## **Hosea 4-6**

## Review...

- Hosea was a prophet to the Northern Kingdom from 755 715 B.C.
  - o He prophesied during the reign of 6 different Kings in Israel right up to the Assyrian captivity...
  - o God used the example of the life of Hosea to illustrate the rebellious character of Israel!
  - o God spoke to Hosea go marry a harlot so he went and married Gomer ...
  - o God told Hosea to name his 'son' Jezreel because God would judge the house of Jehu in Jezreel...
  - o God told Hosea to name his 'daughter' Lo-Ruhamah no mercy...
  - o God was not going to have mercy on Israel referring to the Assyrian captivity 722 B.C.
  - o God told Hosea to name his second 'son' Lo-Ammi not my people...
  - o Because of their rejection of God God was now rejecting His people!
- God used the example of Gomer and the children of Hosea to bring charges against Israel...
  - o Because Israel only wanted her lovers seek after the pleasures of this life not eternal life!
  - o THEREFORE God would block Israel with thorns take away her blessings...
  - o But once He had humbled Israel through consequences He would comfort to her ...
  - o God will marry Israel forever and they would find Mercy / and be His People!
- God said to Hosea go and get Gomer who has committed adultery...
  - o So he went and purchased her for \$160 she was not expensive no value to anyone else...
  - o And for many days Gomer had to wait show that she would not run off again...
  - o Just as Israel would also have to wait many days to be restored to their God!

## THE CHARGES AGAINST ISRAEL... (3 THINGS)

- 1<sup>st</sup> The accusation against Israel... vs. 1-19
  - o  $1^{st}$  Hosea sets up a courtroom setting God had a lawsuit to bring against Israel... vs. 1-5
    - The people had forgotten truth / mercy / and the knowledge of the Lord... vs. 1-2
      - The result was that the people began to break the 10 commandments of God...
      - They swore / lied / stole / killed / and committed adultery without restraint...
      - We live in a world that would love to question truth there are no absolutes...
      - What is right for you / may not be what is right for me everything is relative...
      - Event Pontius Pilate famously said to Jesus What is Truth John 18:38
      - But when truth is removed there is no longer any guidelines by which to live...
      - When a nation refuses to allow a judge to hang the 10 commandments in his courtroom...
      - Who is to say steeling is wrong / why is it bad to lie / its not wrong to kill an unborn child...
      - Sin is allowed to run rampant hearts are hardened by sin and God is forgotten!
    - THEREFORE the Land will mourn... vs. 3
      - God would allow the people to waste away even the animals / birds / fish would die off!
      - Likely speaking of a great drought in the Land causing a devastating famine...
      - God is not mocked whatever a nation sows it will also reap **Galatians 6:7**
      - Whether it is hurricanes and floods / or droughts and famine...
      - It is appropriate we call them 'natural disasters' and 'Act of God'...
      - Because God uses natural disasters to get our attention teach us a lesson!
    - NOW do not point your finger (rebuke) at someone else... vs. 4-5
      - Rather than recognize it as the judgment of God the people would blame each other...
      - They blame priests / follow false prophets therefore God would destroy Israel (*mother*)!
      - Times have not changed today we blame 'Global warming' for Acts of God!

- When the consequences of our sin find us we often look to blame others...
- Because it is far easier to see the faults in others then to look at our own shortcomings...
- If the problem is with others than we do not have to change / repent...
- But until we admit we are the problem there is nothing God can do to save us!
- o 2<sup>nd</sup> Charge against the priests... vs. 6-11
  - The people are destroyed for lack of knowledge... vs. 6
    - But it is not that knowledge of the Lord is hidden the priests refuse to teach it!
    - As a result the people forgot the law of God so God would reject the priests!
    - Too many pastors today spend too little time expounding / teaching the Word...
    - Instead they tell funny stories to entertain sprinkled with the occasional Bible verse!
    - But it is not our words / or funny stories people need to hear...
    - They need to know about the dangers of hell and the reward of heaven...
    - About the coming judgment of God and the amazing hope of Jesus!
    - But they do not know these things because they do not know the Word!
    - And the ones who should be teaching them the pastors do not...
    - The biggest problem in the church today there is a famine in the Land!
    - Amos 8:11 "Not a famine of bread or water but of hearing the words of the LORD."
  - The more the priests increased the more they sinned against the Lord... vs. 7-11
    - When people sinned they brought offerings the priest ate so the priest liked people to sin!
      - o Like priests like people since the priests were wicked the people were wicked too!
      - o "Alcohol and prostitution have robbed my people of their brains." **Hosea 4:11** (*NLT*)
      - o The priest were the representation of God to the people...
      - o So it was incredibly important that obey all laws of God regard Him as Holy...
      - o If they did things God did not command them to do they misrepresented God...
      - o If the priests were mad at the people Israel would assume God was mad at them...
      - o If the priests told Israel to jump on one foot they would assume it was from God...
      - o Whatever the priests said or did was a pattern for Israel to follow after!
      - o A heavy responsibility with stern consequences for misrepresenting the Lord!
    - Which is why God would severely judge the priests!
      - o They would eat but still be hungry / commit harlotry but not increase!
      - o Because a bad example kept people from God Hophi and Phinehas I Samuel 2:12-17
      - o They took the best of the meat of the sacrifices (steal) from the people...
      - o They had affairs with the women who came to worship I Samuel 2:22
      - o They were such poor representatives of God the people hated coming to God!
      - o When pastors start to follow the example of the world rather than teach the Word...
      - o They begin to misrepresent God give a false impression of what God is like...
      - o It is no wonder people are not that interested in getting to know Jesus!
      - o And God will judge these leaders for their misrepresentation!
      - o **James 3:1** "My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment."
- o 3<sup>rd</sup> Foolishness of idol worship... vs. 12-19
  - It was common practice to use a staff to divine the will of the gods... vs. 12
    - The would throw a rod stripped of its bark on one side onto the ground...
    - ullet If the bare side turned up the answer was yet / if the bark side turned up no...
    - They had to ask a wooden stick for help because they had deserted God!
    - **Isaiah 44:19-20** "The person who made the idol never stops to reflect, 'Why, it's just a block of wood! I burned half of it for heat and used it to... roast my meat. How can the rest of it be a god? Should I bow down to worship a chunk of wood?""

