

TEXT: Overview of Hosea –
Paul Apple www.bibleoutlines.com paulgapple@gmail.com

TITLE: *MARITAL UNFAITHFULNESS BREAKS THE HEART OF GOD'S LOYAL LOVE*

BIG IDEA:
GOD DEMONSTRATES HIS LOYAL LOVE THROUGHOUT THE REPEATED CYCLES OF UNFAITHFULNESS, DISCIPLINE AND RESTORATION

“I will heal their apostasy; I will love them freely, For My anger has turned away from them.” (14:4)

I. (1:1 – 3:5) ISRAEL'S INFIDELITY ILLUSTRATED BY MARRIAGE OF FAITHFUL PROPHET AND ADULTEROUS WIFE

Symbolic Narrative – rest of book is series of addresses to the people

A. (1:1) Setting

“The word of the Lord which came to Hosea the son of Beeri, during the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and during the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel.”

Historical Context:

Why called Minor Prophets? Brevity ... not importance (cf. Is, Jer, Ez)

Order in the Hebrew bible:

- Prophets of the Assyrian Period (Hosea to Nahum) – pre-exilic
- Prophets of the Babylonian Captivity (Habakkuk and Zephaniah)
- Prophets of the Persian Period (after exile - Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi)

Name = Hoshea = “*salvation*” – same meaning as that of Joshua and Jesus

Very emotional – like Jeremiah to the Southern kingdom of Judah

Prophet to the Northern kingdom of Israel and native of that area (Jonah = only other writing prophet from the North) – **755–710 BC** – long ministry (sometimes called Ephraim)

- contemporaries: Amos (just before Hosea), Micah and Isaiah
- ministry included the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah in Judah
- he has been called the Jeremiah of Israel – intensely sensitive and emotional

Right before the fall of the northern kingdom to Assyria

Jeroboam II was the king in Israel

Historical Background: 2 Kings 14-20; 2 Chron. 26-32

Had reason to be intense and emotional – this was Israel's last call to repentance; they were already too far gone and too corrupt; judgment was coming

Religious and cultural conditions during reign of Jeroboam II

Political peace; material prosperity – but moral and religious corruption; after Jeroboam II, kingdom became chaotic – short reigns of a succession of kings ended by coups and assassinations

Reign of **Tiglathpileser III** – king of Assyria 745-727 BC

B. (1:2-9) Significance of Marriage to Gomer and Subsequent Children

1. (:2) Significance of the Symbolic Marriage

“for the land commits flagrant harlotry, forsaking the Lord”

Picture of shame and disgrace; an ugly image

How important is faithfulness in your marriage?

“take a wife of harlotry” – Diff views:

1) actually marry a prostitute – but nothing seems wrong in the early stages of birth of first son; this would be very strange – would not picture the condition of a redeemed people who subsequently would commit spiritual adultery; question whether the next two children are really his ... you can see the decline in the relationship

2) symbolic only; an allegory – does not give the power to the illustration; details of the narrative read like a literal story

3) Gomer chaste initially – but God foretelling what her character and actions would be; this is the preferable view

2. (:3-9) Significance of the names of the three children

a. Son = *Jezreel* – “God will scatter” – discipline and exile (2 Kings 9:7 – 10:28) Look at the security we have as the church – nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus “*put an end*” (:4) – exile of Israel to Assyria in 722 B.C. At city of Jezreel – Jehu slaughtered house of Ahab; scene of much bloodshed

b. Daughter = *Lo-ruhamah* – “not pitied” – no more compassion and forgiveness
How important for us that “*the Lord’s lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness*” (Lam 3:22-23)

c. Son = *Lo-ammi* – “not my people” – “not my kin” Hosea realizes that this child was not his; God has rejected Israel;
Think of the privilege of being the people of God – do we take this for granted?

