unified ideas brought out in Exodus and Hosea. This unification draws out the Exodus and the Davidic language to find a culmination in the Messiah, which is exactly what he does.

"... but this use of Hosea also goes beyond a literal meaning in the sense that Hosea was probably not thinking of Christ when he wrote what he did. This appears to be a case of "literal plus typological" connection. Hosea 11:1 refers to the historical exodus of Israel from Egypt while Matthew makes a typological connection between Israel and Christ. Thus, there is a sense in which Hos 11:1 refers to the actual historical event of the exodus from Egypt and typologically points forward to Christ, the ultimate Israelite who is everything God intended Israel to be. Nevertheless, as Hos 11:1 and Matt 2:15 show, it appears that the NT writers sometimes apply OT passages to Jesus in a Christological manner that goes beyond a simple literal or plain interpretation."

— Michael J. Vlach, *Has the Church Replaced Israel? : A Theological Evaluation*, (Nashville, Tenn., B & H Academic, 2010), 92.

"This example is found in Matthew 2:15, which is a quotation of Hosea 11:1. However, the original context is not a prophecy, it is an historical event. It is a reference to the Exodus when Israel, the national son of God, was brought out of Egypt. It is obvious that Hosea is thinking of literal Israel for in the following verses he points out how Israel quickly slipped into idolatry. The literal meaning in context of Hosea 11:1 is a reference to the Exodus. There is nothing in the New Testament that can change or reinterpret the meaning of Hosea 11: 1, nor does the New Testament deny that the literal Exodus actually happened. However, Israel as the national son of God coming out of Egypt becomes a type of the individual Son of God, the Messiah coming out of Egypt. The passage is quoted, not as a fulfillment of prophecy, since Hosea 11:1 was not a prophecy to begin with, but as a type. Matthew does not deny, change, or reinterpret the original meaning. He understands it literally, but the literal Old Testament event becomes a type of a New Testament event. This is literal plus typical. Many of the citations in the Book of Hebrews of Exodus and Leviticus fall into this category."

— Arnold Fruchtenbaum, *Israelology*, 843-44.

Christ as the True Israel

Another possibility for understanding how the church shares in Israel's New Covenants is the recognition of Jesus as the true Israel. In other words, the church's participation in Israel's covenant can be explained in terms of her intimate connection to Christ who is the true Israel. Scripture suggests that Christ is the true Israel. For example, Jesus refers to Himself as the vine in John 15:1. Perhaps He is borrowing this imagery from Isaiah 5:1-7, which describes Israel as the vineyard.

The early chapters of Matthew also seem to argue that Christ is the true Israel. Matthew appears to use Old Testament prophecy to make this argument. For example, although Matthew 2:13-15 uses Hosea 11:1 as a prophecy of the baby Jesus' flight from Egypt, the context of Hosea 11:1 describes Israel's exodus experience. Similarly, although Matthew 2:16-18 uses Jeremiah 31:15 as a prediction of Herod putting to death the male children in Bethlehem, the context of Jeremiah 31:15 describes the death of Jewish children caused by the Babylonian persecution. Dyer believes that these Old Testament passages are used in this manner in the early chapters of Matthew's gospel because Matthew is attempting to draw a parallel between Israel and Jesus. God called Israel to be a light to the Gentiles (Isa 49:6), but Israel failed. Conversely, the Father called Christ to be a light to the world (John 8:12), and Christ succeeded where Israel failed. Thus, Christ became the true Israel.

In fact, Matthews's gospel records numerous instances where Christ succeeded in the very area that Israel failed. For example, although both Israel and Christ were called from Egypt as children (Hos 11:1; Matt 2:15), only Christ was

obedient. Moreover, although both Israel and Christ were baptized (1 Cor 10:1-2; Matt 3), only Christ obeyed God after this baptism experience (Exod 15:22-26; Matt 3:17). Furthermore, although both Israel and Christ went into the wilderness to be tempted (Exod-Num; Matt 4), only Christ successfully endured temptation. Because Christ succeeded where Israel failed, Christ became the true Israel. Isaiah's servant songs (Isa 42; 49-57) also argue for identifying Christ as the true Israel. In these passages, Israel's calling is portrayed as the true servant of God (Isa 42:1-7). Yet, these passages indicate that Israel failed in fulfilling this calling (Isa 42:18-22). Thus, God predicted that He would raise up a new servant to become all that Israel failed to be (Isa 49:1-7). This second servant is obviously Christ (Isa 52:13-53:12). This point is clarified through Christ's application of some of the servant song passages to Himself (Matt 12:17-21). Thus, Christ became a sort of new Israel in succeeding in the very calling that Israel had failed in. In sum, the church's participation in Israel's covenant can be explained in terms of her intimate connection to Christ who is the true Israel.

Website Reference:

<http://www.spiritandtruth.org/teaching/documents/articles/12/12.htm?x=x#sdfootnote30anc>