

2-12-2025 – Prophet and the Prostitute Mid-week encouragement!

Hosea. Small book, big impact. Explains God's heart, and plan.

Hos. 1:2 – First an instruction, then a why.

² When the Lord first began speaking to Israel through Hosea, he said to him, “Go and marry a prostitute, so that some of her children will be conceived in prostitution. This will illustrate how Israel has acted like a prostitute by turning against the Lord and worshiping other gods.”

Go, marry a prostitute. Promiscuous woman. Wife of Harlotry. Inclined to infidelity. Wife of whoredom. **Point:** unfaithful, depart . . . abandon.

Shocking. Your pastor is associating with... then marrying a loose woman!!

But could also be that Hosea marries a woman who later is unfaithful.

- **The why:** b/c Israel has been unfaithful. Worshiping other gods.
 - We don't have baby Baals; but other gods. **Other priorities.**
 - Dating – Fri. For sure, you're off work. It's a priority.
 - *“The calls you take are who you're in a relationship with”*
 - Beware: God isn't a priority if we fit Him in, squeeze in time.
 - Enemy trick: full schedule. “Something came up”
 - **Why?** We understand God more when we're in similar situations
 - We need to see life from God's perspective.
 - Know about Shepherd. Know the agony & grief of loss.
 - God knows about broken hearts. He knows betrayal.

Vs. 3-4 – Hosea marries Gomer, has son - Jezreel.

³ So Hosea married Gomer, the daughter of Diblaim, & she became pregnant and gave Hosea a son. ⁴ And the Lord said, “Name the child Jezreel, for I am about to punish King Jehu's dynasty to avenge the murders he committed at Jezreel.

2 Kings 10 tells of the murders committed by Jehu in Jezreel.

- Naming the child **Jezreel**, is symbolic of **judgment**.

Vs. 6 – Gomer gives birth to daughter. Name: “Lo-ruhamah” **Not loved.**

⁶ Soon Gomer became pregnant again and gave birth to a daughter. And the Lord said to Hosea, “Name your daughter Lo-ruhamah—‘Not loved’—for I will no longer show love to the people of Israel or forgive them.

- “I will no longer **show** love . . . or forgive them.” God doesn't stop loving!
 - “Not forgive.” No more overlooking. Ask for forgiveness. Repent.

Vs 8 - Gomer gives birth to 2d son. Name: “Lo-ammi”. **Not my people.**

⁸ After Gomer had weaned Lo-ruhamah, she again became pregnant and gave birth to a second son. ⁹ And the Lord said, “Name him Lo-ammi—‘Not my people’—for Israel is not my people, and I am not their God.

- Israel was not living as God’s people. Actions show it. Hearts far away.

Vs. 10-11 - Can’t overlook this message of **hope**. God knows change is coming. They’ll stand as Children of the Living God again, one day.

¹⁰ “Yet the time will come when Israel’s people will be like the sands of the seashore—too many to count! Then, at the place where they were told, ‘You are not my people,’ it will be said, ‘You are children of the living God.’ ¹¹ Then the people of Judah and Israel will unite together. They will choose one leader for themselves, and they will return from exile together. What a day that will be—the day of Jezreel^[d]—when God will again plant his people in his land.

- God is waiting – hoping –for His people to acknowledge Him, miss Him.
 - After freeing Israel from slavery in Egypt, God made covenant.
 - **Ex. 19:5** – Keep my commands, you’ll be my “treasured possession”
 - **Israel forgot that blessings were conditioned on obedience.**
 - We can’t experience God’s blessings while living separate from Him.
 - You want to eat Grandma’s cooking, go to Grandma’s house
 - Warmth of a fire? Go. Seashore sand & breeze? Go.
 - To feel treasured? Valued? Loved? Go to God, stay!

Chapter 2. Gomer suffered for her waywardness. So did Israel.

Vs. 1 – 13 – God lays out the **unfaithfulness** – the overlooked blessings.

- We can’t be unfaithful w/o consequences.
- Husband/wife – expect faithful. So does God.
 - “You shall have no other gods before me.” **Ex. 20:3.**
- The **idols of today** aren’t Baal statues; here are **9 things** drives us:
 - Money – consumerism – power
 - Desires to be entertained – to be comfortable – be connected.
 - Desires for job – popularity – friendships . . .
 - Whatever is competing for your heart is an idol.

- Vs. 14-16, 23. God lays out the **plan** – redemption is coming.

