

THE BOOK OF HOSEA, Lesson 1
Introduction and Chapters 1-3

Teacher: John M. Brown, Flatwoods church of Christ, Wednesday Bible Class

I. AUTHOR: Hosea

- a. His name means "God is my salvation" (same as "Joshua").
- b. The only northern prophet who wrote, Hosea was perhaps a priest or of priestly lineage.
- c. He was a contemporary of Amos, Isaiah, and Micah.

2. **WRITTEN TO:** The Northern Kingdom of Israel (often called "Ephraim" in this book).

3. **DATE:** 760-721 BC (before the exile and captivity).

4. **TIME:** Hosea prophesied during the reigns of

JEROBOAM II (793-753 BC)*ISRAEL*

Uzziah, 791-740 BC

Jotham, 750-732 BC

Ahaz, 746-716 BC

Hezekiah, 716-687 BC*JUDAH*

5. THE HISTORICAL SETTING:

- a. Hosea lived during the time of the Assyrian ascendancy.
- b. During his life, TIGLATHPILESER II (745-727 BC) seized the throne and revitalized the military strength of his nation.
- c. Under successive kings, the Empire expanded, eventually reaching Egypt.
- d. The fall of Samaria (the entire Northern Kingdom) was in 722 BC.

6. THE BACKGROUND:

- a. Israel had gone astray from God and her conduct was described as whoredom, harlotry, and prostitution -she is so described because she had broken her covenant with God, thus committing spiritual infidelity .
- b. She had prostituted herself with Baal worship (a Canaanite religion that Israel embraced after coming into the land of Palestine) -El, Baal, and Dagon were the leading deities, with female counterparts, Asherah, Astarte, and Anath.
- c. The people were also guilty of great immorality; there was national decay and decadence.
- d. There was also political upheaval in the land, with much political bickering, deceit, and even treachery and murder.

7. THE MESSAGE:

a. There are several dominant themes in the book:

- (1) Knowing God, and knowing His mercy and loving kindness and righteousness.
- (2) Spiritual adultery and spiritual bankruptcy.
- (3) Backsliding Israel.

b. Israel's sins:

- (1) Lack of knowledge of God, 4:6-11
- (2) Pride, 5:5
- (3) Instability, 6:4
- (4) Worldliness, 7:8
- (5) Corruption, 9:9
- (6) Backsliding, 11 :7
- (7) Idolatry, 13:2

c. The DOOM of the nation is inevitable: Judgment is coming! Assyria shall take Israel into captivity!

Lesson 1: THE PRODIGAL WIFE, <i>chapters 1-3</i>
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I. ISRAEL'S UNFAITHFULNESS, Chapter 1

A. Hosea is to take a "wife of whoredoms"

1. He takes Gomer; she represents the fact that Israel "hath committed great whoredoms."

2. His children:

- a. Son, JEZREEL (whose name means "God sows; God scatters").
- b. Daughter, LO-RUHAMA (whose name means "unpitied").
- c. Son, LO-AMMI (whose name means "not my people").

II. ISRAEL'S PUNISHMENT & RESTORATION, Chapter 2

A. Gomer's unfaithfulness to Hosea represents Israel's unfaithfulness to God.

B. Israel shall be revealed for the shameful acts she has done, and God will punish her .

C. Israel, guilty of spiritual adultery, could be restored, and God's covenant renewed!

III. ISRAEL'S REDEMPTION, Chapter 3

THE BOOK OF HOSEA, Lesson 2
Chapters 4 - 6

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I. THE INDICTMENT AGAINST ISRAEL, chapter 4

A. God had a controversy with the people of the land: *He "brings a charge" against them.*

1. There was no truth, mercy, or knowledge of God in the land
2. They were guilty of swearing, lying, killing, stealing, adultery, and murder (compare Exodus 20:3-17).
3. The land mourns- sin's devastating effect is real!

B. These people are beyond listening.

1. The nation shall be destroyed.
2. God's people would be destroyed "for lack of knowledge" -that is, lack of knowing their God!

C. They had forgotten the law of God.

1. The priests were using religion for gain.
2. The people had completely gone into Bail worship, cult prostitution, child sacrifice -all the heinous sins characteristic of their heathen neighbors.

