



# THE MINOR PROPHETS

Hosea 1-7

Eric Hicks



# Introduction to Hosea

## **The Name Hosea**

“The name Hosea means ‘Salvation’. It is interesting to observe that the names Joshua (Num 13:16) and Jesus (Matthew 1:21) are derived from the same Hebrew root as Hosea.” (Jenson, 411)

## **Date of Writing**

It is believed that the message of Hosea was given between 754 and 714 B.C. All his writings are believed by some to have been compiled by 725 BC. If this is so, then the book of Hosea was complete before the Assyrian captivity which took place in 722 BC. This would explain why judgment is prophesied in the book, but without the mention of it coming to pass.

## **His Ministry**

Hosea’s ministry was to Israel shortly before Assyrian captivity. During his ministry Israel had seven kings (see the list below). Because Hosea had a tender heart, he too is known as a “Weeping prophet” just like Jeremiah. He has also been called, “the prophet of the broken heart.” (Jenson, 412)

The people of God did not respond favorably to the message of Hosea. Consequently, they went into Assyrian captivity (cf. 2Ki 17). This by no means makes Hosea a failure. His duty was to proclaim the message of God. Remember that Noah preached for 120 years with only seven others who were on board the ark. Yet, Peter calls him “a preacher of righteousness” (2Pe 2:5).

**The Setting** [Good background reading for Hosea: 2Kings 14-17; 2Chronicals 26-29]

**Politically:** The setting was out of control as seen by the great succession of kings.

- Jeroboam II (2Ki 14:23-29)
- Zechariah (2 Ki 15:8-12)
- Shallum (2 Ki 15:13-16)
- Menahem (2 Ki 15:17-22)
- Pekahiah (2 Ki 15:23-26)
- Pekah (2 Ki 15:27-31)
- Hoshea (2 Ki 17:1-4)

**Economically:** Israel was very prosperous.

**Spiritually:**

They had rebelled against God. They were living in immorality, arrogance, and idolatry.

**Theme:**

Return unto God. Hosea reveals God's great love for His people. John is the apostle of love in the NT and Hosea is the prophet of love in the OT.

# Outline of Hosea

## **Part 1: The Family of Hosea (1:1-3:5)**

- I. The Illustration of Hosea -1:1-9
- II. The Restoration of Israel – 1:10-2:1
- III. God's Unfaithful People -2:2-13
- IV. God's Mercy on His People -2:14-23
- V. Israel Will Return to God -3:1-5

## **Part 2: The Sins of Israel (4:1-5:15)**

- I. The Nation -4:1-3
- II. The Priest -4:4-14
- III. The Message to Judah -4:15-19
- IV. The Impending Judgment on Israel and Judah -5:1-7
- V. The Consequences are Coming -5:8-15

## **Part 3: The Rejection of Israel (6:1-7:16)**

- I. Their Call to Repentance -6:1-3
- II. Their Unfaithfulness -6:4-11
- III. Their Iniquity Grows Worse -7:1-16

## **Part 4: The Judgment of God (8:1-10:15)**

- I. Israel has Forsaken God -8:1-15
- II. Israel will be Carried away to Assyria -9:1-17
- III. Sin and Shame of Israel -10:1-15

## **Part 5: The Mercy of God (11:1-14:9)**

- I. God's Enduring Love -11:1-11
- II. God's Displeasure with Ephraim -11:12-12:14
- III. God's Judgment against Israel -13:1-16
- IV. God's Restoration of Israel -14:1-9



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## Part 1: THE FAMILY OF HOSEA (1:1-3:5)

### **I. THE ILLUSTRATION OF HOSEA -1:2-9**

#### A. Hosea takes a wife of harlotry

1. Her name is Gomer the daughter of Diblaim (vs. 3)
2. She would represent the unfaithfulness of Israel against God.

#### B. The significance of the children

1. Jezreel: His name means “God scatters” or “God sows” (cf. 2:22)
2. Lo-Ruhamah: Her name means “No mercy”
3. Lo-Ammi: His name means “Not My people”

