

Minor Prophets—Lesson 10

Hosea: Introduction and Overview, Chapters 1–4

“How can I give you up, Ephraim?
How can I hand you over, Israel?...
My heart churns within Me;
My sympathy is stirred” (11:8).

Introduction, Overview

- Details of Hosea's **personal life** are recorded in chapters 1–3, so we'll have more to say about that in our discussion.
- From the kings listed in 1:1, we can put Hosea's **years of prophesying** in the approximate range of 750–725 B.C.
- Occasionally thoughts will be directed toward Judah, but Hosea's **primary audience** is Israel (often called *Ephraim* in Hosea).

Introduction, Overview

- Hosea began to prophesy toward the end of Jeroboam II's reign, a very prosperous period for the nation of Israel. This may be one reason for their pride, for which they were condemned (5:5; 7:10).
- He continued to prophesy after Jeroboam's death, a period of great chaos for Israel. Kings were killed off left and right (see 7:6–7; 10:7).
 - Of the 6 kings who succeeded Jeroboam II, only Menahem died a natural death.

Introduction, Overview

- Things to look for in Hosea:
 - God's relationship with Israel, pictured as both a **loving husband** to His bride and a **loving father** to His child.
 - **Hosea's experience with his wife**, and how that parallels **God's experience with Israel**.
 - The specific **sins** of Israel, and the **underlying causes**.
 - God's **judgment** against Israel.
 - **Prophecies fulfilled** in the new covenant, under the reign of Christ.

God/Israel and Hosea/Gomer

- Read 1:2–3.
- Names of three children and their meaning?
- Read chapter 3.
- Think Hosea was uniquely prepared to feel God's pain over Israel's adultery?
 - Different forms of the word **harlotry** used 21 times in Hosea; different forms of the word **adultery** used 6 times; **lover** or **lovers** used 7 times.

Similarity in First 3 Chapters

- Each begins with a note of gloom, but ends with a note of hope.
- 1:10–2:1
 - Romans 9:22–26; 1 Peter 2:9–10.
- 2:14–23.
- 3:5.
 - Who is “David”? See 1:11 (“one head”); Luke 1:31–33.

Giving Credit To Whom It's Not Due

- To whom did Israel give credit for their prosperity? (2:5, 8, 12–13).
 - “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from _____” (James 1:17).
 - “He gives to all life, breath, and all _____” (Acts 17:25).
- But what would they eventually realize about their “first husband”? (2:7).
 - Think of someone in the N.T. who said “it was better for me”?

Underlying Causes

- Swearing, lying, killing, stealing, and committing adultery—these were all sins for which Israel was rebuked (4:2), but what underlying cause is indicated in 4:1, 6?
 - “I have written for him the great things of My law, but they were considered a strange thing” (8:12).
- Priests were supposed to teach the law (Lev. 10:10–11; Deut. 17:8–11). How did they do?
 - Read 4:6–10.

Do Not Be Partakers With Them

- “Ephraim is joined to idols; let (leave) him _____”
(4:17).
- The context: 4:15–19.

Minor Prophets—Lesson 11

Hosea 5–8

Questions

- Why will Israel not be able to find the Lord when they seek Him?
- T F God said He would be unto Ephraim as a moth.
- What did Ephraim do when he “saw his sickness”?
- To what is the “goodness” or “faithfulness” of Ephraim and Judah compared?
- How had God “hewed” and “slain” them?

Questions

- What two things did God desire more than sacrifice and burnt offerings?
- Who did Israel make glad with their wickedness and lies?
- T F God described Israel as a “cake not turned.”
- What was true of Israel that “he knoweth not”?
- T F Ephraim is also like a silly dove without heart.

Questions

- Though God bound and strengthened Israel's arms, what did they do?
- T F Israel always set up kings and princes by God's direction.
- What did Israel reap by sowing to the wind?
- T F Israel did not make many altars.
- How did Israel regard or consider the great things of God's law?

