

Hosea: Jesus our Faithful Husband

I. Chapter 1-3

II. Chapters 4-14

The book of Hosea marks a division in our study through the prophets from Major Prophets to Minor Prophets. By way of this classification some may be prone to think that the distinction was made based upon the size of their following or the amount of scrolls sold? But that is not what has caused the designation; rather it is the size of the writing. Even though Daniel has 12 chapters and Hosea has 14 those chapter divisions were added much latter and in the original scroll form the volume of writing in Daniel is larger then Hosea.

Hosea's name means "Salvation" and he was a prophet to the 10 northern tribes during the reigns of Jeroboam to Joash in Israel and from Uzziah to Hezekiah in Judah. This would make him a younger contemporary of Amos in Israel and of Isaiah and Micah in Judah. His prophetic ministry would last some 40 years and this book will be divided into two sections:

1. Chapters 1-3 The marriage of Hosea: Here we will see that Hosea's marriage to Gomer was a personal illustration how God say Israel's relationship to Him and His towards her.
2. Chapters 4-14 The Message of Hosea: Here in these 11 chapters the things that Hosea lived through practically form the basis of what God spoke through him prophetically.

The message of Hosea combined with Hosea's personal experience gives us a unique understanding of how God views sin which is the make up of the threefold message of this book.

- **God hates sin as it destroys fellowship**
- **Sin separates a loving God from sinful man and bring about consequences**
- **God continues to love and desire mankind even after he has chosen cheat on Him time and again and still desires to restore the relationship**

The start of this book takes place during a time of prosperity when the 10 Northern tribes were no longer under the over taxation of Judah. They were enjoying life without a care in the world and certainly not a care about God. They wouldn't have seen themselves in rebellion against God they were just too busy for him enjoying life. They would have probably said "*The spirit is willing but the flesh is ready for the weekend!*" Oh how much this 14 chapter book mirrors the church today. Reading Hosea again brought to mind Keith Green's song titled "Asleep in the Light" Do you see, do you see All the people sinking down Don't you care, don't you care Are you gonna let them drown. How can you be so numb Not to care if they come You close your eyes And pretend the job's done. "Oh bless me Lord, bless me Lord" You know it's all I ever hear No one aches, no one hurts No one even sheds one tear But He cries, He weeps, He bleeds And He cares for your needs And you just lay back And keep soaking it in, Oh, can't you see it's such a sin? Cause He brings people to your door, And you turn them away As you smile and say, "God bless you, be at peace" And all heaven just weeps Cause Jesus came to your door You've left him out on the streets Open up open up And give yourself away You see the need, you hear the cries So how can you delay God's calling and you're the one But like Jonah you run He's told you to speak But you keep holding it in, Oh can't you see it's such a sin? The world is sleeping in the dark That the church just can't fight Cause it's asleep in the light How can you be so dead When you've been so

well fed Jesus rose from the grave And you, you can't even get out of bed Oh, Jesus rose from the dead
 Come on, get out of your bed How can you be so numb Not to care if they come You close your eyes
 And pretend the job's done You close your eyes And pretend the job's done Don't close your eyes
 Don't pretend the jobs done Come away, come away, come away with Me my love, Come away, from this
 mess, come away with Me, my love.

I. Chapter 1-3

These three chapters not only set up **Hosea's prophetic word to Israel** and **provide an intimate view upon God's heart towards those He loves who have chosen to love other things**. They **also serve to give insight into the seemingly unnecessary heart ache we believers are often led to live**. To be certain Hosea tells the story of God telling him to marry a wife of Harlotry first but I wonder if it happened the other way around?

Imagine for a moment what life would have been like for the young Hosea when he is told by the Lord to take a wife. Like most you fellows he may have been excited at the prospect. Then he hears who he is to marry, Gomer, now we who know the story don't much care for her name but that is not how Hosea would have understood her name. You see her name means "**finished, complete or perfect**"! Oh my Hosea must have thought not only am I getting married I'm marrying the best looking gal in all of Israel. Then God says there is a down side to this your beautiful perfect wife will be a prostitute but I want you to marry her anyway. But you two will go onto to have three children two boys and a girl.