- We might think well that is silly of course carved idols cannot help us...
- I do not think any of us plan on running home and bowing before some statue...
- But we often forget what our money is made of paper is a wood product...
- Too often we look to old George (\$10) / Abe (\$5) / or even the revered Benjamin (\$100)....
- And we think they can help they can save us some piece of wood we shaped!
- If we are trusting in idols then we are no longer looking or listening to God...
- Where God has the power to help us / save us idols can do nothing...
- The sad thing is we run to money (wooden idols) because we have forgotten about God!
- Israel practiced spiritual harlotry burning incense on the mountaintops... vs. 13-14
  - The result was their women were harlots their wives adulteresses...
  - Yet God did not punish the women because the men were just as bad...
  - Those who do not understand will be trampled by their sin!
  - People did not make the connection their spiritual adultery led to real adultery!
  - Their marriages were falling apart because they had forgotten about the Lord!
- God warned Judah to be careful not to follow the example of Israel... vs. 15-19
  - Do not go to Gilgal where Israel first entered the Promised Land **Joshua 5:10-15** 
    - o But was now a place wholly given over to idolatry Judges 3:19
    - o Or go to Beth-Aven house of vanity / what used to be the Beth-el the house of God...
    - o The location of one of the golden calves set up by Jeroboam I Kings 12:28-29
    - o Israel had become stubborn just like the calves that they worshiped!
    - o So God would make them forage like a helpless lamb in a broad field (easy prey)...
    - o Leave Ephraim (Israel) alone because she has joined himself to his idols...
    - o She drank rebellion / committed constant harlotry and her rulers love it!
    - o The wind would wrap her up in its wings carry her off Assyrian captivity!
  - In **Numbers 16** Korah challenged the authority of Moses...
    - o In response Moses warned all the people to step away from Korah...
    - o Moses told them if he were not chosen then Korah would die as an old man...
    - o But if he were chosen the earth would open and swallow Korah alive...
    - o Moses hardly finished speaking the earth opened and swallowed him up!
    - o And all those who stood with Korah were swallowed as well!
    - o Be careful who you stand with you will become like them and share their fate...
    - o We are foolish if we think the people around us will not affect us...
    - o One of the greatest keys to a Godly life it being surrounded by Godly friends!
    - o I Corinthians 15:33 "...bad company corrupts good character."
- 2<sup>ND</sup> THE JUDGEMENT OF ISRAEL... vs. 1-15
  - o 1<sup>st</sup> Nothing is hidden from the Lord... vs. 1-7
    - God uses the illustration of a hunt to describe the sin of the leaders of Israel... vs. 1-3
      - All the priest / leaders / even the king were involved in the slaughter!
      - Judgment was theirs because they had set a 'snare' in Mizpah spread a 'net' in Tabor...
      - They had dug a deep pit in Acacia (*slaughter*) places where they set up idols!
      - All meant to lead the people of Israel into sin and God was going to replay them for it...
      - God saw it all the sin of Israel was not hidden the harlotry of Ephraim!
      - Interesting God calls out Ephraim as being especially bad among the 10 tribes...
      - They are one of two tribes not mentioned in the 144,000 Revelation 7:4-8
      - **Hebrews 4:13** "Nothing in all creation can hide from him. Everything is naked and exposed before his eyes. The God to whom we must explain all that we have done."

