

What Have I to Do With Idols?

by Arno Clemens Gaebelein

Arno Clemens Gaebelein preaches on the story of Ephraim in the book of Hosea, highlighting how despite all reproof and chastisement, Ephraim remained joined to idols until he heard and observed the Lord, leading to his conversion and forsaking of idols. Gaebelein emphasizes the importance of being separated from idols and walking wholly with the Lord through heart occupation with Him, conscious communion through His Word, and beholding His glory and beauty. The preacher urges believers to have the Lord constantly before their eyes and hearts to avoid being drawn back to idols.

Description

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Transcript

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 true oneLinerSummary: "The only way to be separated from idols and walk wholly with the Lord is to hear
 and observe Him." sermonType: "expository" topics: - name: "Idolatry" slug: "idolatry" - name:
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 - text: "Hosea 4:17" bookId: "HOS" chapter: "4" verse: "17" - text: "Hosea 7:8" bookId: "HOS" chapter: "7"
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 Idols" - heading: "Ephraim's struggle with idols" - heading: "The Lord's rebukes and chastisements" -
 heading: "Ephraim's eventual conversion" faq: - q: "Why are Christians joined to idols?" a: "Our hearts do
 not listen to the Lord's voice and our minds are occupied with earthly things." - q: "How can we be
 delivered from idols?" a: "By heart occupation with the Lord, conscious communion with Him through His
 Word in the power of His Spirit." - q: "What is the key to practical holiness?" a: "Hearing and observing the

Lord." - q: "How can we overcome our attachment to idols?" a: "By beholding the Lord's beauty and worth." - q: "What is the result of companionship with the Lord?" a: "Freedom from idols and a complete filling with the Lord." quotes: - "What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard Him, and observed Him; I am like a green fir tree." - "Our hearts do not listen to that blessed voice, which delights to speak to those who belong to Him." - "We must hear Him, we must observe Him." applicationPoints: - "We must hear and observe the Lord to be delivered from idols." - "Heart occupation with the Lord is the key to practical holiness." - "Beholding the Lord's beauty and worth is the key to overcoming attachment to idols." keywords: - "idols" - "conversion" - "practical holiness" - "heart occupation" - "conscious communion" - "beholding the Lord's beauty" - "companionship with the Lord" - "freedom from idols" ---

MUCH is said in reproof of Ephraim by the prophet Hosea. All the wicked dealings and defilement of Ephraim is uncovered--and the Lord said: "I will be unto Ephraim as a lion." Again Jehovah said: "Ephraim is like a cake not turned." "Ephraim is like a silly dove without heart." "Ephraim hath made many altars to sin." "Ephraim is joined to idols, let him alone." But all reproof and chastisement did not bring Ephraim back. Nothing seemed to be able to draw Ephraim's heart away from the idols. At the close of the Prophet Hosea, however, Ephraim is made to speak and a significant word it is. "Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard Him, and observed Him; I am like a green fir tree. From me is thy fruit found" (xiv:8).

A familiar yet blessed truth is contained in this statement. Ephraim dealt with by judgments after the severe rebukes of the Lord could not let go the idols. Joined to idols, the Lord said, "Let him alone." But the day was to come when Ephraim would willingly forsake all idols and cry out, "What have I any more to do with idols?" And what brought about Ephraim's conversion? Ephraim heard Him and observed Him. The sight of the Lord, His love and tenderness, His patience and kindness beheld in faith, was enough for Ephraim to forsake all idols and cleave to Him alone. Thus Ephraim became like a green fir tree.

And this is still true to-day. There is no other way to be separated from idols and walk wholly with the Lord than Ephraim's way. Why are God's people joined to idols? Why are Christians half-hearted, conformed to this present evil age, given to covetousness, which is idolatry (Col. iii:5)? There is but one answer. Our hearts do not listen to that blessed voice, which delights to speak to those who belong to Him. Our eyes do not look upon Him in all His glory and beauty. We lose sight of Him who is altogether lovely. Our minds instead of being occupied with the things of Christ are centered upon earthly things. Our thoughts are so little brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ and are controlled by our own imaginations and the spirit of the times. There is no other way of being delivered from idols, from everything which would draw us away from Himself and all which hinders from giving to Him the pre-eminence. That way is heart occupation with our Lord, conscious communion with Him through His Word in the power of His Spirit. We must hear Him, we must observe Him. Then He appears to our hearts in all His lowliness, in all His majesty and glory, and that vision will be enough to disgust us with the playthings of the dust and He will become the supreme object of our lives. There is no other way to practical holiness than hearing Him and observing Him.

Hast thou heard Him, seen Him, known Him? Is not thine a captured heart? "Chief among ten thousand" own Him, Joyful choose the better part.

Idols once they won thee, charmed thee, Lovely things of time and sense; Gilded, thus does sin disarm thee, Honey'd lest thou turn thee thence.

What has stript the seeming beauty From the idols of the earth? Not the sense of right or duty, But the sight of peerless worth.

Not the crushing of those idols, With its bitter void and smart, But the beaming of His beauty, The unveiling of His heart.

Who extinguishes their taper Till they hail the rising sun? Who discards the garb of winter Till the summer has begun?

'Tis that look that melted Peter, 'Tis that face that Stephen saw, 'Tis that heart that wept with Mary. Can alone from idols draw--

Draw, and win, and fill completely, Till the cup o'erflow the brim; What have we to do with idols, Who have companied with Him?

Reader! Gaze afresh in that lovely face of transcendent beauty. Think of His great love for you, His never-changing love, His eternal love. Follow the dictates of that new nature Grace has given to you and have the Lord constantly before your eyes and heart. Anything less will lead you to idols. What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard Him and observed Him.

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