



The Minor Prophets

HOSEA *"The Prophet of Love"*
760—712 B.C.

AUTHORSHIP AND DATE

Hosea. He is the last writing prophet to minister to the Northern Kingdom before its destruction by Assyria (722 B.C.). The names Joshua and Jesus come from the same Hebrew root word as Hosea—"Hoshea."

The sermons in this book were delivered by Hosea between 754 and 725 B.C. they were then compiled into a single book around 725 B.C. (this is evident by the fact that the work looks forward to Assyrian captivity of 722 B.C., as yet to happen upon the Northern Kingdom of Israel.)

PURPOSE OF HOSEA

This prophecy was God's last voice to the Northern Kingdom of Israel before its destruction. It was a gracious attempt to rescue individuals out of the doomed nation. This message of judgment was fulfilled within a few years.

IMPORTANT DATA ABOUT HOSEA.

- Key word: God's love for Israel
- Key chapter: 2—A description of love
- Key verses: 1:2-9; 2:5-8; 3:1-5
- Key characters: Hosea and Gomer
- Geography of Hosea: Israel

BACKGROUND TO HOSEA

❖ Historical background

- Political anarchy.
When Jeroboam II died, there was a great turmoil. Jeroboam's son reigned six months, then was assassinated by Shallum who reigned one month. He was deposed by Menahem who was succeeded by his son Pekahiah. Assyria invaded, Pekahiah was murdered; Pekah took the throne; Hosea was then put on the throne by Assyria, but he allied with Egypt. Therefore, Assyria invaded again and destroyed Israel in 722 B.C.
- Spiritual anarchy.
 - Israel's priests and kings were totally corrupt (4:6-9; 7:3-5).
 - The common people were false worshippers who had rejected God and trusted in foreign alliances (8:9-11).

❖ Hosea's background

- A native of the Northern Kingdom sent to minister to that area on the eve of their destruction.
- Commanded by God to marry Gomer by whom he had three children.
 - Jezreel—"the Lord sows" (1:3-5).
 - Loruhamah—"no mercy" (1:6).
 - Loammi—"not my people" (1:8).
- After a period of time, Gomer leaves Hosea and falls into idolatry. She is left alone by her wicked companions and sold for a slave.
- Hosea purchases Gomer and restores her when she sees her error; yet not to her complete former status until there is a genuine change shown.

LEARNING MORE ABOUT OUR GOD FROM HOSEA

The nation of Israel was “married” by covenant to the Lord but had forsaken her “husband” and gone after other gods—spiritual adultery. Her forsaking of the Lord had bred a multitude of sins which were enumerated by Hosea—unfaithfulness, deception, murder, stealing, adultery, rebellion, idolatry, disobedience, pride, stubbornness, and involvement in spiritism (4:1-2, 10-14, 16; 5:5; 6:8-10). The leaders were just as sinful as the people (4:9, 18; 5:1; 7:5; 9:15). Sin had so hardened Israel that she would not repent (5:4). Judgment was sure. But Hosea was just as sure that God would restore Israel in the future (14:4-9).

OUTLINE

- I. Illustration of divine love (1 - 3).
 - A. Marriage of the prophet (1). _____
 - B. Message of the prophet (2). _____
 - C. Mercy of the prophet (3). _____
- II. Indication of divine love (4 - 14).
 - A. Defection of the people (4 - 7).
 - 1. Their sinfulness (4 - 5). _____
 - 2. Their stubbornness (6). _____
 - 3. Their silliness (7). _____
 - B. Destruction of the people (8 - 12).
 - 1. Weakness of their gods (8). _____
 - 2. Wasting of their goods (9). _____
 - 3. Wrestling of their glory (10 - 12). _____
 - C. Deliverance of the people (13 - 14).
 - 1. Sin of Israel (13:1 - 8). _____
 - 2. Salvation of Israel (13:9 - 14:9). _____

SUMMARY

The book of Hosea might be said to express God’s love for backslidden believers. Within its chapters, God expresses to everyone His hatred of sin, and love for the sinner himself. It is a reflection of the tenderness of God’s eternal mercy.

HOSEA’S MESSAGE FOR TODAY

LEARN ABOUT THE HEART OF GOD—We see God’s attributes of justice, faithfulness, longsuffering, goodness, mercy, and love expressed toward His people (and us today). Our focus is on God’s goodness: “God’s mercy, patience, and grace may be seen as three separate attributes, or as aspects of God’s goodness.” (Grudem, Systematic Theology, 200).

God _____ (anguishes) when His people/children are unfaithful.

We see this through two areas affected in Hosea’s life:

Hosea’s _____ (1:1-6, 8-9)

Hosea’s _____ (2:2; 3:1-2)

God _____ condone _____ when His people are unfaithful.

There now occurs two pictures in relationship to sin:

_____ (2:25)

_____ (2:6-13)

God _____ to _____ His people when they are unfaithful.

(Strength of divine love and grace)

Restore to _____ (blessings) (2:14-15)

Restore to _____ (2:16, 19a)

Lest we leave this message “gather dust” back in the OT, the same message would sound again in the NT (Rev. 2:1-6).

Conclusion: Hosea 3:1 “Go again and love . . .”