MacArthur: The phrase gives the breaking of the covenant, a kind of divorce formula in contrast to the covenant or marriage formula

Rom. 9:25-26 – quoted by Paul in NT

C. (1:10-11) Messianic Restoration of Israel – 5 Major Areas Highlighted

1. Restoration from Small Remnant to Great Numbers

“Yet the number of the sons of Israel will be like the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or numbered”

2. Restoration from Rejection to Adoption as Sons
“And in the place where it is said to them, you are not My people, It will be said to them, You are the sons of the living God”
3. Restoration from Scattering and Division to Gathering Together and Unity
“And the sons of Judah and the sons of Israel will be gathered together”
4. Restoration from the Leadership of pagan kings to the Leadership of the Good Shepherd
“And they will appoint for themselves one leader”
5. Restoration from Shame and Disgrace to Blessing and Glory
“And they will go up from the land, for great will be the day of Jezreel”

D. (2:1-13) Indictment Against Adulterous Israel with Promised Subsequent Discipline

1. Serious Charges
 - Shameful Immorality / Unfaithfulness (:2-5)
 - Materialistic Motivation
“I will go after my lovers who give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, my oil and my drink” – (:5) never recognizing that Hosea continued to faithfully provide for her needs
 - Multiple Partners – seeking to satisfy her unquenchable appetites; spiraling downward from one unsatisfied relationship to the next (:7)
 - Ignorant and Unthankful Perspective (:8)
 - Blatant Idolatry (:13)
2. Severe Discipline
 - Stripped naked and exposed
 - Barren and thirsty
 - Cursed children
 - Affliction and Hardship (:6)
 - Removal of food and clothing (:9)
 - Rendered helpless with no one able to deliver (:10)
 - Removal of all joy and happiness
3. Root Problem = Unfaithfulness
“‘she forgot me’ declares the Lord” (:13)

E. (2:14-23) Millennial Restoration of Israel – Additional Details

1. (:14) Wooing Israel Back to Relationship of Mutual Love
“I will allure her”
2. (:15) Restoration of Hope and Joy
“Then I will give her her vineyards from there, and the valley of Achor

as a door of hope. And she will sing there as in the days of her youth, as in the day when she came up from the land of Egypt.”

Waltke: Hosea takes his hands off Gomer’s life and lets sin take its course. He allows Gomer to go down into the depths of despair where there is no place else to turn (= valley of Achor); there I will open a door of hope and salvation.

3. (:16) Converting Relationship to One of Intimacy Rather than Servanthood
“you will call Me Ishi and will not longer call Me Baali”
“husband” denotes affection and intimacy; “master” speaks of rulership
4. (:17) Cleansing From Idolatry
“For I will remove the names of the Baals from her mouth, so that they will be mentioned by their names no more.”
5. (:18) Kingdom of Peace and Safety and Security
 - a. Covenant of Peace with the Animal Kingdom
“In that day I will also make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, the birds of the sky and the creeping things of the ground.”
 - b. Covenant of Peace with all the Nations
“And I will abolish the bow, the sword and war from the land, and will make them lie down in safety.”
6. (:19-20A) New Permanent Covenant Relationship
“I will betroth you to Me forever; yes, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and in justice, in lovingkindness and in compassion, and I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness.”

MacArthur: Repeated 3 times, the term emphasizes the intensity of God’s restoring love for the nation. In that day, Israel will no longer be thought of as a prostitute. Israel brings nothing to the marriage; God makes all the promises and provides all the dowry. These verses are recited by every orthodox Jew as he places the phylacteries on his hand and forehead.

7. (:20B) Intimate Knowledge of God
“then you will know the Lord”
8. (:21-23) Renewal of Marriage Vows -- Response of the Lord and Reciprocal Response of His Bride
 - a. Response of the Lord
 - b. Reciprocal Response of His Bride
“and they will say ‘You are my God.’”

F. (3:1-5) Loyal Love Demonstrated in Renewal of the Marriage
Picture of buying slave out of market place – cf. redemption
Need to reflect on the amazing love that God has for His people; loyal love;

How can people say in light of this that God has completely cast away His people the Jewish nation because of their apostasy? Replaced by the church when it comes to OT promises? This book of Hosea is powerful refutation and support of the dispensational position

II. (4:1 – 13:16) ISRAEL’S INDICTMENT AND CERTAIN JUDGMENT

A. (4:1-3) Summary of God’s Case Against Israel

1. Solemn Summons

“Listen to the word of the Lord, O sons of Israel, for the Lord has a case against the inhabitants of the land.”

