

## Hosea Lesson 42

### INTRO:

- A. The prophet Hosea is quite different from Amos.
  - 1. Amos told the people judgment was coming and they deserved everything that was coming upon them because of their wickedness.
  - 2. God was determined to punish the wicked.
  - 3. If the only picture we had of God is in the book of Amos, it would not be a complete one.
- B. Hosea shows judgment is indeed inevitable, most certainly, but God's heart was broken because His people made it necessary.
  - 1. The wrath of God was against Israel because of her constant idolatry and immorality, but wrath was not the only emotion God felt as He observed Israel's unfaithfulness.
  - 2. God loved Israel but they had not returned His love!
- C. Throughout the book of Hosea God rebukes Israel for her wickedness and idolatry but He does so not only from the standpoint of righteous indignation but like a husband would feel if he found his wife unfaithful and her not returning her love to him.
- D. Hosea prophesied in the days of Jeroboam II of Israel, as well as in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah in Judah. (1:1)
  - 1. He most likely began prophesying late in Jeroboam II's reign.
  - 2. His prophesying is usually dated about 750 to 725 B. C., just after Amos.
  - 3. Hosea prophesied to Israel and the judgment he speaks of is to Israel, not Judah, although Judah is warned to take heed lest she have the same judgment to come upon her.

### I. Israel's Adultery (chapters 1-3):

- A. Chapter 1:
  - 1. The story of Hosea and Gomer is the key to understanding the whole book.
  - 2. In 1:2 Hosea was told to go take a "*wife of whoredoms*".
    - a. What that means is that she is to be a woman who was reared under the influence of idolatry and was not known for her faithfulness.
  - 3. Through Hosea's experiences with Gomer as she turned from him to take other lovers, God revealed His own grief at Israel's rejection of Him.
  - 4. Hosea took the wife as he was told and she bore him three children.
  - 5. Each child was given a prophetic name:
    - a. The first son was named Jezreel - "Jehovah scatters" - foretelling that God would scatter His people for their sins. (1:4)
    - b. The second child was a girl named Lo-ruhamah - "without mercy." (1:8)
      - 1) God's judgment would be without mercy.
    - c. The third child, a son, was named Lo-Ammi - "not my people" - indicating God's rejection of Israel.

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- 1) This name could also indicate this child was not Hosea's, just as Israel was no longer God's people because of her unfaithfulness to Him.
  - 2) Gomer was not faithful to Hosea just as Israel had not be faithful to God.
  - 3) His covenant with them had been broken; it no longer existed.
  - 4) The covenant had stated "*I will be your God and ye my people.*" (Leviticus 26:12); now God says " *...you are not My people, And I will not be your God.*" (1:9)
6. Yet, even here, as God declares Israel is no longer deserving the title of God's people, He looks to the future and sees a day when a spiritual Israel would be His people - (1:10-11)  
[This passage is fulfilled in the New Testament as Jews and Gentiles are one in Christ, and those who had not been God's people could become His sons. What a blessing!]
- B. Chapter 2:
1. God makes the comparison between Gomer and Israel.
    - a. God is pictured as the husband; Israel as the unfaithful wife; and the individuals within the nation as the children.
  2. God speaks to the nation throughout this chapter.
    - a. He calls upon the children to plead with their mother to put away her harlotries (2:3).
  3. God turns away from her: (2:2)
  4. God would have no more mercy upon her children of harlotry than He had upon the wicked wife. (2:4)
  5. God's hope was that, if her blessings were removed, Israel would come back to her first husband (God) and seek to be reconciled.
    - a. God had given Israel many blessings, but she had used them in her sacrifices to Baal. (2:8)
    - b. She had not acknowledged that God was the one who gave her everything she had.
    - c. Therefore He was going to remove all her blessings and leave her stripped naked before her lovers.
    - d. None of her lovers would be willing to help the harlot that was uncovered.
  6. God had given her various feasts and special days but she had corrupted them.
  7. She considered the various gifts and blessings as rewards from the Baals as she faithfully served them.
  8. But God is gracious.
    - a. The Baals had lured Israel away from God; now He seeks to lure her back. (2:14)
    - c. Israel's blessings would begin again as soon as the wickedness was repented of and put away.