Sins of Israel

- Harlotry/idolatry (5:3–4; 8:4–6, 11).
- Went to the wrong doctor (5:13; 7:10–11, 14; 8:9–10).
- Fleeting faithfulness (6:4).
- Vain worship (6:6; 8:13).
- Robbery, murder (6:9; 7:1, 7).

Sins of Israel

- Lewdness (6:9).
- Drunkenness (7:5).
- Fled from God, rebelled against Him (7:13–16).
- Cursed with their tongues (7:16).
- Transgressed the covenant (6:7; 8:1).
 - “Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be My people” (Jeremiah 7:23).

Underlying Causes

- “The pride of Israel testifies to his face” (5:5; 7:10).
- Lack of knowledge, which they could have obtained from the law (4:6; 8:12).
 - And from the prophets (6:5; 5:2).
- “They do not consider in their hearts that I remember all their wickedness” (7:2).
 - “I know Ephraim, and Israel is not hidden from Me” (5:3).

Underlying Causes

- Poor leadership, from priests, kings, etc. (5:1).
- “Willingly walked by human precept” (5:11).
- “Ephraim has mixed himself among the peoples; Ephraim is a cake unturned” (7:8).
- “Israel has forgotten his Maker” (8:14).
- Despised God’s goodness (7:13, 15).
- So hardened they didn’t know true condition (7:9).

God's Judgment Against Israel

- “With their flocks and herds they shall go to seek the LORD, but they will not find Him; He has withdrawn Himself from them” (5:6).
- “I will pour out My wrath on them like water” (5:10).
- “I will be to Ephraim like a moth, and to the house of Judah like rottenness” (5:12).
- “I will be like a lion to Ephraim, and like a young lion to the house of Judah. I, even I, will tear them and go away; I will take them away and no one shall rescue” (5:14).

God's Judgment Against Israel

- “I will return again to My place until they acknowledge their offense” (5:15).
- “I will spread My net on them; I will bring them down like the birds of the air” (7:12).
- “Now He will remember their iniquities and punish their sins, they shall return to Egypt” (8:13).
- “I will send fire upon his cities, and it shall devour his palaces” (8:14).

Minor Prophets—Lesson 12

Hosea 9–11

Questions

- **Why** did Hosea say, “Rejoice not, O Israel, for joy?” (9:1).
- T F It was prophesied that Israel would **not** dwell in the Lord’s land. (9:3).
- **Where** would Israel eat unclean things? (9:3).
- T F Hosea foretold Israel **would** be carried away into captivity. (9:3, 6, and others).
- Why would God cast them away? (9:17).

Questions

- Judgment shall spring up as what? (10:4).
- T F The thorn and thistle would come up in Israel's gardens. (10:8).
- T F Israel had sinned from the days of Jericho. (10:9).
- What attitude had led Israel to “plow wickedness and reap iniquity?” (10:13).
- Hosea said, “It is time” to do what? (10:12).

Questions

- To **whom** had Israel sacrificed and burned incense? (11:2).
- God “drew” Israel into what? (11:3–4).
- God’s people were “bent” to what? (11:7).
- Why would God “**not** execute the fierceness of his anger?” (11:9).
- T F It was said that Judah yet ruleth with God. (11:12).
(Marginal reading: “yet unsteadfast with God”)

Deep Corruption

- “They are deeply corrupted, as in the days of **Gibeah**” (9:9); “you have sinned from the days of **Gibeah**” (10:9).
 - Refers to an account in Judges 19–20 where a Levite took a concubine; the concubine played the harlot against him; after retrieving her from her father’s house, and on his way to the **Lord’s house**, he stopped in Gibeah of Benjamin where an old man took them in for the night. The men of the city abused her that night, and to call the other tribes to war against Benjamin, he cut her into 12 pieces and sent them throughout the various tribes. In this battle Benjamin’s men were reduced to 600.

