



Series: Bible Survey

Lesson: 42. Hosea

- **Introduction**

- Author: Hosea, most likely from and/or in Northern Israel
- Date: Covers at least 753–716 BC (part/all of the reigns of the kings listed in 1:1) and appears to have been written progressively over that span; cf. 2 Kings 14:16–18:12 & 2 Chron. 26:1–31:1
- Context:
 - Hosea is one of the prophets most dependent on knowing historical references to understand what is being said, especially associations with places and their names—use a study Bible and brush up on Kings/Chronicles!
 - Hosea is among the earliest Major/Minor Prophets, a period of intense warning to the divided kingdom that things were about to change because of their consistent breaking of the Old Covenant.
 - Hosea prophesies to Northern Israel during its final years before the Assyrian invasion of 722 BC and beyond, a period of great turmoil and strife.
 - Their religion at this point consisted mainly of Baalism and the golden calves in Dan and Bethel (cf. 1 Kings 12:25–33).

- Helpful names to know in Hosea:
 - Jezreel – ‘God scatters’
 - Lo-ruhamah – ‘she has not obtained mercy’
 - Lo-ammi – ‘not my people’
 - Ephraim – stand-in for all of Northern Israel
 - Bethel – ‘house of God’
 - Beth-Aven – ‘house of wickedness/idolatry/iniquity’
 - Gilgal – where Joshua set up the memorial stones after crossing the Jordan
- Hosea is written almost entirely in poetic form, much of it satirical, as an indictment of the people for their unrepentant sin.
- Main theme: God’s _____ with Israel
 - Hosea’s marriage with Gomer is meant to be a symbol of God’s relationship with Israel, and the names of their children are meant to provide insights into the current and future states of their relationship.
 - Those first three chapters inform how you are supposed to read the rest of the book: everything that follows is meant to be understood in terms of a marriage that has been strained by an unfaithful spouse.
 - Their pervasive idolatry is essentially cheating with another lover.

- However, Hosea is also full of assurance that one day, their relationship will be restored because God's love is greater than their unfaithfulness.
- A related sub-theme is the repeated use of 'know/knowledge' (especially '(of) YHWH'): Israel should have 'known' better because they should have 'known' their God Who cares so much about and for them.

- **Outline**

- Chapters 1–3.

- Hosea is commanded to take a wife he knows will be unfaithful, but the marriage is intended to be _____.
 - Their three children are each intended to be prophetic signs too:
 1. Jezreel foretells the prophesied end of Jehu's line (cf. 2 Kings 9:1–10:30).
 2. Lo-ruhamah shows the division between Northern Israel and Judah because Judah is more closely aligned w/YHWH and will therefore receive more mercy than its brethren.
 3. Lo-ammi is meant to be a statement that the people have completely rejected their relationship with God, yet He is quick to point out that this will one day be reversed because of His unbreakable covenant with Abraham.

- God takes the more gen prophetic statements of chapter 1 and fleshes them out into concrete accusations, judgements, and prophecies about Israel in chapter 2.
- God's love for His people shows through in the _____ between how harshly He will judge them for their infidelity and how much will love them and restore them despite it all.
- The chapter ends with God reaffirming His love for them by reversing the judgments in the names of the three children.
- God ratifies this prophecy to Israel in chapter 3 by telling Hosea to go and redeem Gomer and take her again as his wife, so the pic lines up with the reality.
- God acknowledges that there will be some boundaries in their relationships to begin with because of the sin issues that exist, but those are not intended to last because the relationship will be fully restored.

○ Chapters 4–6

- God 'lays out the case' against the people by indicting their bad leadership, idolatry, and hypocritical worship in chapter 4.
- He pronounces what the judgment will be in chapter 5.
- He addresses their false _____ and the need for faithfulness, not mere ritual, to restore the relationship in chapter 6.

- Chapters 7–10

- God describes their sin with four metaphors in chapter 7.
- He addresses their complaints about His judgment in chapter 8 by showing four ways they proved they didn't actually _____ Him.
- Chapters 9–10 further prove His case by detailing how they would be judged for Baal worship and for abusing the blessings He gave them, respectively.

- Chapters 11–14

- Chapters 11–12 change the metaphor and show how God loved Israel like a son, yet they failed to imitate their ancestor Jacob (Israel) in obeying as a faithful son.
- Note that 11:1 is quoted of Jesus in Matt. 2:15 as the ultimate Son Who will be faithful where the nation failed.
- Chapter 13 shows how God will therefore _____ Israel like a son.
- Chapter 14 describes how God will teach them repentance like a son because He still loves them like a son and will one day restore them.

Discussion:

1. What are the strengths each of describing our relationship with God as both husband-wife and parent-child? What does each picture teach us about that relationship?
2. What is the 'danger' of claiming a relationship with God?

FOR REFLECTION: How does seeing areas of persistent sin in your life as adultery change your perception of them?

Blanks: marriage, prophetic, contrast, repentance, chastise