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C. Chapter 3:

1. For Hosea to understand all this, God commanded him to go to his wife Gomer despite her infidelity, show his love to her, and bring her back to him again.
2. Hosea did so and showed how God would speak kindly to Israel to bring her back to Himself.
  - a. But like God's love, Hosea's love would not overlook her wickedness: Gomer would be required to prove herself to Hosea.
  - b. She would have to prove her changed attitude by refraining from her sin for "*many days*." (3:3)
3. Israel would be punished: her government, and religion would be destroyed, and she would be exiled in a foreign land.
  - a. Even that punishment would be for her eventual good because a spiritual remnant is promised - an Israel who would return and seek the Lord her God and David her king. (3:5)

**[NOTE:** It is where the premillennialists believe God will bring physical Israel back to Jerusalem and renew His covenant with them and give them the blessings promised in the prophets. But if what they say is true, the Gentiles have no right to a covenant relationship with God! The physical kingdoms of Israel and Judah were soon to be carried into captivity as prophets like Hosea prophesied. A remnant would return, determined to renounce idolatry and to serve God. Unfortunately, most who returned were not faithful. Therefore God was not able to bless them as He would have, just as He had not been able to bless them down through the years. The small spiritual remnant who truly kept their covenant relationship with God was made larger in the New Testament to include Gentiles, too - those who had not been God's people could now be His people. Passages such as Hosea 1:10 and 2:21-23 are quoted in the New Testament (Rom. 9:25-26; 1 Pet. 2:10) to show that the Gentiles have been accepted.]

II. Chapters 4-13 - The Ungodliness Of Israel and Its Inevitable Punishment:

A. Chapters 4-6:

1. These chapters are almost like a trial (law suite) in which the Lord presents evidence which will justify the actions He is about to take against Israel.
2. The Lord brings a charge against Israel because there is no truth, no mercy, and no knowledge of the Lord in the land.
3. Instead, there is nothing but swearing and lying, and killing, and stealing and committing adultery, no restraint, and bloodshed upon bloodshed. (4:1-2)
  - a. Which gives us the familiar verse: "*My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.*" (4:6) and God blames the priests. They led the people into error. God will punish them for their deeds. **[NOTE:** Under the law of Moses, the priests and Levites were to teach the people, to keep the knowledge of God's law alive in the land. (Deuteronomy 17:10-11; 33:8-11)]

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- b. Their harlotry and wine have taken away the people's common sense and they ask advice from wooden idols (in other words: a stump) and their walking sticks talk to them.
- c. The people are completely given to idolatry and fornication.
- 4. Judah is warned to leave Ephraim alone because he is joined to his idols. (4:17)
  - a. Nevertheless Judah will also stumble and will share in the judgment God has in store for Israel. [NOTE: Ephraim was the largest, most prominent tribe in the northern kingdom of Israel. The reference, throughout the prophets, to the name Ephraim is used interchangeably with the name Israel. And, since Ephraim was the son of Joseph, the expression "*house of Joseph*" is often used in the same way.]
- 5. In chapter 6, Hosea exhorts the people to repent and return to the Lord.
  - a. God Himself laments over the unfaithfulness of Israel and Judah.
  - b. They have transgressed their agreement with God and have completely turned away from Him.
- B. Chapters 7-8:
  - 1. The king and the princes delight in wickedness: they are all adulterers.
    - a. They prepare their hearts like an oven to do evil.
  - 2. Ephraim repeatedly turns to the wrong sources for help.
    - a. They turn to Egypt and Assyria.
    - b. They do everything but turn to God!
  - 3. Israel has transgressed God's covenant and broken His law.
    - a. Their kings are set up without His approval; they have set up their idols. The more the idols, the more the sin.
    - b. They have sowed the wind; they shall reap the whirlwind.
  - 4. God wrote for Israel the ten thousand things of His law, but they are strange things to Ephraim, things he obviously knows nothing about.
  - 5. Therefore God does not accept their sacrifices. Instead, He will remember their iniquity and will punish their sins.
  - 6. They will return to Egypt. [NOTE: Several times in Hosea and in the other prophets, Egypt is used as a symbol of bondage. Their captivity, however, would be at the hands of Assyria (5:13; 7:11; 9:3; 10:6; 11:5).]