### **II. THE RESTORATION OF ISRAEL -1:10-2:1**

#### A. Despite Israel’s unfaithfulness to God, there remains restoration foretold.

#### B. References to this prophecy are two-fold:

1. Release from Assyrian captivity.
2. Most likely, it references the spiritual restoration for all Gentiles and Jews who believe in Jesus -Ro 9:25, 26; 1Pe 2:10

### **III. GOD’S UNFAITHFUL PEOPLE -2:2-13**

#### A. The charges brought against her -2:2-5

1. She is charged with harlotries and adulteries -vs. 2
2. This is the spiritual harlotry that Israel committed by worshipping other gods.
3. There would be no mercy on her children -vs. 4, 5

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4. Compare a husband who does not claim the children produced by his wife's affair.

### B. The punishment inflicted upon her -2:6-13

1. Her lovers would be hidden from her -vs. 6-8
2. Her grain and covering would be taken from her -vs. 9-11
3. Her materials of idolatry would be removed -vs. 12, 13

## **IV. GOD'S MERCY ON HIS PEOPLE -2:14-23**

### A. Bringing her back -vs. 14, 15

1. Wilderness: This compares to the wilderness wanderings. The faithless generation had to die out before the next generation could be blessed with the Promised Land.
2. Valley of Anchor: A reference the sin of Achan. After the sin was removed, Israel had hope of victory over their enemies.
3. Assyrian Captivity: This would be their "wilderness" or "Valley of Anchor". Afterward, they would be restored to God.

### B. They will call the Lord "Husband" and not "Master" -vs. 16, 17

1. Husband describes the close relationship with God.
2. Master is reminiscent of Baal. Baal has the word "master" ascribed to it.

### C. Israel would be blessed with God's peace and protection -vs. 18-20



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1. Five words are used to describe the divine betrothal: Righteousness, justice, lovingkindness, mercy, and faithfulness.
  2. It is then that they would know He is the Lord.
- D. They would be His people once again. They would receive His mercy -vs. 21-23

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“There can be no valid question that the above promises have reference to the present dispensation under Christ. They have been fulfilled in Him and are not deferred to some future dispensation.” (Hailey, 144)

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### V. ISRAEL WILL RETURN TO GOD -3:1-5

- A. Hosea restores Gomer -vs. 1-3
1. The Lord tells Hosea to do so as a symbol of His love for Israel.
  2. Hosea bought Gomer back -vs. 2
  3. Hosea tells her to stay with him many days and not to play the harlot.
- B. God restores Israel -vs. 4, 5
1. Israel would not play the harlot any longer.
  2. They would seek the “Lord their God and David their king.” -vs. 5



# Digging Deeper:

There is a strong parallel between the children of Israel and the redemption found in Christ. Because of Israel's sin, they were separated from God. Note the three names of the children: Jezreel (scattered), Lo-Ruhamah (No mercy), and Lo-Ammi (Not My people). -Hosea 1:3-9

Note how Peter refers to Christians today -1Peter 2:9, 10

- “Royal priesthood, a holy nation” (not scattered)
- “The people of God”
- “Have obtained mercy”

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## Part 2: THE SINS OF ISRAEL (4:1-5:15)

### **I. THE NATION -4:1-3**

- A. There is the absence of: truth, mercy, and knowledge of God -vs. 1
  
- B. With the listed absences comes an abundance of wickedness -vs. 2
  - 1. The sins listed are clear violation of the law of Moses.
  - 2. Adultery -this results in the breaking apart of the home. Without the strength of the home (family) the nation becomes corrupt and deteriorates from within.
  
- C. With wickedness comes punishment -vs. 3

### **II. THE PRIEST -4:4-14**

- A. They had failed to teach the people. Consequently, the people of God are destroyed for the lack of knowledge - vs. 6
  
- B. They feast off the sins of the people.
  - 1. The priests were either caught up in sin themselves, or they were benefitting from all the sacrifices needed after the people had sinned.
  - 2. Either way, the sins of the people had grown considerably worse.
  
- C. The children of Israel are given over to idol worship and will reap the consequences.

