

HOSEA 1-3

INTRODUCTION...

- **THE WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD**
 - Our desire to is to teach through the whole Bible...
 - **Acts 20:27** – “For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.”
 - We finished **Daniel** - the 27th book of the Old Testament - 4th of 16 prophetic books in the OT...
 - We will start with **Hosea** – the first of what is known as the 12 Minor Prophets...
- **THE PROPHETS...**
 - 1st - Who were the prophets...
 - The prophets of Israel were sent by God to call Israel to repentance...
 - First and foremost through the preaching of the Word of God...
 - Because it is through the Word that there is conviction – it reveals our sinful nature...
 - Just like people today – Israel thought they were ‘good people’...
 - They did not see anything wrong with their idolatry / sexual immorality...
 - Because they did not realize the standard of righteousness that God required...
 - So the prophets came to declare the Word of God to them – show them their need to repent!
 - But there was also an aspect of the Prophets to foretelling the future...
 - Not so much because God wanted His people to know what the future held...
 - But so that when the future came – people would see God knew in advance...
 - Because only the Lord is outside of time – only he sees the end from the beginning...
 - Prophecies are His fingerprint proving He is the author of the Word - **Isaiah 46:9-10**
 - 2nd – The time of the prophets - the Divided Kingdom...
 - After the death of Solomon the Kingdom of Israel was split in two - 930 B.C.
 - The Northern 10 tribes – called Israel / Ephraim / or Samaria - ruled at first by Jeroboam...
 - Judah and Benjamin – called Judah – ruled at first by Rehoboam...
 - Israel would not be reunited again as one nation until May 14, 1948 – **Ezekiel 37:21-22**
 - 40 Kings would rule over the two kingdoms – 20 in Israel / 20 in Judah...
 - This is the period of Israeli history that we studied in **I and II Kings / II Chronicles**...
 - Most of the prophets wrote during this time – **Isaiah / Jonah / Hosea** to name a few...
 - The period ended with the Diaspora - 722 B.C. - the fall of the Northern Kingdom ...
 - And 586 B.C. – when the southern Kingdom was taken captive to Babylon for 70 years!
 - 3rd – Major and Minor Prophets...
 - There are 16 prophetic books in the Old Testament – broken up into 2 sections...
 - There are 4 Major Prophets – **Isaiah / Jeremiah / Ezekiel / and Daniel**...
 - And there are 12 Minor Prophets – from **Hosea to Malachi**...
 - They are not minor in that they are less important – they are just shorter in length...
 - They tend to be the least read / most unfamiliar books in the entire Bible!
- **THE BOOK OF HOSEA – 5 THINGS...**
 - 1st - Who wrote the book of **HOSEA**...
 - Pretty straight forward – just look at the name at the top of the page!
 - There is very little dispute over the authorship of this book
 - 2nd – When was the book written – Hosea was a prophet to the Northern Kingdom...
 - Hosea prophesied from 755 B.C. – until 715 B.C.
 - He would be a prophet during the reign of 6 different Kings in Israel...

- During the years leading up to the captivity of the Northern Kingdom!
- When he began in the reign of Jeroboam II – there was great financial prosperity...
 - But at the same time there was great spiritual depravity – God was forgotten!
 - Because when life is easy - it is easy to forget God – **Deuteronomy 8:11-14**
 - When we are lacking - we often pray for God to provide for our needs...
 - But suppose God gave us one million dollars - what would it do to our prayer life...
 - The reality is if there is not a need - we rarely take the time to seek the Lord...
 - The easier life becomes - the harder it is for us to depend on the Jesus!
- o 3rd – The theme of the book...
 - In the opening of the Book - Hosea is told by God to marry a harlot – Gomer...
 - She ultimately ends up leaving Hosea – returning to her life as a prostitute...
 - She has children by other men – but God commands Hosea to take her back!
 - And Hosea forgives Gomer – and their relationship is restored!
 - God used the life of Hosea as a picture...
 - God took Israel as His bride – but the nation ran after other gods – spiritual harlotry...
 - Yet the Lord took Israel back – forgave and restored their relationship!
 - So the main theme of the book – is the Love and Grace of God that overcomes sin!
- o 4th – The division of the book...
 - Chapters 1-3 – give the personal story of the marriage of Hosea to Gomer
 - Chapter 4-13 – lay out the rebellion of Israel – and the consequences for their actions...
 - Chapter 14 – gives the hope of the restoration of the people to God!