**III. Chapters 9-11 - Israel's Religious And Moral Apostasy - Its Punishment:  
Exile and Destruction:**

- A. Ephraim has played the harlot, therefore they will not dwell in Lord's land.
- B. They shall return to Egypt [captivity] and will eat unclean food in Assyria.
- C. The time has come for their sins to be visited upon them. (9:10-12).
- D. Hosea says, "*My God will cast them away, Because they did not obey Him; And they shall be wanderers among the nations.*" (9:17).
- E. As Israel has been blessed, he has increased his altars to idols.
  - 1. Because of the calves of Beth Aven [Bethel], the people of Samaria will mourn. (10:5)

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2. Their idols shall be carried away to the king of Assyria. **[NOTE:** There is a play on words in this passage. The name Bethel meant "house of God, " but by placing their golden calves there, they had turned it into Beth Aven the "house of vanity, the house of emptiness instead.]
- F. Israel has sinned more than in the days of Gibeah (Judges 19:10-30). **[NOTE:** On that occasion, almost the whole tribe of Benjamin was wiped out.]
  1. He needs to seek the Lord, but because he is filled with evil-doing, destruction of the fortresses and of the cities are the things that await.
  2. When Israel was a child God loved him and called His son out of Egypt (Matt. 2:15).
  3. However, the more God reached out to them, the more they sacrificed to the Baals. (11:1-2)
  4. They will not return to Egypt, but the Assyrian will be their king.
- G. The sorrow which God had over losing the people He loved is expressed when He says... (11:11).

**IV. Chapters 12-13:**

- A. Ephraim feeds on the wind [emptiness].
- B. God not only has a charge (suite) with him but also with Judah.
- C. God will punish Jacob according to his deeds.
  1. In the womb he took his brother by the heel.
  2. In his manhood, he had power over the angel, and prevailed (Gen. 32:24-28).
  3. He met God at Bethel, and God spoke to him.
  4. Ephraim is a Canaanite. (12:8).
- D. When Ephraim spoke, he made people tremble, but when he offended in Baal, he died. (13:1)
  1. The people of Ephraim made for themselves silver images of their calves and said, "*Let the men who sacrifice kiss the calves!*" (13:2).
  2. Therefore they will pass away as the morning fog, as the early morning dew, as chaff blown from the threshing floor, as smoke from the chimney. (13:3)
- E. God says...(13:4-5).
- F. Nevertheless, Israel turned away from God.
  1. The Lord now stalks them as a lion or a leopard.
  2. As a bear that has lost her cubs, He will meet them and will tear open their rib cage (hearts).
  3. He will devour them like a lion.
- G. "*O Israel, you are destroyed, But your help is from Me.*" (12:9)

**V. Chapter 14 - Israel's Conversion and Pardon:**

- A. The Lord calls to Israel, (14:1)
- B. Israel needs to say... (14:2-3).
- C. The Lord will "*heal*" Israel.
  1. He will be like the dew to refresh them.

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2. The Lord will be like the olive-tree and His people will come again to His shade.
3. He will bless Israel and will restore their blessings.
- D. Though both Hosea and Amos are declaring the time has come for judgment, the nation is ripe for picking - yet the cry goes out from God, "*O Israel, return to the Lord your God, For you have stumbled because of your iniquity;*"
  1. Even this late in their history and the increase of their wickedness, God would have been glad to accept them back if they had only repented.
  2. The story of the divided kingdom is a very sad story, but the sad part is not because they were punished but because they refused to listen to the warnings and return to God.
  3. God's mercy is as obvious as His justice in the prophets.
    - a. God's justice could not ignore their wickedness, but His mercy made Him long-suffering in hopes that things would change.