And how difficult would this have been for Hosea as he would speak of the moral failings and spiritual harlotry of Israel? I can only imagine how this would have been thrown back in his face, "*Hey Hosea, why don't you put your own house in order before you go around telling us what is wrong with ours?*" Saints, God often allows and in this case even directs into situations and heartaches that seem to be for no purpose and

only wound our hearts. A.W. Tozer wrote “*Whom God uses mightily He often wounds deeply!*” Oh but here we are able to peel back the mystery and reveal that such wounded gives us a rare privilege of understand and even communion on a higher level with God’s heart. Hosea was willing to go through what others would not if it brought him closer to the Lord. His prophetic words of pending doom upon an idolatrous nation are covered in the broken hearted tears of a man who loved his wife even while she loved others. Before we go further there is an interesting parallel in that **spiritual adultery always precedes a nations physical immorality!** The names of people in Israel were often symbolic and the name of Hosea’s three children would provide the nation with a view of how God saw them.

- **Jazreel**’s name means “God scatters or castaway” which was a name of shame in Israel. This name would be prophetic as we are told in 2 Kings 9:30-37 of Queen Jezebel being thrown for a window to the courtyard below and eaten by dogs and the spot being renamed Jazreel. The name was a warning for the nation to turn from sin or they would become castaways and scattered abroad.
- **Lo-Ruhamah**: Her name means “Not loved or not to be pitied”. The name of this gal was to remind the nation that God would no longer act in mercy and love if they continued their unfaithfulness towards Him. Can anyone imagine naming your little girl “Not Loved”?
- **Lo-ammi**: The third child’s name means “not my people”. Since they didn’t want to be His children then He would no longer be their God. For all those who want no God careful what you wish for as He has made the rain to fall on the just and

the unjust and if those who wish nothing to do with Him want to continue without Him He can and will remove His blessings!

Yet with that said God holds out a yet future time when according to 1:10 that *“the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or numbered. And it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them, 'You are not My people,' there it shall be said to them, 'You are sons of the living God.'*

The promise that God had made to Abraham in Gen. 22:17 will still come to pass at the beginning of the millennial reign of Christ.

Chapter 2 starts out with the future promise that those who chose *“not to loved”* and *“not be His people”* would once again be loved and again be called His people! This chapter also serves to link Gomer’s actions with that of Israel’s. A plea is made for both to put away their harlotries least they be exposed (stripped naked). Their sin is not isolated and will have lasting impact upon generations and she has gone after other for financial gone. Oh how many of God’s citizens have exchanged the eternal for the temporary and sold out future generations? Though God will rightly judge his bride Israel for her continued unfaithfulness (verses 6-13) He will also restore her (verses 14-23) although most of this speaks of a yet future time as verse 18 indicates it will be at a time when the animal kingdom shall no longer be under the curse as Isaiah 11:6-9 spoke of.

Chapter 3 tells us that Gomer in spite of Hosea’s unconditional love for her and her three children had fallen back into adultery and harlotry just like the nation had done with the Lord. Listen to God words in Hosea 3:1 as He instructs Hosea to *“Go again, love a woman who is loved by a lover and is committing adultery, just like the love of the Lord for the children of Israel, who look to other gods and love the raisin cakes of the*

pagans.” So bad was her fall into sin that in verse 2 Hosea purchases her from the slave market for ½ price and food for the livestock. Sin destroys and devalues all it possess. This once beautiful “Perfect Ten” wife was not ½ off dog food. But even at such a price she was to not go back to what had destroyed her. Verses 4-5 go back to Israel and speak of how long Israel would be without her husband the King and we are past 2000 years and they still have not seen the One who loved them so that He gave His life for His bride. Yet there will come a time when they will see their Son of David and come to know His goodness but not until the “latter days”.

