

# Hosea

## Introduction

### Opening Questions:

What do you know about the Book of Hosea? What have been your previous impressions of this book?

What does your name mean?

The names of Gomer's three children: *Jezreel* – literally means God plants

*Lo-Ruhamah* – No Mercy

*Lo-Ammi* – Not My People

What do you think of the names of Gomer's children?

What do we know about Hosea? The name Hosea means "he rescues/delivers". Hosea's father's name, Beeri, means "my wellspring".

## Hosea 1

### 1:2 -9

Four separate commands are given to Hosea by God each followed by an explanation.

- Take yourself a wife .... because
- Call his name .... because
- Call her name ....because
- Call his name .... because

### 1:10 – 2:1

A day of salvation is coming.

- Encouragement.
- Takes place far beyond Hosea's time.
- The final fulfillment comes via the work of Jesus Christ.

## Hosea 2

The betrayed husband (God) will punish his wife (Israel) for her infidelity. But after punishing her he will restore her to himself, for he has never ceased to love her.

## Hosea 3

God tells Hosea to show love to his wife. "*Love her as the Lord loves the Israelites.*"

Hosea pays a price for his wife.

She has been bought, her sinful life is now over.

Hosea's restrictions on her "show love", they are intended to reform and protect her.

## Literary Structure – Hosea 1-3

**Opening narrative:** Sign of Hosea's unfaithful wife and their three children (1:1-11)

a **Yahweh's first punishment:** Yahweh will no longer love the children of wayward Israel and he will remove her land's fertility (2:1-5a)

- He will make her a desert, slaying her with thirst
- Begins: say, my people and loved

b **Yahweh's second punishment:** Yahweh will stop Israel from going after her lovers until she returns to him in desperation (2:5b-7)

- Nature is made to oppose Israel

c **Yahweh's third punishment:** Yahweh will take back all the gifts he gave Israel because they continue to worship Baal and attribute the gifts to him (2:8-13)

d **TURNING POINT:** Yahweh will woo Israel back (2:14-15)

c' **Yahweh's positive action in response to the third punishment:** he will take the names of the Baals from Israel's lips (2:16-17)

b' **Yahweh's positive action in response to second punishment:** he will remarry returning Israel (2:18-20)

- Nature is made to cooperate in Israel's restoration

a' **Yahweh's positive action in response to first punishment:** Yahweh will restore the land's fertility and he will love Israel's people (children) again (2:21-23)

- He will restore her fertility; rains and wine
- Ends: "I will love Not loved and will say to Not my People you are My People

**Closing Narrative:** Sign of Hosea's unfaithful wife and his taking her back (3:1-5)

*The Literary Structure of the Old Testament, David A. Dorsey*

### A few more questions:

Have you ever been unfaithful or "cheated" on God? Was God faithful to you?

What does Hosea 1 – 3 show us about the character of God?

### Hosea 4:1-5:7 – Condemnation of Israel's Adultery and Prostitution

List as many of the Ten Commandments as you can.

Imagine a city where everyone took the Ten Commandments seriously and actually obeyed them, what would that place be like?

Indictment against Israel (1-3) – they are not faithful to God and have violated God's law.

Accusation against the priesthood (4-10) – Priests are not doing what God instituted them to do. Priests are charged to see that the law is known and by the people Deut. 31:9-13), they have neglected their duty and

*CENTER:* Israel's prostitution – the worship of false god's (11-14) – their success religion is false – they do not know God at all.

Condemnation and warning (15-19)

Coming judgement (5:1-7) (1&2) A summons to attention followed by a sentence of judgement:

*Hear this, O Priests*

*Pay attention, O house of Israel*

*Give ear (listen), O house of the King*

*For the Judgement is for you*

Their depravity has caused God to withdraw from them.

***Discussion Questions:***

What causes spiritual and moral decline in individuals and society?

Do you see any parallels to our situation today?