MARRIED A PROSTITUTE... (3 THINGS)

- 1ST – THE EXAMPLE OF GOMER... VS. 1-11
 - o 1st – The Prophet Hosea – son of Beeri... vs. 1
 - Although Hosea was from Israel - we are introduced to him with a list of Kings from Judah...
 - But because there were no good kings who would rule there – they are just not mentioned!
 - I am sure these kings thought they were important – but God did not seem to agree!
 - Most people tend to think they are important – but the question is what does God think...
 - 10,000 years from now in heaven - no one will care how much money someone had...
 - But the thanks of a friend who we introduced to Jesus - will never fade away!
 - The things we do for ourselves – the glory of men – are all forgotten...
 - It is the things we do for the Lord that will last forever – **Matthew 6:20**
 - o 2nd – God spoke to Hosea – go marry a harlot... vs. 2-3
 - Hosea did not hesitate at this seemingly ridiculous command of God – he just obeyed!
 - There is a funny story about a young believer and a mailbox...
 - There will be times God asks us to do things – that seem to make no sense...
 - Even if we do not understand – God always has a plan that is for the best!
 - Hosea went and married Gomer (*complete*) the daughter of Diblaim (*fig cake*) – baker...
 - There is some speculation if Gomer was a prostitute before she married Hosea...
 - Some argue her harlotry refers to her pagan faith - she did not worship God...
 - And the 3 kids of Hosea are his – but kids of harlotry because they grew up in pagan Israel...
 - But others say Gomer was a prostitute from the beginning – and continued to be...
 - So that the children born to Hosea were actually from other men!
 - Either way – Gomer did end up being a harlot – as we will see in chapter 3!
 - It makes you wonder if Hosea every ‘regretted’ hearing from the Lord...
 - We say we want to serve the Lord – but do we really understand what that means...

- We might understand and like - that Jesus is our Savior - keeps us out of hell...
- But we tend to overlook the fact that we are called to take up our cross – daily...
- Choosing to serve Jesus is far from a the secret to an easier life...
- In fact if often means that we are going to face more challenges - **John 16:33**
- Serving Jesus means obeying Him – dying to us – living our life for Him!
- **Luke 9:3** – “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.”