D. A warning is issued to Judah as well!

II. THE VERDICT AGAINST ISRAEL, chapter 5

A. Judgment is coming!

1. Both Israel and Judah shall fall.
2. When they seek the Lord, they shall not find Him.

B. The cornet and trumpet will be sounded (a warning of impending judgment!).

1. The northern kingdom would be made desolate in the day of rebuke.
2. Israel will go to foreign nations for help, rather than God, and no help will be forthcoming.

C. God would "withdraw" Himself until Israel acknowledges her offense and seeks Him.

III. THE PLEA OF ISRAEL & THE REPLY OF THE LORD, chapter 6

A. Israel's plea to return to the Lord, vv. 1-3

1. There is talk of "return," but it seems flippant and insincere.
2. There seems to be an idea that God will "automatically" return to them.

B. The Lord's reply, vv. 4-11

1. God tells Israel and Judah that her goodness is as a morning cloud or early dew (it is fleeting!).
2. God desired mercy and knowledge of God from this people, but they transgressed His covenant.
3. For their whoredom, they are defiled.
4. And a harvest is waiting for Judah as well.

<p>THE BOOK OF HOSEA, Lesson 3 <i>Chapters 7 - 10</i></p>

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I. ISRAEL'S CRIMES, chapter 7

A. The charges against Israel are described: falsehood, robbery, wickedness, adultery, pride.

1. Israel is as cake "not turned" ("half-baked").
2. Israel is as a "silly dove" (easily lured and captured).

B. God's judgment is coming, and Israel is sorry, but not repentant.

II. JUDGMENT IS COMING, chapters 8-10

A. Assyria is coming as God's instrument of judgment, chapter 8

1. Assyria shall come as an "eagle" (or "vulture").
2. Israel has acted independent of God in every way!
3. Israel has sown the wind, and shall reap the whirlwind for forgetting the Maker!

B. Captivity is coming, chapter 9

1. There shall be a loss of joy, vv. 1-2
2. Ephraim (Israel) shall return to Egypt (a symbol of captivity) -exile, vv. 3-6
3. There shall be a loss of spiritual discernment, vv. 7-9
4. There shall be declining birth rate, vv. 10-16
5. God shall cast this people away, v. 17.

C. Israel shall become as an empty vine, chapter 10

1. The description of this "empty vine" is given by the prophet.
2. When God's judgment comes, Israel's idolatry shall be taken away.
3. Because Israel plowed wickedness, she shall reap iniquity.

HOSEA, Lesson 4

Chapters 11 - 14

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I. GOD'S GREAT LOVE FOR ISRAEL, chapter 11

- A. God loved, delivered, and sustained Israel, vv .1-4
 - 1. Israel was like God's child -yet unappreciative.
 - 2. What did Israel do? Go after idols.

- B. So, Israel backslid from God, vv. 5-12
 - 1. Assyria shall rule over Israel, because Israel refused to repent.
 - 2. Israel backslid (see Proverbs 14:14).
 - 3. God is disturbed at their behavior, and at giving them over to Assyria - Judgment, then restoration!
 - 4. Ephraim (the northern kingdom of Israel) had encircled God with lies!

II. GOD'S CHARGE AGAINST ISRAEL, chapter 12

- A. Israel attempted alliances with heathen neighbors, vv. 1-8
 - 1. As God charges Ephraim, so He charges Judah also ("Jacob" is often used synonymously with Israel- see 10: 11; Genesis 32:28).
 - 2. Israel had become materialistic, greedy, and dishonest (like a "Canaanite!").

- B. But God is the Lord!, vv. 9-14
 - 1. God is the Provider of Israel, and the One who has spoken by the prophets.
 - 2. The idols are vanity- and God shall bring His reproach upon the nation.

III. GOD'S JUDGMENT ON ISRAEL, chapter 13

- A. Israel's sin has increased more and more, vv. 1-3

- B. But God will make Israel know there is no other God!, vv. 4-16
 - 1. Since Egypt, they should have known the Lord God -*God was her deliverer!*
 - 2. But because they refused knowledge of God, He shall be to them like a lion, a leopard, a bear, and a wild beast -*God will be Israel's judge!*
 - 3. Israel is destroyed -and God is her only help, her only King!
 - 4. Only God can heal their pain or redeem them from death.

IV. GOD'S RESTORATION OF ISRAEL, chapter 14

- A. The call for Israel to return to the Lord is a call to repentance!, vv .1-3
- B. God's promise of healing, love, and prosperity, vv. 4-9