**Hosea 5:8-6:11 – Condemnation of Israel for Political Faithlessness, Corruption and Empty Sacrifices**

***Literary structure:***

a **Raising the alarm in Benjamin**, including Gibeah and Beth-aven (Bethel); Ephraim will be ruined (5:8-9)

b **Social injustice** and crime in Judah and Ephraim (5:10-11)

c **God will tear Judah and Israel to pieces** like a lion (5:13-15)

Israel has turned to Assyria instead of Yahweh for healing.

d **CENTER: Call to repentance** (6:1-3)

c' **God has cut Judah and Israel to pieces** by his prophets (6:4-6)

Israel has offered sacrifices instead of knowing and loving Yahweh for restoration.

d' **Social injustice** and crime in Ephraim (6:7-9)

a' **The horrible thing that has occurred in Bethel**; Israel has been defiled; Judah will be judged (6:10-11a)

*The Literary Structure of the Old Testament*, David A. Dorsey

Both Israel and Judah are addressed. The call to repent is highlighted by being placed in the central position. The urgency to repent is emphasized by being bracketed by two units describing God's power to destroy Israel and Judah.

There is a message of hope in the call to repentance (6:1-3).

Jesus links Hosea 6:6 to his ministry in Matthew 9:10-13.

## Hosea 7 – Israel’s Failure to Return to Yahweh

### *Literary Structure:*

#### a God’s failed efforts to cause Israel to return (6:11b-7:2)

- His efforts are spoiled by Israel’s wickedness

#### b Debauchery and drunkenness (7:3-7)

- People become inflamed with wine and heated up like bread baking in an oven.
- “None of them cry out to me.”

#### c Condemnation for mixing with the nations (7:8-9)

- “Ephraim is like a half-baked cake.”

d **CENTER: Israel has not returned to Yahweh;** after all this they have not sought him (7:10)

#### c’ Condemnation for appealing to nations for help (7:11-12)

- “Ephraim is like a dove...calling to Egypt, going to Assyria.”

#### b’ Debauchery and drunkenness (7:13-14)

- People will not cease from their debauchery; new wine and grain
- “They do not cry out to me.”

#### a’ God’s failed efforts to cause Israel to return (7:15-16)

- He disciplines them, but His efforts are in vain.
- They devise evil and return to Baal.

*The Literary Structure of the Old Testament, David A. Dorsey*

The placement of the complaint about Israel’s failure to return at the beginning, center and end highlights this point

## Hosea 8:1-9:7 – Condemnation of Israel’s Faithlessness and Corruption

Blessings and curses of God’s covenant in Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 24, 28 – 32 are mirrored in Hosea.

## Hosea 9:8-10:15 – Israel’s Spiritual Prostitution

Hosea 10:12 – *“Sow for yourselves righteousness; reap steadfast love; break up your fallow ground, for it is time to seek the Lord, that he may come and rain righteousness upon you.”*

## Hosea 11-14 – God’s Wayward Son

Matthew 2:13-15 - Matthew uses Hosea 11:1 as a messianic prophesy.

Compare Hosea 13:14 with I Corinthians 15:53-56, what is Paul’s point?

What does Hosea reveal about God's heart and character?

**Concluding Thoughts:**

- *The focus is not on Hosea.*
- *The focus is on God and Israel.*
- *God calls sinful people back to himself.*
- *God's attitude towards his people is love.*
- *Israel does not deserve God's love.*
- *We do not deserve God's love but receive it.*
- *In love Jesus Christ paid the price to set us free from slavery to sin.*
- A remarkable picture of God, the divine husband attempting to win back his faithless wife.
- Hosea buys his wife out of slavery to rescue, reform and protect her. (A picture of Christ.)
- In love, Jesus Christ paid the price to set us free from slavery to sin.
- Israel's sin and faithlessness is exposed and condemned.
- God, a loving father, invites his wayward son, Israel to return and be forgiven.
- Although Israel has been utterly unfaithful to the Lord, he still invites them to return.
- The final triumph over death is assured by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

*Whoever is wise, let him understand these things; whoever is wise, let him know them; for the ways of the Lord are right, and the upright walk in them, but transgressors stumble in them." Hosea 14:12*

***Book of Hosea Bible Study – Bob Krepps***