o 3rd – The 3 children of Hosea... vs. 4-11

- God told Hosea to name his first ‘son’ – Jezreel (*God sows*)...
 - Because God was going to avenge the bloodshed of Jezreel on the house of Jehu...
 - Jehu was the 9th King of Israel – the great grandfather of Jeroboam II...
 - God used him to wipe out the line of King Ahab – execute Jezebel – in Jezreel...
 - But Jehu was only partially obedient to the Lord – did not remove the golden calves...
 - So god told him his dynasty would only last to the 4th generation – **II Kings 10:30**
 - The bow of Israel – Zechariah the final heir of Jehu – would die in the Jezreel valley...
 - And all 5 kings who came after him would be godless – dragging Israel to destruction!
- God told Hosea to name his ‘daughter’ - Lo-Ruhamah...
 - Because God was not going to have mercy on Israel – lo = no / ruhamah = mercy
 - They were going to be utterly taken away – referring to the Assyrian captivity – 722 B.C.
 - The 10 northern tribes would be taken into a foreign land – Diaspora
 - Yet God would have mercy on the house of Judah – they would be saved...
 - Not by military might – God would save them supernaturally – **II Kings 19:35**
 - An angel of the Lord wiped out 185,000 Assyrian troops in a single night!
- God told Hosea to name his second ‘son’ – Lo-Ammi...
 - When Gomer had weaned Lo-Ruhamah – she got pregnant again right away...
 - Lo = no / Ammi = people – because Israel was no longer going to be His people!
 - Because of their rejection of God – God was now rejecting His people...
 - Yet – there number will one day be as the sands of the sea – **Genesis 32:12**
 - And where it was said – you are not my people – they will be called the sons of God!
 - Israel and Judah will gather in unity – one nation / under one head – Jesus Christ...
 - In the great day of Jezreel – perhaps referring to God sowing His people back in the Land...
 - Or perhaps a reference to the geography – the valley of Jezreel – Armageddon!
- In **Leviticus 26** - God told Israel if they did not obey - 7 times the punishment...
 - Interesting cross reference to the 7 times more judgment - the 430 days of **Ezekiel 4:1-8**...
 - Ezekiel had to lie on his side for 430 days - representing 430 years of judgment for Israel...
 - 430 years x 7 (*7 times the punishment*) = 2,520 years of judgment for Israel...
 - If you start from the first fall of Judah to Babylon (*there were 3 sieges of the city*)...
 - Add 2,520 years – you come to May 14th, 1948 - the day Israel was declared a nation again!
 - If you start from the destruction of the Temple 586 B.C.
 - Add 2,520 years - you come to June 7th, 1967 - the day Israel recaptured Jerusalem!
 - God did punish Israel 7 times - but in the end - Israel became a nation again!
 - Because God had a plan to bless Israel - in spite of all they had done!

● 2ND – THE APPLICATION FOR ISRAEL... vs. 1-23

o 1st – The charges against Israel... vs. 1-5

- God uses the example of Gomer and the children of Hosea to bring charges against Israel...
 - Say to your brothers – Ammi / say to your sisters – Ruhamah...
 - Tell you mother – you are not my wife / and I am not your husband!

- Until she puts away her harlotries – stops committing adultery!
- Speaking of spiritual adultery – running after other gods – putting their faith in them!
- If Israel did not stop – God would strip Israel naked like the day she was born...
 - Put her back in the wilderness – 40 year wandering – in a dry and thirsty land...
 - And God would not have mercy on her children – because they were children of harlotry...
 - From one generation to the next – the people of Israel were rejecting God!
 - Because Israel only wanted her lovers – that gave her bread / water / wool / oil...
 - In other words they were only concerned about this life – not eternal life!
- o 2nd – Taking away the blessing... vs. 6-13
 - THEREFORE - God would block Israel with thorns – so they could not find their way...
 - Though Israel would chase after her lovers (*idols*) – she would not be able to find them...
 - Causing her to return to her first husband – because it was better with him!
 - Like the Prodigal Son – who came to himself in the pig sty – Luke 15:17-19
 - Sin is enjoyable – if it were not there would be no temptation to sin...
 - But it is enjoyable only for a short time - Hebrews 11:25...
 - No matter how we choose to sin – in the end there are consequences – Galatians 6:7
 - When we come to ourselves – we realize things were a LOT better with God!
 - God would block Israel – by taking away her blessings...
 - Israel did not realize all she had – came from God...
 - The grain / wine / oil / silver and gold she gave to Baal – came from the Lord!
 - So God would take away those blessings – no more food to eat...
 - No more clothing to wear – He would leave her naked and desolate!
 - All the fun would stop – no more feast days / no more Sabbaths (*empty religion*)...
 - Israel thought she was blessed – vines / figs – because of her idolatry!
 - So Israel decked herself out (*nose ring*) for her lovers – but forgot the Lord!
 - Everything we have comes from the Lord – yet people refuse to live for Him...
 - Instead people tend to live their lives for the moment – live for pleasure...
 - But God knows how to get our attention – take away all the blessings...
 - God will allow us to go through times of ‘famine’ - no food / no money...
 - God allows us to face consequences - reap what we sow - to bring us back to Him!
- o 3rd – The hope of restoration... vs. 14-23
 - THEREFORE – having humbled Israel through consequences...
 - God will allure her into the wilderness – where He can speak comfort to her...
 - God would give her vineyards – blessings there – John 15:4
 - From the valley of Achor (*trouble*) – God would open the door of hope!
 - No child ever likes to be taken out to the wood shed – it is the valley of trouble...
 - Yet the discipline they receive from their parents teaches them to live a holy life – give hope!
 - God will punish us for our mistakes - but not in anger - because He loves us...
 - God desires to teach us - His kids - how to live a pure and holy life!
 - When we are ‘punished’ by the Lord - it proves we are His kids - Hebrews 12:5-6
 - Then Israel will sing like in the days when God first brought Israel out of Egypt...
 - And she will no longer call God Master – she will call him ‘my Man’ (*Ishi*)!
 - No longer will Israel be known by Baals – God will take that name from her mouth...
 - God will make a covenant with the animals – Isaiah 11:6-9
 - And He will shatter the bow and sword – no more war – Isaiah 2:4
 - Prophetically looking forward to the Millennial Kingdom of Jesus Christ!
 - God will betroth / marry Israel – He says it 3 times (*Trinity*)...

