

Hosea Special Problems

 The book of Hosea has at least two perplexing problems.

- 1) The first concerns the nature of the story told in chs. 1-3 and the character of Gomer. While some interpreters have thought the story to be merely an allegory of the relation between God and Israel, others claim, more plausibly, that the story is to be taken literally. Among the latter, some insist that Gomer was faithful at first and later became unfaithful, others that she was unfaithful even before the marriage.
- 2) The second problem of the book is the relation of ch. 3 to 1. Despite the fact that no children are mentioned in ch.3, some interpreters claim that the two chapters are different accounts of the episode. The traditional interpretation, however, is more likely, namely, that ch. 3 is a sequel to ch. 1 - i.e., after Gomer proved unfaithful, Hosea was instructed to take her back.