

HOSEA

Hosea 1:1 - 2:1*
The Agony of Adultery
Week 1: 26th August 2012

Into the Bible

1. Hosea was prophesying during the reign of Jeroboam, King of Israel. While Hosea does not state it, he was also active during the reign of the next 6 kings of Israel. Read each of the following passages, name the king, how long they ruled and a description of their character

- 2 Kings 14:23-29
- 2 Kings 15:8-12
- 2 Kings 15:13-16
- 2 Kings 15:17-22
- 2 Kings 15:23-26
- 2 Kings 15:27-31

2. All but one (i.e Shallum who reigned for 1 month!) of the above descriptions refers back to the sin of Jeroboam “which he had caused Israel to commit”. Read 1 Kings 12:25-33. What was his sin?

3. How does the Lord describe this sin in Hosea 1:2?

4. Why do you think Hosea’s marriage would strengthen his message?

5. Read Hosea 1:4-5 . Why did God need to punish the house of Jehu? Compare the command of God in 2 Kings 9:6-9 with the actions of Jehu in the following passages

- 2 Kings 9:24-27
- 2 Kings 10:6-11
- 2 Kings 10:12-14
- 2 Kings 10:25-27

6. What are the names of the three children of Hosea? What do their names tell us about the nation of Israel's relationship with God?
7. What is the promise of God as related in Hosea 1:10-2:1

Application

1. What does the heartache of Hosea teach us about the love of God?
2. Why do you think Israel kept turning away from God and rejecting his love? What lessons do we learn from this?
3. The kings and the nation of Israel were driven by their own agendas. How does a true encounter with God and a revelation of who he truly is change our personal agendas?

Going Beyond

Despite God's discipline, God tells Hosea that He will eventually restore the nation. List the ways the nation will be restored in Hosea 1:10 – 2:1. Has this been fulfilled? Read the following verses to deepen the discussion.

- Isaiah 9:6-7
- Ezekiel 34:23-24
- Daniel 7:13-14
- Revelation 11:15
- Revelation 16:12-16 (Note that Armageddon means Mt Megiddo. In ancient Israel, Megiddo is a plain, not a mountain and it is also known as the valley of Jezreel.

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Hosea 2:2 - 3:5* The Lord of Love Week 2: 2nd September 2012

Chapter 2 of Hosea is the message the Lord gave to the nation of Israel through Hosea, bearing in mind that Hosea knew the Lord's heartache in a very real and personal way. Chapter 2 and 3 teach us about the folly of sin and the power of forgiveness and restoration as well as the need to learn lessons along the way!

Into the Bible

1. What does the Lord say will happen to the adulterous wife in Hosea 2:2-6 and 9-13?
2. Who is responsible for the unraveling of her life?
3. How does Hosea 2:7-8 and 13 describe the motivation and actions of Gomer?
4. How do the answers to the above 3 questions describe the nation of Israel?
5. Why would God lead her (both Gomer and Israel) into the desert? (Hosea 2:14-23)
6. The word Achor means trouble. How can a place of trouble be a door of hope?
7. Throughout the Bible the desert is always a place used by God. Look at the following passages and list what God does in the desert
 - Deuteronomy 29:5-6
 - Hebrews 3:8
 - Matthew 4:1-11
8. Describe Hosea's actions in Chapter 3
9. Describe what will happen to the Israelites in Chapter 3

Application

1. When we sin there are consequences!! As you think back, can you identify any consequences either spiritually, emotionally or even physically?
2. Have you ever experienced a desert time in your life? If so, what was it and what lessons did you learn through it?
3. Trials and Temptations are an opportunity to learn more about the Lord. Hosea 2:19-20 lists five characteristics of God. Discuss and define each one using Bible verses to support your definition.
 - Righteous
 - Just
 - Love
 - Compassionate
 - Faithful
4. Describe how those characteristics of God have been revealed in your life.
5. Hosea had to forgive his wife just as God forgives us and forgiveness costs the one who forgives. How easy is it for you to forgive in ALL circumstances

Going Deeper

How is the prophecy of Hosea 3:4-5 fulfilled

- Jeremiah 50:4-5
- Deuteronomy 4:30-31
- Isaiah 9:7
- Zechariah 14:9-11
- Isaiah 11:12-13

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Hosea 4:1 - 6:3*

Faithless People, Faithful God

Week 3: 9th September 2012

Into the Bible

1. Read Hosea chapter four. What does this chapter have to say about:

- The leadership of Israel (v. 5, 7)
- Who was at fault among the people (v. 9, 14)
- How the Israelites viewed worshipping God and worshipping idols (vv. 15-17)

2. Compare Hosea 4:7 with Psalm 106:20-22 and Romans 1:21-23. How do these verses define idolatry?

3. Some people have suggested that because Israel has been unfaithful to God the Jews have forfeited God's promises, which they say have been inherited by the church. This is known as 'replacement theology'. What do the following verses have to say about this idea, and the faithfulness of God?