- God would marry Israel forever - in Righteousness / Justice / Grace / and Mercy...
- And Israel will be faithful – no longer running after lovers – they will know the Lord!
- In that Day the earth will answer the Lord with blessings of Jezreel – grain / wine / oil...
- And those who had no Mercy – Lo-Ruhamah – will find Mercy from the Lord...
- And those who were not His people – Lo-Ammi – will say You are my God!
- Israel is frequently described as the Bride of God – **Jeremiah 3:14 / 31:31**
- The church is also described as the Bride of Christ – **II Corinthians 11:2 / Ephesians 5:23**
- Because in the end there is neither Jew of Gentile - we are one in Jesus...
- **Ephesians 2:14-15** – “ [Jesus] has broken down the middle wall of separation... to create in Himself one new man *from the two.*”
- So that we who had no Mercy – found mercy in the cross of Christ...
- And we who were not His people – have become the Children of God!

● **3RD – THE TIMETABLE FOR ISRAEL... vs. 1-5**

- o God said to Hosea – go and get Gomer who has committed adultery... vs. 1-3
 - So he went and purchased her for 15 shekels of silver (\$110) – and 10 bushels of wheat (\$50)...
 - Gomer was not very expensive - \$160 – because she did not have value to anyone else...
 - Who would want an unfaithful wife – who no doubt was worn from her destructive lifestyle...
 - Yet she was priceless to Hosea – because he loved her – just like God still loved Israel!
- o Yet for many days Gomer would have to wait...
 - She had to show that she would not run off again and play the Harlot...
 - Just as Israel would also have to wait many days without a king / a Temple to sacrifice in...
 - Without a priest who could wear the Ephod to lead them...
 - Talk about waiting – it has been 2000 years – but in the end they will seek the Lord God!
 - Like Israel we were worthless sinners – lost and bound for destruction – **Ephesians 2:1-3**
 - But God paid for us – but He did it precious blood of Jesus – **I Corinthians 6:20**
 - Yet our redemption does not mean we immediately get to see Jesus - **II Peter 3:9**
 - We have to wait – and we hate waiting – we would rather do almost anything than wait!
 - One of the greatest tests we will ever face in our Christian walk is patience...
 - The danger being it is too easy to loose our excitement for Jesus in the busyness of life...
 - But we must remember this is not our home – we are just passing through – **Hebrews 11:13**
 - Home is a place we have yet to see – where our king / priest / and Temple dwell in heaven!