2. Comprehensive Charges

a. Lacking in (Expanded in the three indictments below)

- **faithfulness**
- **kindness**
- **knowledge of God**

b. Transgressing in

- swearing
- deception
- murder
- stealing
- adultery
- *“they employ violence, so that bloodshed follows bloodshed”*

3. (:3) Global Consequences

“Therefore the land mourns, and everyone who lives in it languishes along with the beasts of the field and the birds of the sky, and also the fish of the sea disappear.”

[Remainder of outline for this point II taken from **David Malick** – we will skip over this section – Note chiasmic arrangement = A B C C B A]

B. (4:4 - 6:3) **The First Indictment:** The LORD indicts the nation for a lack of *knowledge* and a rejection of *knowledge of the LORD* so that they will understand the coming affliction which will cause them to turn to Him and be restored

C. (6:4 – 11:11) **The Second Indictment:** The LORD indicts Israel and Judah for having a lack of *loyal love* [kindness] in order that they might understand the coming purifying judgment and possibly repent to their loyal God who will restore them to the Land

D. (11:12 – 13:16) **The Third Indictment:** The LORD indicts Israel for having a lack of *faithfulness* so that they will understand their coming judgment and return to Him who will not completely destroy them due to His faithfulness

III. (14:1-9) ISRAEL'S RESTORATION AND FUTURE BLESSING

A. (:1-3) Call for Repentance and Faith = Conditions for Restoration

1. (:1) Need for Repentance: Sin Separates Israel from Her God
“Return, O Israel, to the Lord your God, for you have stumbled because of your iniquity.”

2. (:2) Process of Repentance

a. Must be Verbal and Specific and Directed Personally to the Lord
“Take words with you and return to the Lord”

b. Must ask for Forgiveness
“Say to Him, ‘Take away all iniquity”

c. Must Cast Yourself on the Grace and Mercy of God
“And receive us graciously”

d. Must Issue in the Fruit of Thanksgiving and Obedience and Service
“That we may present the fruit of our lips”

3. (:3) Flip Side of Repentance = Faith in God Alone

a. No Hope in Other Powers
“Assyria will not save us”

b. No Hope in Our Own Strength or Resources
“we will not ride on horses”

c. No Hope in Idols of Any Kind or Our Own Accomplishments
“Nor will we say again, ‘Our god,’ to the work of our hands”

d. Hope in God Alone Who Shows Mercy to the Helpless Sinner
“For in You the orphan finds mercy.”

B. (:4-8) Comfort in the Lord's Forgiveness, Healing, Blessing, Sufficiency

1. (:4) Anger Replaced by Healing and Loving
“I will heal their apostasy, I will love them freely, For My anger has turned away from them.”

2. (:5-7) Blessing of God Promotes Fruitful Growth

a. (:5) Providing Nourishment for Beauty and Strength of Character

*“I will be like the dew to Israel;
He will blossom like the lily,
And he will take root like the cedars of Lebanon.”*

b. (:6) Fostering Growth, Beauty, Fragrance

*“His shoots will sprout,
And his beauty will be like the olive tree
And his fragrance like the cedars of Lebanon.”*

c. (:7) Restoration of Productivity, Reputation and Glory

*“Those who live in his shadow will again raise grain,
And they will blossom like the vine;
His renown will be like the wine of Lebanon.”*

3. (:8) Sufficiency of God Should Eliminate Any Inclination Towards Idols

*“O Ephraim, what more have I to do with idols? It is I who answer and
look after you. I am like a luxuriant cypress; From Me comes your
fruit.”*

C. (:9) Closing Charge – Listen Up / Understand / Obey

*“Whoever is wise, let him understand these things; whoever is discerning, let
him know them. For the ways of the Lord are right, and the righteous will walk
in them, but transgressors will stumble in them.”*

* * * * *

Teaching About Christ

3:5 refers to the Messiah during the Millennial Kingdom; promises based on the Davidic Covenant – chief characteristic highlighted = “His Goodness”

“Afterward the sons of Israel will return and seek the Lord their God and David their king; and they will come trembling to the Lord, and to His goodness in the last days.”

Hosea 11:1 with Matt. 2:15

“When Israel was a youth I loved him, And out of Egypt I called My son.”