Deep Corruption

- “But they went to Baal Peor, and separated themselves to that shame; they became an abomination like the thing they loved” (9:10).
 - “The people began to commit harlotry with the women of Moab. They invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people bowed down to their gods. So Israel was joined to Baal of Peor, and the anger of the Lord was aroused against Israel” (Numbers 25:1–3).

You're in trouble **BECAUSE...**

- “The days of punishment have come; the days of recompense have come...**BECAUSE** of the **greatness of your iniquity and great enmity**” (9:7).
- “**BECAUSE** of the **evil of their deeds** I will drive them from My house” (9:15).
- My God will cast them away, **BECAUSE** they **did not obey Him**” (9:17).
 - “Those who **do not obey the gospel**...these shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord” (2 Thess. 1:8–9).

You're in trouble **BECAUSE...**

- “You have eaten the fruit of lies, **BECAUSE you trusted in your own way, in the multitude of your mighty men**” (10:13).
- “Thus it shall be done to you, O Bethel, **BECAUSE of your great wickedness**” (10:15).
- “He shall not return to the land of Egypt; but the Assyrian shall be his king, **BECAUSE they refused to repent**. And the sword shall slash in his cities, devour his districts, and consume them, **BECAUSE of their own counsels**” (11:5–6).

Other causes

- Attitude toward God's spokesmen: "The prophet is a fool, the spiritual man is insane" (9:7).
 - "He [Jesus] has a demon and is mad. Why do you listen to Him?" (John 10:20).
 - "Paul, you are beside yourself! Much learning is driving you mad" (Acts 26:24).
- "Their heart is divided" (10:2).
 - "How long will you falter between two opinions?" (1 Kgs. 18:21).
 - "Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God?" (James 4:4).

Other causes

- Despised God's love and goodness:
 - “When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son. The more they were called, the more they went away; they kept sacrificing to the Baals and burning offerings to idols. Yet it was I who taught Ephraim to walk; I took them up by their arms, but they did not know that I healed them. I led them with cords of kindness, with the bands of love, and I became to them as one who eases the yoke on their jaws, and I bent down to them and fed them” (11:1–4, ESV).
 - “Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering...? (Romans 2:4).

Play on Words

- Ephraim was the largest and most prominent tribe in Israel, which helps explain why Israel is addressed by this name throughout Hosea.
 - Ephraim means “double fruit,” but notice 9:16: “Ephraim is stricken; their root is dried up; they shall bear **no fruit.**”
 - Prior to this, God explained how He would make the wombs of their women barren (9:11–15).

Play on Words

- Recall that in the northern kingdom of Israel, golden calves were set up at Dan and **Bethel** (“house of God”).
 - “The inhabitants of Samaria fear because of the calf of Beth Aven” (10:5). Beth Aven means “house of vanity,” so a place that means “house of **God**” has been turned into a “house of **vanity**.”
 - “Also the high places of Aven...shall be destroyed” (10:8).
 - “Thus it shall be done to you, O Bethel” (10:15).

Minor Prophets—Lesson 13

Review of Hosea; Chapters 12–14

Repentance

- “So you, by the help of your God, **return**; observe mercy and justice, and wait on your God continually” (12:6).
- O Israel, **return** to the LORD your God, for you have stumbled because of your iniquity; take words with you, and **return** to the LORD. **Say** to Him, “Take away all iniquity; receive us graciously, for we will offer the sacrifices of our lips. Assyria shall not save us, we will not ride on horses, nor will we **say** anymore to the work of our hands, ‘You are our gods.’ For in You the fatherless finds mercy” (14:1–3).

Repentance

- “Ephraim shall say, ‘What have I to do anymore with idols?’” (14:8).
- “She will chase her lovers, but not overtake them; yes, she will seek them, but not find them. Then she will say, ‘I will go and **return** to my first husband, for then it was better for me than now’” (2:7).
- Keep in mind what God said earlier: “I will return again to My place till they **acknowledge** their offense” (5:15).