- People think that no one sees the sin in their lives no one knows what they did...
- But Every action / every word / every thought is open and seen by the Lord...
- And for every action/word/thought we will one day be judged for!
- Unless we receive the forgiveness of Jesus unless we have a relationship with Him!
- The deeds of Israel kept them from coming back to God... vs. 4-7
  - They were a prostitute through and through they COULD NOT know the Lord...
  - Pride was their response therefore they will stumble / and Judah will stumble with them!
  - And when they come with their flocks to sacrifice to the Lord it will be too late...
  - They will be alone because they betrayed the Lord raised pagan children...
  - Now a new moon (*month*) will devour them speaking of the short time they had left!
  - What keeps people from seeing that Jesus is the answer to their lives...
  - It is not that they cannot find Jesus or that the Gospel is difficult to understand...
  - Men stay away from Jesus because they LOVE (agape) their sin John 3:19
  - And because men LOVE sin they CANNOT come to the light...
  - They think that they will have to give up the 'wonderful' sin in their life...
  - In pride they would rather have their sin than eternal life with God in Heaven!
- o 2<sup>nd</sup> The fall of Israel... vs. 8-15
  - Blow the shofar in Gibeah / the trumpet in Ramah / cry out in Beth-Aven...
    - Because the enemy was upon them the time of their judgment had come...
    - God gave His guarantee (I will make it sure) Ephraim (Israel) will be desolate!
    - To the princes of Judah who move landmarks (moral boundaries) wrath like a waterfall!
    - Ephraim (*Israel*) will be broken cause they were content to listen to the command of men!
    - God will be like a moth to Israel / and rottenness to Judah He will consume them...
    - They will run to Assyria for help to king of strife (Jareb) but he will not be able to help…
    - Israel did attempt to seek the help of Assyria on several occasions II Kings 15:9 / 17:3
    - But God would be like a lion tearing Israel and Judah dragging them away...
    - Then God would wait till they admitted their sin in their affliction they would seek Him!
  - Amazing that even when things began to unravel Israel went to the world rather than God...
    - **Jude 1:12** "They are clouds without water..."
    - The world is full of the promise of wonderful things but they are empty promises...
    - The promise if we get a good education / good job we will find happiness...
    - The promise if we have enough money we will have no more worries...
    - But what the world does not tell you only in Jesus are promises Yes and Amen!
- $3^{RD}$  The restoration of Israel... vs. 1-11
  - o  $1^{st}$  On the  $3^{rd}$  day... vs. 1-3
    - Come and let us turn to the Lord He has torn but will heal / He has injured but will bind...
      - Hosea speaks of a day when Israel and Judah will finally see Jesus is the answer...
      - They will recognize that God punished them because of their sin...
      - But that God is also willing to heal them bind up their wounds forgive them!
    - After 2 days God will revive Israel on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day He will raise them up...
      - There is some speculation on the meaning of this verse some say it refers to Jesus...
      - How He rose on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day and through His death and sacrifice we are forgiven
      - The problem is the prophet is speaking of Israel they would be reborn after 2 days...
      - And on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day they would be lifted up so they could live in the sight of God!
      - In **II Peter 3:8** we are told that a day to the Lord is like 1000 years...
      - The nation of Israel was destroyed in 70 A.D. the destruction of the Temple...
      - For 2000 years (2 days) they were lost until the nation was reborn on May 14, 1948...

- When Jesus returns Israel will be lifted up to live in the sight of God for 1000 years (1 day)!
- This likely speaks of the ultimate restoration of Israel in the Millennial Kingdom!
- THEREFORE let us pursue the knowledge of the Lord...
  - Because His going forth (*decisions*) is as certain as the rising of the sun!
  - His grace is like the former / later rains that give new life to those who are dead!
  - God has established His plan for the world and nothing will change it Matthew 5:18
  - He will come to judge the nations and every knee will bow Philippians 2:10
  - There are only two kinds of people when it comes to God...
  - Sinner who have received the free gift of salvation in Jesus and sinners who have not...
  - Therefore lets pursue the Lord now receive His grace and be healed!
  - **Hebrews 10:31** "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God..."
- o 2<sup>nd</sup> Mercy not sacrifice... vs. 4-11
  - What was the Lord to do with rebellious Ephraim (*Israel*) / Judah...
    - Their faithfulness was like the morning dew it only lasted for a brief moment...
    - God sent the prophets cut them with His Word sent His light to judge them...
    - Trying to show them He wanted mercy / not sacrifices empty vain religious rituals!
    - In Matthew 12 the Pharisees rebuked Jesus disciples for picking grain on the Sabbath...
    - Jesus responded to them by quoting this verse God is not concerned about rituals...
    - God is looking for good fruit the evidence of a heart that is devoted to Him!
  - But like Adam (*men*) Israel broke the covenant...
    - The people of Gilead are sinners covered in the blood of their victims...
    - Priest act like robbers lying in wait to murder those coming to Shechem (city of refuge)...
    - God had seen a horrible thing in Israel the people of God would be scatted Diaspora!
    - And Judah also would be harvested (taken captive) though God would return them!
    - God sets the choice before every man follow Adam / or follow Christ Romans 5:14
    - We get to choose which we want do we want judgment or forgiveness...
    - God did not make salvation hard He wants everyone to be saved II Peter 3:9
    - But at the same time it is our choice heaven or hell / life or death...
    - God will not make us go to heaven He provides the way for those who believe!