Favorite Verses / Use in NT

Very important book – other biblical writers quote from it either directly or indirectly more than 30 times

Hosea 6:6 with Matt. 9:13; 12:7 need for reality in religious worship

“For I delight in loyalty rather than sacrifice, and in the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.”

Hosea 10:8 with Luke 23:30

Hosea 13:14 with 1 Cor. 15:55)

Key Applications

- God's unfailing love and faithfulness
- God still has a program for the Jewish nation that includes Millennial Kingdom
- Forgiveness and restoration in marriage relationship
- God will discipline His people for sin and idolatry
- Picture of redemption from the slave market in Hosea buying back Gomer
- Importance of growing in our intimate knowledge of God

* * * * *

QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Malick: The reason (Judah and especially) Israel are going to be judged by the God of loyal love is because they have not been faithful to the covenant and thus need to repent in order to receive a future restoration to the land

I. Setting: 1:1

II. The LORD's loyal love for the idolatrous, northern kingdom of Israel is demonstrated through Hosea's marriage to Gomer 1:2--3:5

III. The LORD directly indicts the nation Israel (and Judah) for their breaking of their covenantal relationship with Him in three specific areas:

- (1) their lack and rejection of the knowledge of the LORD,
- (2) their lack of loyal love, and
- (3) their faithlessness—

in order to reveal the reason for their coming judgment which ultimately will lead to restoration 4:1--13:6

A. In a summary statement the LORD indicts the nation of Israel for their lack of faithfulness, kindness and knowledge of God which results in judgment in the land 4:1-3

B. The First Indictment: The LORD indicts the nation for a lack of *knowledge* and a rejection of *knowledge* of the LORD so that they will understand the coming affliction which will cause them to turn to Him and be restored 4:4-19

C. The Second Indictment: The LORD indicts Israel and Judah for having a lack of *loyal love* in order that they might understand the coming purifying judgment and possible repent to their loyal God who will restore them to the Land 6:4--11:11

D. The Third Indictment: The LORD indicts Israel for having a lack of faithfulness so that they will understand their coming judgment and return to Him who will not completely destroy them due to His faithfulness 11:12--13:16

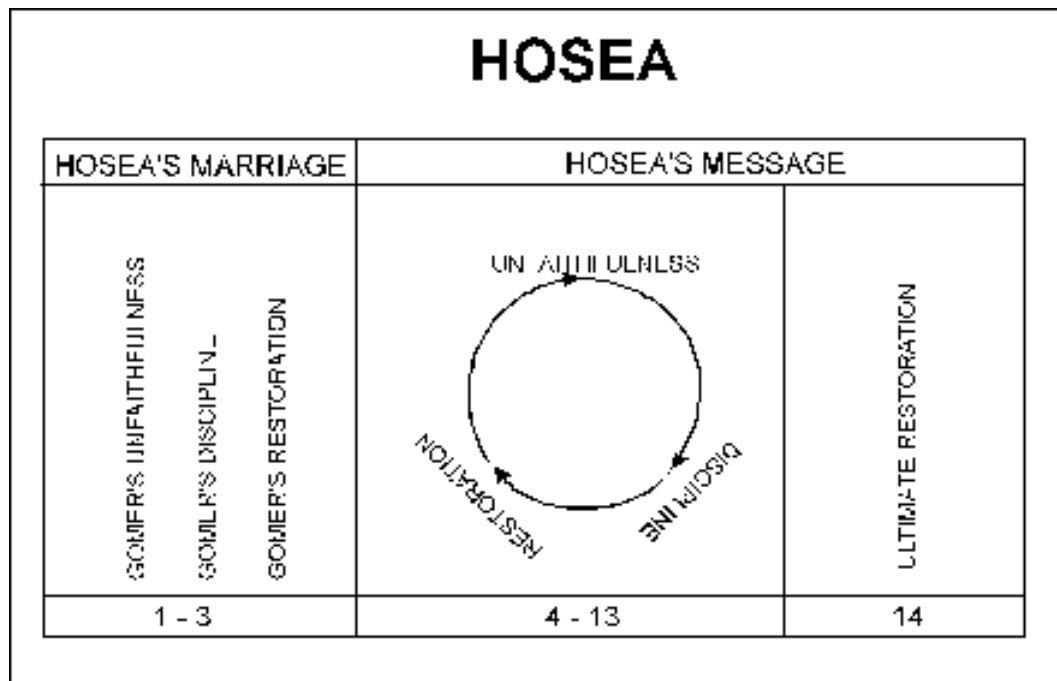
IV. The LORD calls upon the nation to repent and turn to Him for restoration 14:1-8

