

Hosea Chapters 1 - 4

Series Study Sheet

Hosea 1 Making an example

Though not exactly the easiest reading, the book of Hosea holds some of the most wonderful examples of the never failing and unending Love of God. It is one of the few books of the bible that deals almost exclusively with the issue of relationships and in particular the relationship between God and his people.

Hosea was originally living in the Northern Kingdom of divided Israel. Israel was continuously sinful and had had no good Kings since their rebellion against the Royal house of David. Perhaps this was the reason that such an astounding physical example was made in Hosea's marriage, his children and his life.

In Hosea chapter 1 we find that God instructs Hosea to marry the prostitute Gomer “for the land hath committed great whoredom, departing from the Lord.”. Gomer goes on to have three children; the name of the first prophesying the end of the reign of the line of Jehu and the destruction of Israel, the name of the second prophesying the divine intervention of God for the nation of Judah in the days of Hezekiah and the name of the third telling of the end of the relationship with his people for a time.

Despite all this the chapter finishes with a promise (**read Hosea 1:10-11**) and shows the mercy of God.

Read Psalm 103:11-18, and discuss in your group how God's omniscience is key to our redemption through his mercy.

As mentioned before the relationship between Hosea and Gomer is given as a living example of the relationship between Israel and God.

Group Challenge: See if you can think of any other examples in the Bible where God has used a physical metaphor for a concept or point he is trying to make.

This chapter starts on a low point, “she is not my wife, neither am I her husband”. This in effect is the end of the relationship.

The chapter then goes on to complain of all the ways that the wife has taken the provisions of the husband for granted and even gone as far as declaring that they were not provided by him. When we consider this in light of mankind and his gratitude to God we can see this has been played out right throughout the history of the world. I like to call it the “Prosperity Problem” as it seems that as soon as man is comfortable enough he quite often decides that God is an inconvenience and no longer needed.

(While watching your time) discuss how we can see this happen in the world around us and why this might be. Also think of some biblical examples that show this problem throughout the history of mankind.

In verse seven (**Read Hosea 2:7**) we see the wife’s first attempt to turn back to her husband but it is not until verse thirteen (**Read Hosea 2:13**) that justice is served and God is able in verse fourteen to again “lure” or attract her back again.

The following is the final 5 verses of the chapter and again God ends the chapter with redemption and promise.

In your group find and circle five aspects of Gods character and the troth which represents the renewal of the covenant between man and God.

Hosea 2:19-23

¹⁹ And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies.

²⁰ I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the Lord.

²¹ And it shall come to pass in that day, I will hear, saith the Lord, I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth;

²² And the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil; and they shall hear Jezreel.

²³ And I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God.

Hosea 3 The wife and Israel returns.. at a cost

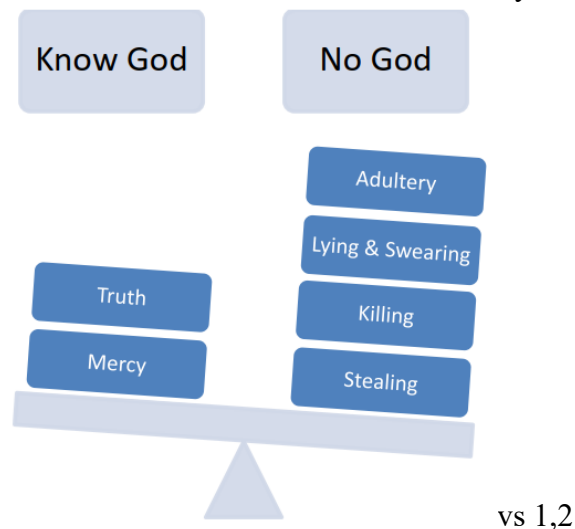
In chapter 3 Hosea is told to buy back his adulterous wife. He does this and instructs her that *“Thou shalt abide for me many days; thou shalt not play the harlot, and thou shalt not be for another man: so will I also be for thee”*.

We also find that the long blindness of outcast Israel is prophesied and the chapter ends with the foretelling of the return of Israel to God “in the latter days”.

Notice that for some reason Hosea had to buy his unfaithful wife back in a similar fashion to us having to have our debt paid by the sacrifice of Jesus. Again, we have justice satisfied in order to have mercy shown.

Hosea 4 The charges laid

In this chapter the charges against Israel are put forward. We see the decline of a nation which is determined to remove God and his ways from among them and the result.



In verse 6 we find that *“My people are destroyed for **lack of knowledge**: because **thou hast rejected knowledge**, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.”*

Read Deuteronomy 6:4-9 in your group and discuss the implications of a the instructions it contains.

List out several practical measures that you could implemnt in your life or your family to prevent this straying from knowledge and God.