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**KEY VERSE:** Hosea 4:6 – “My people are destroyed for a lack of knowledge...”

Today, we too must have a working knowledge of God’s word.

- It is able to save our souls -James 1:21
- It is able to make us wise to salvation -2Ti 3:15

## **III. THE MESSAGE TO JUDAH -4:15-19**

- A. Israel has played the harlot against God.
- B. They serve as a bad example. Don’t be like them!
  1. Israel is “like a stubborn calf” -vs. 16. (ie. He refuses to take on the yoke of the Lord)
  2. The Lord will leave them exposed as “a lamb in open country” -vs. 16b
- C. The actions they are taken will lead them to destruction and shame.



**KEY VERSE:** Hosea 4:17 – “Ephraim is joined to idols, let him alone.”

The power of a bad example:

- Judah is warned to keep away from the influence of Israel.
- Evil companions corrupt good morals -1Cor. 15:33
- Sometimes we must withdraw -1Cor. 5:11-13

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## **IV. THE IMPENDING JUDGMENT ON ISRAEL AND JUDAH -5:1-7**

- A. The leaders have been a snare to the people -vs. 1
- B. Even Judah will be influenced by their wickedness -vs. 5
- C. Because of their sin, the Lord will withdraw from them -vs. 6, 7

## **V. THE CONSEQUENCES ARE COMING -5:8-15**

- A. Because of their sin, the land shall be laid in waste -vs. 9
- B. God's wrath will be poured out upon them -vs. 10
- C. God would destroy them like a moth. Ie. He would bring about their destruction slowly. -vs. 12
- D. The cure for their wounds does not come from any man (ie. The king of Assyria) -vs. 13
- E. God tears them away like a lion -vs. 14
- F. In their affliction, they will once again seek after the Lord -vs. 15

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## Part 3: THE REJECTION OF ISRAEL (6:1-7:16)

### **I. THEIR CALL TO REPENTANCE -6:1-3**

- A. There is a desperate plea for Israel to repent.
  - 1. If they repent, God will accept them back into His loving care.
  - 2. If they repent, they will enjoy God's riches blessings.
- B. Two views of these verses:
  - 1. These are the words of Hosea urging the people to repent.
  - 2. These are the words of Israel stating the words of repentance without the real intent.
- C. Regardless, Israel was not faithful to God -vs. 4

### **II. THEIR UNFAITHFULNESS TO GOD -6:4-11**

- A. Their faithfulness is short-lived. It is like the morning cloud or the morning dew.
- B. They offer sacrifices to God, but not with the right heart. Therefore, He says that He desires mercy and not sacrifice.
- C. The city had been defiled (lit. foot-tracked) with blood - vs. 8
- D. They had influenced Judah for evil.

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## Key Verses:

Hosea 6:4 – “...For your faithfulness is like a morning cloud, and like the early dew it goes away.”

Our repentance before God must be from the heart. It should never be just a matter of convenience due to unpleasant circumstance. Rather, it should be based upon one’s genuine desire to be right with God; pleasing in His sight.

Hosea 6:6 – “For I desire mercy and not sacrifice...”

- This was the teachings of Jesus -Mt 9:13; 12:7
- Taught in Proverbs -Pr. 21:3
- Expressed in Micah -Mic. 6:6-8

### **III. THEIR INIQUITY GROWS WORSE -7:1-16**

- A. God would have healed them, but they remained in their sins -7:1-3
- B. Adultery (which would include spiritual harlotry) -7:4-7
- C. They do not fully know their own corruption therefore, they do not call on God -7:8-10.
- D. They align themselves to other nations to no avail -7:11-16

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## Key Verses:

Hosea 7:2 – “They do not consider in their hearts that I remember all their wickedness...”

- Some sin thinking no one else knows about it. What they forget is that God sees all.
- All things will be brought into account. -cf. Ec. 12:14; Ro 2:16; Re 20:12

Hosea 7:8 – “Ephraim has mixed himself among the peoples...”

- Israel had corrupted themselves by not being mindful of their companions -1Co 15:33
- Today, we must not be unequally yoked -2Co 6:14-18



