

## Lesson #24

**PREPARATION FOR LESSON:** read Hosea chapters 1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10, 11, 14 from the Living Bible

## BACKGROUND

**Author:** Hosea. A contemporary of Amos; he also knew Jonah as a child.

During the last year of Amos, Hosea began his first year of ministry.

**Date and Place of Ministry:** he preached some 23 years in Israel c. 745 - 722 BC  
 he began in the last 3 years of Jeroboam II.  
 he wrote his book after he went to Judah in 722 BC.

**Theme:** God's love and justice.

**Purpose:** To explain God's judgment on the **nation** of Israel - why there was no escape.

To make God's final offer of grace and strength to **individuals** - why there was hope.

**Scripture background:** 2 Kings 14:23-29; 15:8-12; 17:1-23

## OUTLINE

- I. The Life of Hosea 1 - 3
- II. The Message of Hosea 4 - 14
  - Israel's sin 4-7
  - Israel's judgment 8-10
  - Israel's forgiveness 11-14

## HISTORICAL SETTING IN ISRAEL

**Politically:** Instability and chaos Hosea 7:7; 12:1

There were 6 kings after Jeroboam II; 4 of the 6 were assassinated.

**Spiritually:** Breaking the 10 Commandments, drunkenness, seeking answers apart from God, idolatry and immorality.

Spiritual leaders were killing, robbing and encouraging people to sin Hosea 4:1-2, 11-14; 6:9; 4:8

It happened because there was no knowledge of God in the land.

God's people knew all about Him. But it was a knowledge with no relationship, obedience, thanksgiving.

There was no praise, awe, reverence or fear of consequences for disobedience.

## EXPLANATIONS

**Reason for book:** In the 23 years before His judgment comes, God wants everyone to know 4 things.

- Continued, willful disobedience is bringing **national** judgment to that generation and it cannot be stopped.
- God is grieving that He has to bring this judgment.
- **Individuals** will have God's grace and strength during the judgment if they respond to God now.
- In spite of judgment and exile, the Jews will be restored as a united nation in the future (in God's Kingdom).

**Reason for the picture language:** There are 2 very different ways of learning and teaching.

We learn and teach thru **factual concepts** and scientific observation. We state what we think is true. We give logical facts that we know or can prove. We arrive at a conclusion, which pulls everything together and explains it. The conclusion must be stated clearly and specifically. When pictures are used, their purpose is to illustrate facts.

Jews and Arabs in the Middle East, tribes people in Africa, Indians in South America - these people start with a **story, picture language or symbol**. With just a little explanation they automatically understand the conclusion. It never needs to be stated. Two examples are Aesop's fables, written in Greece 75 years after Hosea and the parables of Jesus.

In the days of Hosea, God knows His people will ask,

*If God has chosen and loved us, then why will He let us be destroyed as a nation?*

God answers their question in the most effective way possible.

He demonstrates it thru the life and experience of Hosea.

Please note: this book is *not* instruction for marriage; it is God's answer to the questions of Israel in the 700's B.C.

## DEFINITIONS and MEANINGS

**Idioms** are phrases which mean something different than the literal words. Example: *He sure had egg on his face*.

**Knowledge of God** means a relationship with God that produces a desire to obey, to praise and to thank Him.

There is awe and reverence of God Himself and fear of consequences for disobedience.



### DEVELOPED OUTLINE

**Life of Hosea:** God tells Hosea to marry a temple prostitute. Personally, I believe God sees a woman who wants to live differently. God answers *her* need by sending Hosea to rescue her. Hosea marries her and gives her a new name, a new way of life, a new beginning and a tremendous future. They have a boy. Later there is a girl and another boy, but Hosea is not the father. His wife is guilty of adultery. Some time later she leaves Hosea to go into prostitution. But the situation becomes impossible. She ends up in debt with no home and no money. In desperation she sells herself as a slave in the market place. She expects to be a slave the rest of her life.

During this time Hosea raises the 3 children alone. He is heartbroken, because he still loves his wife.

On the day his wife is in the market, offering herself as a slave, God tells Hosea to go, buy her and take her back to the house. Altho he loves her, there must be consequences for her adultery. God's law in the Old Testament said the penalty for adultery was death by stoning. God says, in mercy, her life can be spared. But she must live alone for a time, without marital relations with Hosea. Later there will be restoration.

**Message of Hosea:** Hosea is a picture of God; his wife is a picture of Abraham and the nation of Israel.

Hosea chose his wife who was physically giving herself to other men.

- God chose Abraham when he was spiritually giving himself to worship other gods Joshua 24:2
- From Abraham came the Jewish nation. They are called God's wife; He is called their husband.
- He gave them His name (God's people), a new way of life, a new beginning and a tremendous future.
- Israel has been unfaithful to God - she is guilty of spiritual adultery. 1:2
- God's heart breaks to see Israel's sin. 11:8 cf. Matt. 23:37
- God wanted to help Israel, but she would not listen

During her 208 yrs. of existence, the ministries of the prophets overlapped  
so there was never a time when God's message was not being given.

- Israel's sin will lead to her exile. 11:5
- God continues to love Israel, but there must be consequences for her actions.
- Israel will live outside the land or inside the land without peace and security, but God will wait for her. 3:3-4
- There will be national repentance, forgiveness and restoration of a united Israel in the future. 14:2-7

**APPLICATION:** The pattern that God used with Israel is also the pattern He uses with individuals today.

- \* If we are in His family, He gives us the family rules in Scripture and expects us to obey.  
He lets us know that if we willfully disobey, there will be consequences.  
For years and years He gives us teaching and explanations.  
He gives us blessings and mercy to encourage us.
- \* If we continue to disobey, He gives us warnings that are made just for us, so we cannot possibly miss them.  
If we ignore Him over an extended time, He sends smaller judgments to create a fear of His consequences.  
If our rebellion continues, with a breaking heart He sends severe consequences, but His love will always be there.
- \* If we repent, He will forgive, but some consequences are permanent.

As individuals, if we are following God, then in times of national judgment,

He guarantees we will have His grace and strength for any situation we have to face.

These are the patterns God uses. They are called **the ways of God**. Hosea says,

*Whoever is wise, let him understand these things. Whoever is intelligent, let him listen. The ways of the Lord are right. Those who follow God will walk in them, but the rebellious will stumble.*

