

The Book of Hosea

Chapter 1

Introduction

- The Author – Hosea
 - His name means “salvation”, similar to Joshua.
 - Son of Beeri (“well, fountain”)
 - Resident of the Northern Kingdom of Israel
 - His prophetic message centers around the Northern Kingdom
 - He shows much familiarity with the region
 - His tomb is claimed to be in Safed, a town in Galilee (for whatever its worth)
 - His ministry seems to have lasted at least fifty years
 - Reese dates his messages from 786-723 B.C
 - Relation to other prophets:
 - Contemporary of Isaiah and Jonah
 - Amos ministered to the Northern Kingdom shortly before him.
 - Many parallels to the later prophet Jeremiah.
 - Both known for sadness, suffering
 - Both proclaimed coming judgement to unheeding audiences
- The Setting – The Decline and Fall of the Northern Kingdom
 - Illusions of prosperity and success
 - Spiritual and moral decline
- Basic Outline
 - The Personal Example of Hosea - Chapters 1-3
 - The Prophecies of Hosea - Chapters 4-14
- Important Topics to Consider
 - The use of names is very important in this book.
 - Names had much more meaning to the ancient Jews.
 - Pay close attention to their meanings
 - The use of an “object lesson” in Hosea’s marriage
 - God uses the illustration of Gomer’s unfaithfulness to illustrate Israel’s unfaithfulness to Him
 - Note that this actually happened. It is not allegorical, nor are “code words” being used (e.g., Gomer’s harlotry is really idolatry in poetic terms)
 - Judgement and Restoration
 - A common theme in the Prophetic books is coming judgment, but also note that coupled with this are promises of future blessing
 - Many of these promises look forward to the Millennial Kingdom
 - In spite of being considered a “minor” prophet, this book is quoted around thirty times in the New Testament.

Chapter 1

- vs. 2 – “of whoredoms” - probably speaks of the ritualistic prostitution connected with Baal worship.
- vs. 2 - “for the land hath committed...” - note here that the appearance of prevalent theme of spiritual unfaithfulness illustrated through marital unfaithfulness.
 - Remember the shape the Northern Kingdom is in. Hosea is in the minority by remaining true to God.
- vs. 3 – *Gomer* means “completion, consummation”
- vs. 3 – *Diblahim* (“two fig cakes” and I’m not making that up!)
- vs. 4 – God chooses to speak through the names of these children, much like he did with Isaiah (Isaiah 8:1-4)
- vs. 4 – *Jezreel* means “God has scattered or sown”
 - Foretells the end of Jehu’s dynasty on the Northern throne (as promised in II Kings 10:29-31) with the assassination of Zechariah in II Kings 15:8-12.
 - The use of Jezreel also is a reference to the crimes committed at the town of Jezreel – I Kings 21:1-24; II Kings 9:24-25, 10:7-11
- vs. 5 – Foreshadows the fall of the Northern Kingdom to Assyria in 721 B.C. Some believe there may have been a decisive battle in the Jezreel Valley.
- vs. 6 – *Loruhamah* means “unpitiably, no more mercy”
 - The Northern Kingdom’s fate is sealed
- vs. 7 - By contrast, the Southern Kingdom of Judah is granted more time by divine deliverance (see II Kings 19:35 for details)
- vs. 9 – *Loammī* means “not my people”
 - Shows the complete breakdown in the relationship between God and His people.
- vs. 10 – However, the promises of God are faithful and He will keep his promise to Abraham (compare Hosea 1:10 and Genesis 22:17)
- vs. 11 – This is unfulfilled. Israel has not been reunited as described here.
- vs. 12 – “day of Jezreel” - I think this refers to the Battle of Armageddon, which takes place in the Valley of Jezreel. Thus, the promise here is fulfilled in the Millennial Kingdom