II. Chapters 4-14

The 4th and 5th chapters speak of the idolatry and adultery of the nation. God tells them through Hosea what has caused their destruction in 4:6 saying, *“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.”* And then in 4:9 we see who God holds responsible for such defection as He declares *“And it shall be: like people, like priest. So I will punish them for their ways, and reward them for their deeds.”* What led to such a departure well 4:7 tells us *“the more they increased, the more they sinned against Me”* and 4:11 says that *“Harlotry, wine, and new wine enslave the heart.”* In Hosea 5:11 God says *“Ephraim (the largest tribe in Israel) is oppressed and broken in judgment, because he willingly walked by human precept.”* There was a way that seemed right unto man but the end lead to death! But again the chapter ends with the hope of restoration in 5:15 saying, *“I will return again to My place till they acknowledge their offense. Then they will seek My face; in their affliction they will earnestly seek Me.”* Here we see that God’s judgments are not punitive

but rather corrective giving only enough to cause the people to turn from sin and towards Him. The 6 chapter verses 1-3 starts with Hosea putting himself in the place of backslidden Israel saying, *“Come, and let us return to the Lord; for He has torn, but He will heal us; He has stricken, but He will bind us up. After two days He will revive us; On the third day He will raise us up, that we may live in His sight. Let us know, let us pursue the knowledge of the Lord. His going forth is established as the morning; He will come to us like the rain, like the latter and former rain to the earth.”* This is another prophetic scripture that speaks of the resurrection of Jesus. God says to them in 6:6 *“For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.”*

The 7th chapter speaks of Israel’s refusal to accept God invitation to repent that He can restore them. They said they would but did not do as they would say, they were adulterers (verse 4), a cake unturned (verse 8), a silly dove (verse 11) . In 7:16 God says, *“They return, but not to the Most High”*.

The 8th chapter records that they still are into calf worship (verse 6) and because of this they have according to 8:7 *“They sow the wind, and reap the whirlwind. The stalk has no bud; it shall never produce meal. If it should produce, Aliens would swallow it up.”* This situation has come upon them because (8:14) *“Israel has forgotten his Maker”*.

Chapter 9-10 Israel is judged by God for her continual rebellion. And with that comes a most amazing prophecy in 9:17 where we are told that *“My God will cast them away, because they did not obey Him; and they shall be wanderers among the nations.”* The wandering Jew who lived this for over 2000 years yet the only nation that has ever maintained its cultural and national identity during those wanderings. Yet with the judgment God still pleads with them in 10:12 saying, *“Sow for yourselves righteousness;*

reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground, for it is time to seek the Lord, till He comes and rains righteousness on you." A verse that Charles Finney used in a sermon to get the Church to clean up its ways.

Chapters 11-14 are given over to Israel's future restoration by her loving faithful Lord. In 11:1 we read "*When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called My son.*" This reference was used of Jesus in Matt. 2:15 by the Holy Spirit. In 11:10 we are told that "*They shall walk after the Lord. He will roar like a lion. When He roars, then His sons shall come trembling from the west.*" In 13:4-6 God says, "*I am the Lord your God ever since the land of Egypt, and you shall know no God but Me; for there is no Savior besides Me. I knew you in the wilderness, in the land of great drought. When they had pasture, they were filled; they were filled and their heart was exalted; therefore they forgot Me.*" And the 14 chapter concludes with: "*O Israel, return to the Lord your God, for you have stumbled because of your iniquity; take words with you, and return to the Lord. Say to Him, 'Take away all iniquity; receive us graciously, for we will offer the sacrifices of our lips. Assyria shall not save us, we will not ride on horses, nor will we say anymore to the work of our hands, 'You are our gods.' For in You the fatherless finds mercy.' 'I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely, for My anger has turned away from him. I will be like the dew to Israel; he shall grow like the lily, and lengthen his roots like Lebanon. His branches shall spread; his beauty shall be like an olive tree, and his fragrance like Lebanon. Those who dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall be revived like grain, and grow like a vine. Their scent shall be like the wine of Lebanon. 'Ephraim shall say, 'What have I to do anymore with idols?' I have heard and observed him. I am like a green cypress tree; your fruit is found in Me.' Who is wise?*"

Let him understand these things. Who is prudent? Let him know them. For the ways of the Lord are right; the righteous walk in them, but transgressors stumble in them.”