God's Response

- “I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely, for My anger has turned away from him. I will be like the dew to Israel; he shall grow like the lily, and lengthen his roots like Lebanon. His branches shall spread; his beauty shall be like an olive tree, and his fragrance like Lebanon. Those who dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall be revived like grain, and grow like a vine. Their scent shall be like the wine of Lebanon” (14:4–7).

Quite a Contrast to Earlier Words

- “I will be to them like a lion...like a leopard...like a bear deprived of her cubs...I will tear...I will devour” (13:7–8).
- “Though he is fruitful [Ephraim means “double fruit] among his brethren, an east wind shall come; the wind of the LORD shall come up from the wilderness. Then his spring shall become dry, and his fountain shall be dried up” (13:15).

“I have seen a **horrible thing** in the house of Israel...the harlotry of Ephraim; Israel is defiled” (Hosea 6:10).

Swearing, lying, killing, stealing, vain worship, oppression of the poor, lewdness, drunkenness, etc.

How NOT to Repeat the Sins of Israel

- Realize we have the best “husband” we could possibly ask for (2:7), and so don’t go after other “lovers” (2:13).
- Be thankful for our husband’s love, grace, goodness, and mercy; for the blessings He has lavished upon us; and especially for the salvation that can only be found in Him (11:3–4; 7:13, 15–16).
 - “There is no savior besides Me...your help is from Me. I will be your King; where is any other, that he may save you...? (13:4, 9–10).

How NOT to Repeat the Sins of Israel

- Understand that we can't love two at the same time, that a divided heart will never do (10:2).
 - In the words of Jesus, “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other” (Matthew 6:24).
- We need to be very careful about the extent to which we mix ourselves “among the peoples” (7:8).

How NOT to Repeat the Sins of Israel

- Don't leave the house of the Lord (Bethel) for a house of vanity (Beth Aven), which is exactly what happens when we leave Him for the world (10:5–8).
- Keep growing in knowledge—through our own study and by listening carefully to those who teach the word (4:1, 6; 8:12; 12:10). “People who do not understand will be trampled” (4:14).
- Remember that what we think, say, and do is not hidden from God, that He remembers all our sins (5:3; 7:2).

How NOT to Repeat the Sins of Israel

- Never ever refuse to repent (11:5); keep a soft heart and come back to Him trembling (10:10–11), determined to put away wrong and do what's right (12:6; 14:1–3, 8).
- Remember He is always ready to heal, to forgive our sins, to receive us into His fellowship (14:4–7). He does not want to give us up (11:8–9)—He has not appointed us to wrath (1 Thessalonians 5:9).

How NOT to Repeat the Sins of Israel

- Heed the warnings about the **deceitfulness** of sin. Sin is not to be trifled with, or dabbled in, because it can enslave us (4:11), cause us to “break all restraint” (4:2), which then makes us “sin more and more” (13:2). We may set our heart on iniquity (4:8), become so “deeply corrupted” (9:9) that we no longer acknowledge sin (13:8; 7:9). We may even still cry, “My God, we know You!” (8:2).
 - We become “like a silly dove” (7:11) who doesn’t realize he’s flying right into a trap.

How **NOT** to Repeat the Sins of Israel

- Trust in God (12:6)—not in our wealth (12:8; 13:6), not in our power (10:13), not in anything or anyone else (5:13; 7:10–11, 14; 8:9–10).
- We should know better, then, to walk in our own ways, according to our own counsels (10:6, 13; 11:6)—“it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps” (Jeremiah 10:23).
 - “WAIT on your God” (12:6)—NOT run ahead of Him.
 - Don’t remove His landmarks (5:10).

How NOT to Repeat the Sins of Israel

- Strive for consistency in service to God—we don't want our faithfulness to be “like a morning cloud and like the early dew” (6:4).
 - “Exercise yourself toward godliness” (1 Timothy 4:7)—hard for the devil to hold sway over us when exercise is part of our daily routine.
- Leaders must lead—in the paths of righteousness. Priests, princes, kings—they were all a huge disappointment in Israel (“her rulers dearly love dishonor”—4:18).