V. Conclusion: The reader is exhorted to be wise unto life by understanding who the LORD is and obeying Him rather than being foolish and disobeying Him which would result in death 14:9

Keathley:

It is hard to outline the prophetic books because the prophets alternate between listing sins, predicting judgment and then promising restoration, it is hard to pick out the macro structure or “big picture.” Hosea is probably the hardest.

One way to outline the book is as follows:



In the first three chapters we see Hosea's marriage to the prostitute, Gomer. His marriage to the unfaithful wife is to be an example of God's relationship with the unfaithful nation of Israel. In the first three chapters we alternate between the events in Hosea's message and God's explanation of how those events relate to the nation.

In 4-14: we see Hosea's message of warning to the nation of Israel. I think you can see a parallel between the three sections describing Hosea's marriage and the major sections in the last part of the book, within these individual sections, we have several “mini” sermons which themselves alternate between the listing of the sins, the pronouncement of judgment, the call to repentance and the promise of restoration.

If you keep that in mind as you study the book, it will help keep you from getting lost in the details.

Stedman: Hosea: The Prophet and the Prostitute

Can you see in this beautiful story all the elements of the eternal triangle? There is the loving God, the faithless human heart, and the deceptive attractiveness of the world.

<http://www.discipleshiplibrary.com/pdfs/NET01040.pdf>

Piper: Call Me Husband, Not Baal

Love God warmly as your husband, don't just serve him as your Lord. . .

If you get your kicks from somewhere else, you commit great harlotry against God. . .

Gomer is going to bear three children, and each one is going to symbolize the judgment of God which harlotry always begets. The first is named Jezreel to remind the people of the fury of Jehu (a former king of Israel) when he killed Joram and Amaziah and Jezebel and 70 sons of Ahab in the city of Jezreel. Even though Jehu was carrying out the penal purposes of God, he was reckless and impetuous and high-handed in his dealings. When God says in verse 5 that he will therefore break the bow of Israel, he means that this is still Israel's spirit. She is unfaithful and begets violence and treachery. The first son stands for this sin of Israel.

I see in Hosea 2:14–23 at least three things God does for us, his rebellious wife, to win us back; and I see one overriding thing that he wants from us. *The first thing* he does is woo us tenderly. Verse 14: "Behold, I will allure her and bring her into the wilderness and speak tenderly to her." We are all guilty of harlotry. We have loved other lovers more than God. We have gotten our kicks elsewhere. He has been at times an annoying deity. We, like Gomer, were enslaved to a paramour, the world, pleasure, ambition. But God has not cast us off. He promises to take us into the wilderness. He wants to be alone with us. Why? So that he can speak tenderly to us. Literally, the Hebrew says, so that he can speak "to her heart." And when he speaks, he will allure you. He will entice you and woo you. He will say what a lover says to his lady when they walk away from the party into the garden. God wants to talk that way with you. Go with him into the wilderness and listen with your heart. Do not think you are too ugly or too rotten. He knows that his wife is a harlot. That's the meaning of mercy: God is wooing a wife of harlotry.

The second thing God does is promise her hope and safety. Verse 15: "And there I will give her vineyards and make the valley of Achor a door of hope." The valley of Achor is where Israel was first unfaithful to the Lord in the promised land. Just after Israel entered the land, Achan kept the forbidden booty and caused the defeat at Ai. But now God promises that if his harlot will come home, Achor will no longer be a "valley of trouble" (Joshua 7:26), but a door of hope. She will come home to rich vineyards. Verse 18 spells out her hope in more detail: "I will make for you a covenant on that day with the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the creeping things of the ground, and I will abolish the bow, the sword, and war from the land; and I will make you lie down in safety." If only his estranged wife will come home, she will find a paradise with her husband: he will make a pact even with the animals, lest they do harm; and he will

remove all violence and conflict. These are no doubt the words God speaks into the heart of his wife in the lonely place. "It will be so good, so good! Put away your harlotry and come home."