**VI. Lessons From Hosea:**

**A. We Are Gomer!**

1. When the Lord first spoke through Hosea, the Lord said to Hosea...(1:2-3)
2. Gomer is presented as the unfaithful wife to Hosea.
  - a. Hosea's life becomes a picture of the mercy and grace and patience of God with an unfaithful people.
  - b. The message is to the people, the bride of Christ.
  - c. God is absolutely faithful. We are not!
3. This book goes into detail about this.
  - a. It portrays idolatry and adultery.
  - b. When we worship idols (prosperity, money, success, comfort, safety, recognition, pleasure) we commit adultery against God.
  - c. Even ignoring God in favor of our own lives is a form of unfaithfulness.
4. Despite all of this, God still wants us! He loves us that much!

**B. God Desires Relationship Not Ritual: (6:6)**

1. The phrases '*steadfast love*' and '*knowledge of God*' are both expressing a relationship.
2. When we fully love with God, we want to grow in our knowledge and understanding of him.
  - a. That requires a day by day walk and increasing awareness of His presence.
  - b. We can then know His character, His ways and, certainly, His love.
  - c. There is a great joy in having this type of relationship!
3. This verse also states what God does not desire is ritual and sacrifice.
  - a. When we read the Old Testament, we see that sacrifice was commanded by God. Does this mean it is no longer required?
  - b. This is not the point that God is making here.

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- c. During the time of Hosea's prophecy, the people continued to sacrifice.
- d. They went to the temple, acted holy in their worship and believed that going through the motions was good enough.
- e. They were deep in sin while they were religious on the surface!
- 4. This is a warning for us!
  - a. Too many today go through the motions in the assembly and then live the way they want to, completely ignoring God.
  - b. This is not what God wants!
- C. God Punishes His Own People:**
  - 1. Chapters 8-10 describes some of the consequences for disobedience.
  - 2. There are several consistent things throughout Scripture.
    - a. God's love is certainly one of them.
    - b. God's grace saves people – always has, always will. He saves us today because of His grace. (Romans 3:24; Ephesians 2:8)
    - c. Another consistent thing we don't like quite as much is God's requirement that His people be obedient to Him.
      - 1) That is consistent in all of Scripture.
      - 2) The consequences of sin are not done away with at the cross.
      - 3) We cannot be rebellious and hateful as God's people and expect Him to turn a blind eye.
- D. God's Punishment is Designed to Bring Us Back: (12:6)**
  - 1. God helps us when we want to get our lives right.
  - 2. He works in and through our commitment to Him to enable us to follow through.
  - 3. We have some responsibility here, too.
    - a. We choose to love, we choose justice and we choose to follow God's leadership which He's provided for us in His word.
      - 1) Love is not just a feeling, it's a choice. When we choose to love God and love one another, we continually make decisions and live on the basis of love.
        - a) He helps us to do this but we still bear the responsibility.
    - b. Justice is something that we should always live for.
      - 1) Sadly, we often view justice through the eyes of the world and not the eyes of God.
      - 2) God's justice is tempered with mercy.
      - 3) We should never embrace cold justice but always consider the individual. (Jude 21-23)
      - 4) And most importantly, we must remember that God's justice is supreme and apply that justice to our own lives!
    - c. Are we patient enough to use God's word to lead us through all the things that we encounter?
      - 1) Are we willing to let his word transform our lives?

**Lessons From Characters In Old Testament**  
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- 2) We must always remember that He is God.

**CONCLUSION:**

- A. In the book of Hosea, we see that we serve a God of love AND a God of wrath.
- B. May we be forever thankful that God loved the world so much that He sent His only Son to die on the cross for our sins, so that we would not have to face the wrath of God.
- C. No sin is beyond His forgiveness.
- D. Our God is full of compassion and He loves us deeply.
- E. How much do we love Him?

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**The Prophet Isaiah**