

Hosea 11:4, "I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love: and I was to them as they that take off the yoke on their jaws, and I laid meat unto them."

The Old Testament provides many lessons and much instruction for our lives today. In the verse previously cited, as well as many other verses in the book of Hosea, we find the Lord reminding the Children of Israel of His grace and goodness that He had bestowed upon them. They were reminded over and over how the Lord had freed them from the bondage of Egypt and fed them in the wilderness. Even after the Lord had been so good to them, they still backslid away from Him into a life of sin and idolatry. One of the most disheartening text in scripture is Hosea 4:17, "Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone." In this verse of scripture, God brings it to the attention of the prophet that Ephraim (another title for the nation of Israel) had fallen so far away that they should be left alone in their state of ungodliness.

A good question for us to ask ourselves daily is, 'How much has God done for me?' When I examine my life, I can see where God has led me with tender care, as a man would draw his beast with a cord and with "bands of love:..." The Lord has freed me from the bondage of sin, as a master frees his beast from the bondage of the bit (or muzzle) in his mouth. And the Lord, as a man would nourish his own beast, has fed me with the marvelous manna from on high, the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Should I be as Israel of old, who would turn their backs from the Lord, or should I put Him first in my life giving thanks daily for all that He has done for me?

Dear child of grace, will you turn unto the world, or will you be found numbered with those that desire to praise Him for all His grace and goodness?

Elder Ronnie B. Loudermilk