

Hosea

Study Outline

Main Point: The book of Hosea is all about the love of God and the heartache He experiences when His people forsake Him for the world. Though the majority of the book contains prophecy concerning Israel's impending judgment by the invading Assyrian army, the marriage relationship of Hosea and a prostitute named Gomer highlight several incredible spiritual realities that exist between God and His people. The life and example of Hosea challenge us to move beyond the games of religion and enter into a more real, intimate relationship with God.

Historical & Scriptural Placement: (760-710 B.C.)

Hosea ministered in the Northern Kingdom of Israel. He warned of the coming judgment God would allow through the Assyrian conquests. His warnings were not heeded and Israel fell in 722 B.C. Hosea's contemporaries were Isaiah and Micah who ministered in the Southern Kingdom of Judah.

LESSONS FROM THE BOOK OF HOSEA:

LIFE APART FROM GOD - GOD'S UNCONDITIONAL LOVE & GRACE.... God commands Hosea to marry a prostitute named Gomer. This aspect of the story practically shows what our lives looked like before we entered into a covenantal relationship with God. It further reveals the unconditional nature of God's love and the grace which makes His love available to the unlovable.

REALITY OF SIN IN THE COVENANT RELATIONSHIP.... Gomer's unfaithfulness towards Hosea teaches us that sin is literally a love crime against God. As we imagine the pain Hosea experienced as his intimate love was rejected, we should realize the effects our own spiritual infidelity has on God.

FREEDOM TO LEAVE & THE PAIN TO WATCH.... In Hosea graciously allowing Gomer to leave and live the life she desired, in spite of His own personal pain, suffering and betrayal we see a picture of the Divine Gentleman allowing the wayward heart the freedom to seek pleasure in worldliness.

RESULT OF LIFE OUTSIDE THE RELATIONAL COVENANT.... Though Gomer left the covenant relationship she had with Hosea for what she believed to be a more fulfilled, happy life, we recognize the world only left her indebted, naked, and abused. The world promises one thing, but takes everything.

THE PRICE OF FORGIVENESS & THE DEPTHS OF GOD'S LOVE.... By Hosea going down to the slave market to purchase back his bride, we not only see another example of God's unconditional love and continued faithfulness, but we learn forgiveness and reconciliation come at a great cost to the one actively redeeming. Grace is very expensive.

RESTORATION TAKES TIME.... Though Hosea redeemed Gomer and brought her home, it took time for trust to redevelop and for wounds to heal before they became intimate again.



Day 1: Marry the Hooker....

Hosea 1:1-3 // THINKING POINTS: (1). Since Hosea represents God in this story, what do you learn about the heart and characteristics of God? (2). Since Gomer represents "God's people", what do you learn about our present condition before God by being compared with a prostitute? (3). In what ways does this deepen your understanding of grace?

Day 2: Redeeming Love....

Hosea 3:1-5 // THINKING POINTS: (1). Though Gomer left Hosea for what she believed would be a better life, what did this life really leave her with? (2). What did redemption and forgiveness cost Hosea in this particular story? (3). From the reality of verse three, what do you learn about the process of restoration?

Day 3: Still Hungry....

Hosea 4:4-10 // THINKING POINTS: (1). Indicated by these verses, what was the underlying cause of Israel's spiritual harlotry? (2). According to this passage, what does the indulging of sin's desire actually produce in the heart of a person? (3). How does the picture of spiritual harlotry challenge your perspective of personal sin?

Day 4: What I Desire....

Hosea 6:1-6 // THINKING POINTS: (1). What does God desire most out of a wayward heart? (2). What does it actually mean to be faithful to the Lord? In what way would you consider yourself faithful? (3). When God declares that He "desires mercy and not sacrifice", what does this practically mean for your personal walk with God?

Day 5: The Spiritual Harlot....

Hosea 9:1-2 // THINKING POINTS: (1). Why does God refer to our sin against Him using such shocking imagery (2). In light of the fact God emotionally experiences the grief of a jilted lover when we sin, what impact should this have over our choices? (3). Why do we look for satisfaction outside our relationship with God?

Day 6: Divine Anguish....

Hosea 11:8-11 // THINKING POINT: (1). Emotionally speaking, what is revealed concerning the heart of God by these verses? (2). What is revealed about His character by the fact God agonizes so much when He has to punish His children? (3). Why does God go through with His punishment when it pains Him to do so?

DEVOTIONS

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