

A Study of Hosea

- A. Hosea dates the book for us in 1:1. He prophesied at the same time as Isaiah (Isa. 1:1).
- B. 1:1-9 sets the stage for the rest of the book.
 - a. The marriage and children of Hosea are used as an illustration for the relationship between God and Israel.
 - b. He is instructed to marry a woman “of harlotry.” There is some debate between commentators as to exactly what this means. She was to be used as an illustration for Israel’s treatment of God in spite of His goodness toward her.
 - c. Three children were born to this marriage:
 - i. Jezreel – God will scatter. God would “scatter” Israel in the captivities.
 - ii. Lo-Ruhamah – No mercy. God’s patience with His people was out.
 - iii. Lo-Ammi – not my people. Israel had forsaken God and they were no longer in a right relationship with Him.
- C. 1:10-11 shows that after their punishment, God would restore His people.
 - i. He did that after the Babylonian captivity (Ezra 1-2).
 - ii. This passage is also quoted in the NT and applied to the Gentiles coming into the church (Rom. 9:26; 1 Pet. 2:9-10).
 - iii. Hosea 2:1 should really be 1:12.
- D. 2:2-5 is the illustration of Israel’s treatment of God.
 - a. If a relationship was to be maintained between the two then Israel had to put away her adulteries.
 - b. The only way to change the situation was for God to strip Israel of all her blessings (v. 3).
 - c. The “lovers” of Israel were Egypt, Assyria, and anyone else that they thought would protect and provide for them (v. 5).
- E. 2:6-13 states that God would punish Israel and cause her to turn back to Him. It is obvious that they were going to have to learn the hard way!
- F. 2:14-23 contains many promises made to Israel after their punishment and return to God.
 - a. The “wilderness” (v. 14) is where God protected, provided for, and given a covenant to His people.
 - b. After their punishment in captivity idolatry would no longer be a problem (v. 16-18).
 - c. 2:19-20 are a prophecy of the New Covenant that God would make with Israel. It would be an everlasting marriage and they would “know” the Lord. Jeremiah 31:31-34.
- G. 3:1-5 is an illustration using Hosea and Gomer entering a second marriage after he buys her back from her adultery.
 - a. Verse 1 shows that this is “just like” what Israel was doing to God.
 - b. It seems that verses 2-3 state that until Gomer proved herself to be a faithful wife to Hosea that they would not have a physical relationship with each other.
 - c. Verses 4-5 seem to be a Messianic prophecy. After captivity they never returned to the power and status they had before but, in the future, they would “seek the Lord their God and David their king.” This is obviously a reference to Jesus because it would happen in the “latter days.”
- H. 4 records God’s charges against His people.
 - a. No truth, mercy, or knowledge of God.
 - b. Swearing, lying, killing, stealing, adultery, no restraint, bloodshed.
 - c. Contentious (v. 4). These people could no longer be reasoned with.
 - d. They had rejected knowledge and forgotten God’s law.
 - e. Sin continually increased and they ceased obeying God’s law (v. 7-10).
 - f. They were wholly given to idolatry (v. 11-13, 17-19).
 - g. Fornication was a common practice among the people (v. 14).
 - h. Judah should have learned from Israel (v. 15-16).