The third thing God does is renew his wife's betrothal and consummate the marriage again in purity. Verses 19, 20: "And I will betroth you to me for ever; I will betroth you to me in righteousness and justice, in steadfast love and mercy. I will betroth you to me in faithfulness; and you shall know the Lord." Three times: I will betroth you; I will betroth you; I will betroth you. "We will go back to the days of our engagement. We will start over. Harlots can start over! We will lay a fresh foundation: righteousness, justice, steadfast love, mercy, faithfulness. Things will not only be good in the paradise around us. Things will also be right between us. These have always been *my* ways; but now they will be mutual." Yes, even a wife of harlotry can experience a new relationship of righteousness, justice, steadfast love, mercy, and faithfulness with her divine husband.

But the most daring statement of all is the last one in verse 20: "And you shall know the Lord." To see what this means, recall the peculiar use of the word "know" in the Bible. For example, Genesis 4:1, "Adam *knew* Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain." And Matthew 1:25, "Joseph *knew* her [Mary] not until she had borne a son." In the context of a broken marriage being renewed with the fresh vows of betrothal, must not the words, "and you shall *know* the Lord" (v. 20), mean, you shall enjoy an intimacy like that of the purest sexual intercourse. When the wife of harlotry returns to her husband, he will withhold nothing. He will not keep her at a distance. The fellowship and communion and profoundest union he will give to his prodigal wife when she comes home broken and empty.

This is the gospel story in the Old Testament. This is the meaning of Christmas interpreted seven centuries before Christ. God comes to woo us tenderly to himself; he promises us fullest hope and safety; he starts over with any who will come, and offers us the most intimate and pleasure-filled relationship possible.

And what must we do to qualify? What does he want from us? Verse 16: "In that day, says the Lord, you will call me, 'My husband,' and no longer will you call me, 'My Baal.'" I think the word Baal here has a double meaning. As the next verse shows, it means one of the false gods of Israel's idolatry. So verse 16 means: "You will no longer include me as one of many gods, or many lovers; you will talk to me as your only true God and husband."

But there is another sense of the word Baal. Fifteen times in the Old Testament it simply means "husband," but husband in the sense of owner and lord. The Baals were Israel's hard masters as well as her lovers. In 7:14, for example, the people gashed themselves to try to get benefits from the Baals (just like the prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel in 1 Kings 18:28). When Israel chose a Baal for her "significant other," she chose a cruel and merciless lord. So the other (and I think primary) meaning of Hosea 2:16 is: "Relate to me as a loving husband, not as a harsh master or owner. In that day, says the Lord, you will call me 'My husband,' and you will no longer call me 'My

Baal."

The good news at the end of 1982 is that God wants you to love him warmly as your husband, not just serve him dutifully as your Lord.

http://www.desiringgod.org/ResourceLibrary/Sermons/ByScripture/41/372_Call_Me_Husband_Not_Baal/

Baxter: THE PROPHET OF PERSEVERING LOVE

All the trouble in that ten tribed kingdom of long ago originated in the worship of the two golden calves which king Jeroboam installed at Dan and Bethel. By the time Hosea lived, those calves and the illicit cult which grew up around them had brought the nation to such a moral condition that Divine judgment could be staved off little longer.

Prologue (i.-iii.) – the whole story in symbol

I. ISRAEL'S SIN INTOLERABLE: GOD IS HOLY (iv.-vii.)

The Fivefold Indictment (iv., v.)

Israel's Unreal "Return" (vi.)

Healing Made Impossible (vii.)

II. ISRAEL SHALL BE PUNISHED: GOD IS JUST (viii.-x.)

The Trumpet of Judgment (viii)

These chapters throughout are expressions of wrath to come

III. ISRAEL SHALL BE RESTORED: GOD IS LOVE (xi.-xiv.)

Divine Yearning (xi.)

Yet Israel Must Suffer (xii., etc.)

The Final victory of Love (xiv.)