¹⁴ **“But then I will win her back once again. I will lead her into the desert and speak tenderly to her there. ¹⁵ I will return her vineyards to her and transform the Valley of Trouble into a gateway of hope. She will give herself to me there, as she did long ago when she was young, when I freed her from her captivity in Egypt. ¹⁶ When that day comes,” says the Lord, “you will call me ‘my husband’ instead of my master.”**

- God’s **plan - life will be hard** so Gomer/Israel comes back to their senses and acknowledges – **I was better off before than now.**
- God sets in motion a plan to win love. . . to fall in love w/Him again.
- **23 - At that time I will plant a crop of Israelites and raise them for myself. I will show love to those I called ‘Not loved.’ And to those I called ‘Not my people,’ I will say, ‘Now you are my people.’ And they will reply, ‘You are our God!’”**
 - When you are in your **desert place**, listen for God’s voice to **speak tenderly** to you. He’s saying: “I love you, come back home.”

Chapter 3. Hosea’s actions show us God’s heart. Forgiveness & reconciliation. **Then the Lord said to me, “Go and love your wife again, even though she commits adultery with another lover. This will illustrate that the Lord still loves Israel, even though the people have turned to other gods and love to worship them.”**

² **So I bought her back for fifteen pieces of silver and five bushels of barley and a measure of wine.**

- **God continues to love**, continues efforts **to reconcile** relationship, and **bring us to a place where we love Him back.** Note: **God reached out first.**
- Hosea bought her back. He redeemed her.
 - **This story matches our story:** We were created by God, are His. But Jesus redeemed us. Paid for our sins with His own blood.
 - **We are the bride.** Jesus’ parables: a King who prepared a **wedding banquet** for His son . . . Bridesmaids who did not prepare their **lamps with oil** and missed the arrival of the Bridegroom. . . And **Revelation** – We are the bride of Christ.
 - **Isaiah 62:5** - “as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so will your God rejoice over you.”

Chapters 4 - Lays out how the sin of people, and the priests who are happy about sin b/c they are getting fed off of people's sin offerings.

Chapter 5 – failure of Israel's leaders. Become a den of thieves.

Chapter 6. – More than religion, God wants us to know Him, His love.

Vs.1-3 - “Come, let us return to the Lord. He has torn us to pieces; now he will heal us. He has injured us; now he will bandage our wounds. ² In just a short time he will restore us, so that we may live in his presence. ³ Oh, that we might know the Lord! Let us press on to know him. He will respond to us as surely as the arrival of dawn or the coming of rains in early spring.” And God' response:

4 “O Israel and Judah, what should I do with you?” asks the Lord. “For your love vanishes like the morning mist and disappears like dew in the sunlight. . . . (skip to vs 6) ⁶ I want you to show love, not offer sacrifices. I want you to know me more than I want burnt offerings.”

- He wants us to love Him faithfully, just as He loves us.
- He wants devotion more than duty. More than going thru motions.
 - Don't just do wrong, say sorry, do it all over again.
 - If we truly love another, we don't keep doing wrong over/over.

Chapters 7-10 – lays out sin, how they abandoned God.

Hosea 11 – read to see God's broken heart.

After all I've done for you . . . you moved away.

- God removes His protection, b/c God wants to be appreciated . . . adored just like He adores us.
 - As kids - “restriction” ... lose privileges to appreciate what we have. Somehow, they'll return to Him. His love has hope.
- Feel like U have lots of problems? God may be getting your attention.
 - He's not truly part of your life . . . He's been on the shelf.

Hosea 12-13 – God lays out sin, how they became proud, forgot Him.

Hosea 14 – God's desire. Read vs. 1-4; 8-9

14 Return, O Israel, to the Lord your God, for your sins have brought you down. ² Bring your confessions, and return to the Lord. Say to him, “Forgive all our sins and graciously receive us, so that we may offer you

our praises. ³ Assyria cannot save us, nor can our warhorses. Never again will we say to the idols we have made, ‘You are our gods.’ No, in you alone do the orphans find mercy.” ⁴ The Lord says, “Then I will heal you of your faithlessness; my love will know no bounds, for my anger will be gone forever. . .

⁸ “O Israel, stay away from idols! I am the one who answers your prayers and cares for you. I am like a tree that is always green; all your fruit comes from me.” ⁹ Let those who are wise understand these things.

Let those with discernment listen carefully. The paths of the Lord are true and right, and righteous people live by walking in them. But in those paths sinners stumble and fall.”

The message of Hosea is this: God loves us. God is faithful to us, but requires faithfulness in return. Even so, He never gives up.

God appeals to His people to seek Him, return to Him.

- The blessings of life are from His hand. He protects, He answers.
- The best life for us is when we return to the One who loves us best.
 - o Put Him first, everything else will fall into place.