- I. 5 is a record of the fact that God is coming in punishment.
 - a. Verse 1 shows that idolatry was found among the priests and in the house of the king. The leaders were not doing what they should have been doing.
 - b. Israel's pride was one of her downfalls (v. 5).
 - c. Their search for God is too late (v. 6-7).
 - d. Verses 10-12 state that the leaders of Judah had "moved the landmarks." This was forbidden by the law of Moses (Deut. 19:14). They had moved the lines of right and wrong.
 - e. Instead of turning to God for their help, they turned to Assyria (v. 13).
 - f. As a result, God would attack them for their sin (v. 14-15).
- J. Chapter 6 is a call to repentance.
 - a. The prophet calls for national repentance (v. 1-3). True repentance can only come when a person seeks the knowledge of the Lord. God will be a source of blessing to those who turn to Him.
 - b. God is faithful and true to His people, even when they are continually fickle (v. 4-6).
 - c. "But they like men (AVS reads "like Adam") have transgressed..." Adam transgressed God's law and was expelled from the garden. In a similar manner, God gave Israel a covenant, they broke it, and would be thrown out of their land.
- K. Chapter 7 discusses the political conditions of the day.
 - a. Verses 1-3 clearly imply that sin was just a way of life for these people! It was just one thing after another. It was that way from the king on down.
 - b. Verses 4-7 show that the kings of Israel were not even safe. Zechariah (2 Kgs. 15:8-12), Shallum (2 Kgs. 15:13-16), Pekahiah (2 Kgs. 15:23-26), and Pekah (2 Kgs. 15:27-31) were all murdered while on the throne!
 - c. Israel had become like a "cake unturned" (v. 8-10). Their devotions were completely one sided with idolatry. They did not realize that they were getting weaker and older as a nation and that they would not stand for much longer.
 - d. Israel had fled from God and turned to Egypt and Assyria (v. 11-16). Notice the description:
 - i. They fled from God.
 - ii. They transgressed against God.
 - iii. Spoke lies against God.
 - iv. They did not cry out to God.
 - v. They rebelled against God.
 - vi. They devised evil against God.
- L. Chapter 8 reveals that Israel had forgotten her Maker.
 - a. Verses 1-6 show that the reason for the coming destruction of God's people is that they had forsaken His covenant. Assyria will be God's instrument of destruction and at that time Israel will claim to know God but it will be too late (v. 2-3).
 - b. The "calf of Samaria" is a reference to Jeroboam I setting up different places of worship in Dan and Bethel (1 Kgs. 12:25-33). Since that time not one king of Israel served God. In the destruction from Assyria that calf would be broken into pieces.
 - c. Verses 7-10 show that Israel is going to be scattered among the nations.
 - d. Verses 11-14 show how far into idolatry God's people had gone. They "multiplied" altars to themselves and forgot God's law. Verse 13 teaches that God does not ignore sin.
- M. Chapter 9 further discusses Israel's unfaithfulness and the fact that they would be removed from the land.
 - a. God warned that this would happen – Deuteronomy 28:15-68.
 - b. Verse 17 shows the utter destruction that is facing the nation.
- N. Chapter 10 is a continuation of the announcement of their destruction.
 - a. Verse 12 shows that Israel had been cultivating wickedness for a long time.

- b. God's desire was that they repent and not be punished but it is too late.
 - c. Verse 13 basically says, "What did you expect to happen?"
- O. Chapter 11 reveals God's continuing love for His people.
 - a. Verses 1-4 show the tender care that God displayed for Israel. The statement of verse 1 is also applied to the life of Christ (Matt. 2:13-15).
 - b. Verses 5-7 say they are going to Assyria "because they refused to repent."
 - c. Verses 8-11 are very emotional as they express God's struggle with what is about to happen. Once God's wrath is poured out for their sin He will restore the remnant.
 - d. Admah and Zeboiim were cities that were near-by and destroyed at the same time with Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 14:8; 19:24-25).
 - e. Verse 12 shows that while she was guilty of sin, Judah was not as "far gone" as Israel. The Hebrew Bible uses 11:12 as 12:1.
- P. Chapter 12 shows that God's people have brought all of this on themselves.
 - a. Verse 2 shows the justice of God. The NT teaches this same thing in regard to judgment (2 Cor. 5:10).
 - b. The prophet reminds the people of the strength of their ancestor (v. 3-5) and then encourages them to repent of their sin (v. 6).
 - c. Verses 7-8 show that Israel had started acting like the Canaanites, whom they failed to drive out of the land when they inherited it. They believed that their wealth and success was a result of their own efforts.
 - d. God clears up that misunderstanding (v. 9-10).
 - e. History is again appealed to (v. 11-14) in an effort to get them to repent. Instead of being grateful to God for His blessings Israel provoked God to anger.
- Q. Chapter 13 is a proclamation of God's judgment on Israel.
 - a. Israel's sin has increased so much (v. 1-3) that she is going to be like (1) a morning cloud, (2) the early dew, (3) chaff and (4) smoke from a chimney.
 - b. They have known (as a nation) God since they were delivered from Egypt. The blessings God gave them went to their heads (v. 6).
 - c. Verses 7-8 are very descriptive of what will happen to the nation as a result of her sin.
 - d. The source of their destruction (v. 9-11) was when they turned from God's leadership to the leadership of a man (1 Sam. 8).
- R. Chapter 14 is a plea for repentance.