- Romans 2:28-3:4
- Romans 11:25-29

4. Read Hosea chapter five. How does this chapter build on the themes of chapter four?

5. Compare Hosea 5:4 with Isaiah 44:18 and Romans 1:18 and 8:7-8.

- How does a life of sin affect our ability to relate to God?
- In light of these verses, Israel would seem to be in a hopeless situation – but what is God’s promise in Hosea 13:14 (and compare with Hosea 2:16-23)?

6. Read Hosea 6:1-3.

- How do these verses express the expectation that God will be merciful if the people are repentant – what is implied about God’s mercy?
- How does the imagery of 6:3 contrast Hosea 2:3?

Application

1. Have you ever considered anyone to be beyond God’s reach?
2. What does the Bible have to say about how God overcomes people’s addiction to sin? See Jeremiah 31:3; John 6:44, 6:65, 12:32; 1 Peter 2:9.
3. How does this understanding of God’s faithfulness and mercy inform your approach to praying for people who do not acknowledge God?
4. Who will you commit to praying for this week?

Going beyond

In Hosea 5:14 God says he will be like a lion to Israel, tearing the nation to pieces as a judgement for sin. Read Psalm 22:13 and 22:16 (see your footnotes!) and consider how Jesus took this punishment upon himself on the cross, and then rose from the dead three days later, conquering death, to give us eternal life. As Hosea 6:2 says: “on the third day he will restore us, that we may live in his presence”.

HOSEA

Hosea 6:4 - 11:11*

Callous People, Faithful God

Week 4: 16th September 2012

Into the Bible

1. Read Hosea 6:4-7:16

- What charges does God bring against Israel here?
- What does God mean when he says "I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgement of God rather than burnt offerings"?
- Read Matthew 9:10-13. Why do you think Jesus quotes Hosea 6:6 on this occasion?
- What prevents God from redeeming Israel according to 7:13
- What does 7:14 indicate the Israelites live for?

2. Read Hosea 8.

- What additional charges are brought against Israel here?
- What imagery is used to describe God's judgement?
- What is their attitude towards God's word according to 8:12?
- What do verses 8-10 say about Israel's relationship with Assyria? Read 2 Kings 17:1-6 for the fulfilment of God's promise that the Israelites will "waste away under the oppression of the mighty king".

3. Read Hosea chapters 9 and 10.

- How are the prophets regarded and why? See 9:7-8.
- How does God describe his initial relationship with Israel in the first part of 9:10? What emotions do you associate with the metaphors here?
- In contrast, what imagery is used to describe how God sees the nation in its state of rebellion (9:16)?
- In what way have we seen 9:17 fulfilled in history?

4. Read Hosea 11:1-11.

- Compare and contrast 11:4-5 and 10:11; how have things changed for Israel, and why?
- Verses 9-11 speak of God bringing Israel back to the land. How has this prediction been fulfilled in our own times?

Application

1. The Israelites rejected both the word of God, and the prophets he sent to warn them. What does the Bible have to say about how we should respond to God's call to repentance? Consider this in light of Hosea 6:6 and Joel 2:12-13.
2. Read God's plea to Israel in Hosea 10:12. What do you think this means in practice?

Going beyond

In Hosea 11:1 God says, "out of Egypt I called my son." This verse refers both to God bringing the nation of Israel out of slavery in Egypt, and to Jesus returning with his family from Egypt after initially fleeing from Bethlehem to escape Herod's attempt to kill him as a child (see Matthew 2:13-15). Compare the sonship of Jesus with the sonship of Israel, and consider what an amazing act of substitution God made in sending his only begotten son, Jesus, to die in our place to redeem us from our sins.

HOSEA

Hosea 11:12 - 14:9*

The Futility of Rebellion & the Blessing of Repentance

Week 5: 23rd September 2012

Into the Bible

1. Read Hosea 11:12-12:14

- What events in Israel's history does God use to remind the people of their special relationship with him? Consider 12:4, 12:9, 12:12, 12:13.
- What is the significance of Bethel (verse 4), Gilead and Gilgal (verse 11)? See Genesis 12:7-8; 28:19; Numbers 32:1-5 and Joshua 4:19-24.
- How is Israel described in this chapter – what imagery is used to describe the nation's rebellion against God?

2. Read Hosea 13

- What reminders does God give Israel here of their history? Compare Hosea 13:4 with Deuteronomy 5:6-7; Hosea 13:6 and with Exodus 16:11-20.
- What is the message of verses 13:7-10?
- In the middle of this chapter on judgement we are given 13:14 – where is this verse quoted in the New Testament and how is it fulfilled?

3. Read Hosea 14

- What is God's plea in verses 1-3?

- What is his promise in verses 4-7?

- What is his perspective in verse 8?

Application

1. What is the concluding message of Hosea in 14:9? What is it that we are called to realise and understand?

2. Looking back at the book of Hosea:
 - What was the chief sin of Israel, and how is it described?

 - In what ways do we fall into the same trap today?

 - What does this book tell us about the character of God?

 - How can you put into practice the call to walk in the ways of the Lord?

Going beyond

1. How does God call us to respond to Biblical prophecy? Compare Hosea 14:9, Daniel 12:9-10, Matthew 16:3-4, Matthew 24:32 and Revelation 1:3 and consider:
 - What God would have us learn from Israel's history

 - How he would have us regard world events today

 - How he would have us live.