

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 7-15-12 PM Notes  
HOSEA  
#30 in Series, "The Glory of God in the Old Testament"

I. An Adulterous Wife and a Faithful Husband (Chapter 1-3)

A. God's Unusual Leading (1:1-2)

**James 4:4 (NKJV)** "Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God."

B. Gomer's Unfaithful Life (1:3 – 2:5)

C. Hosea's Unexplainable Love (2:6 – 3:5)

II. An Unfaithful Israel and a Faithful Lord (Chapter 4-14)

A. The Sin of Israel

1. A Faulty Knowledge of God

**Hosea 4:1 (NKJV)** "Hear the word of the Lord, you children of Israel, for the Lord *brings* a charge against the inhabitants of the land: There is no truth or mercy or knowledge of God in the land."

**Hosea 4:6 (NKJV)** "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children."

"It is impossible to keep our moral practices sound and our inward attitudes right while our idea of God is erroneous or inadequate... I believe there is scarcely an error in doctrine or a failure in applying Christian ethics that cannot be traced finally to imperfect and ignoble thoughts about God."

-A. W. Tozer

**Genesis 4:1a (NKJV)** "Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain..."

**Hosea 6:6 (NKJV)** "For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings."

**Daniel 11:32b (NKJV)** "...the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out *great exploits*."

2. Continual Backsliding

**Hosea 11:7 (NKJV)** "My people are bent on backsliding from Me. Though they call to the Most High, none at all exalt Him."

*Oh to grace, how great a debtor,  
Daily I'm constrained to be!  
Let Thy grace, Lord, like a fetter,  
Bind my wandering heart to Thee:  
Prone to wander, Lord I feel it,  
Prone to leave the God I love;  
Here's my heart Lord, take and seal it,  
Seal it for Thy courts above.*

- Robert Robinson (1758)

3. Practicing Idolatry

**Hosea 4:12 (NKJV)** "My people ask counsel from their wooden *idols*, and their staff informs them. For the spirit of harlotry has caused *them* to stray, and they have played the harlot against their God."

**Hosea 4:13 (NKJV)** "They offer sacrifices on the mountaintops, and burn incense on the hills, under oaks, poplars, and terebinths, because their shade *is* good. Therefore your daughters commit harlotry, and your brides commit adultery."

**Hosea 6:4 (NKJV)** "O Ephraim, what shall I do to you? O Judah, what shall I do to you? For your faithfulness is like a morning cloud, and like the early dew it goes away."

An idol is anything you love more than you love God, trust more than you trust God, or turn to instead of turning to God.

4. Ignoring God

**Hosea 5:13 (NKJV)** "When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah saw his wound, then Ephraim went to Assyria and sent to King Jareb; yet he cannot cure you, nor heal you of your wound."

**Hosea 7:11 (NKJV)** "Ephraim also is like a silly dove, without sense-- they call to Egypt, they go to Assyria."

**Hosea 8:9 (NKJV)** "For they have gone up to Assyria, *like* a wild donkey alone by itself; Ephraim has hired lovers."

**Hosea 10:13 (NKJV)** "You have plowed wickedness; you have reaped iniquity. You have eaten the fruit of lies, because you trusted in your own way, in the multitude of your mighty men."

B. The Judgment of Israel

1. Shame

**Hosea 4:7 (ESV)** "The more they increased, the more they sinned against me; I will change their glory into shame."

**Hosea 10:6 (NKJV)** "*The idol* also shall be carried to Assyria as a present for King Jareb. Ephraim shall receive shame, and Israel shall be ashamed of his own counsel."

2. The Withdrawn Presence of God

**Hosea 4:17 (NKJV)** "Ephraim *is* joined to idols, let him alone."

**Hosea 5:6 (NKJV)** "With their flocks and herds they shall go to seek the Lord, but they will not find *Him*; He has withdrawn Himself from them."

3. Oppression by the Enemy

**Hosea 11:5-6 (HCSB)** "<sup>5</sup> Israel will not return to the land of Egypt and Assyria will be his king, because they refused to repent. <sup>6</sup> A sword will whirl through his cities; it will destroy and devour the bars of his gates, because of their schemes."

4. Withheld Blessing

**Hosea 9:11-14 (NKJV)** "<sup>11</sup> *As for* Ephraim, their glory shall fly away like a bird-- no birth, no pregnancy, and no conception! <sup>12</sup> Though they bring up their children, yet I will bereave them to the last man. Yes, woe to them when I depart from them! <sup>13</sup> Just as I saw Ephraim like Tyre, planted in a pleasant place, so Ephraim will bring out his children to the murderer. <sup>14</sup> Give them, O Lord-- What will You give? Give them a miscarrying womb and dry breasts!"

C. The Restoration of Israel

**Hosea 11:4 (NKJV)** "I drew them with gentle cords, with bands of love, and I was to them as those who take the yoke from their neck. I stooped *and* fed them."

1. God Exhorts His People to Return to Him

**Hosea 10:12 (NKJV)** "Sow for yourselves righteousness; reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground, for *it is* time to seek the Lord, till He comes and rains righteousness on you."

**Hosea 14:1 (NKJV)** "O Israel, return to the Lord your God, for you have stumbled because of your iniquity".

2. Israel Will Be Restored

**Hosea 14:4 (NKJV)** "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely, for My anger has turned away from him."

**Hosea 14:8a (NKJV)** "Ephraim *shall say*, 'What have I to do anymore with idols?'"

## FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 7-15-12 PM

### HOSEA

#### #30 in Series, “The Glory of God in the Old Testament”

With the book of Hosea, we begin the final section of the Old Testament called “The Minor Prophets”. The word “minor” certainly doesn’t refer to their importance! Don’t think in terms of baseball – the minor leagues vs. the major leagues. “Minor” simply means “short”. These books are simply shorter in length than Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel (the Major Prophets). There is nothing minor about the message of the Minor Prophets.

Hosea seems to have been from the Northern Kingdom of Israel. We don’t know the exact dates that he prophesied, but it was probably close to the time that the Northern Kingdom was defeated by the Assyrians in 722 BC. Hosea was probably a contemporary of Isaiah who prophesied in the Southern Kingdom of Judah. Hosea’s message was directed to the people of the Northern Kingdom as they sinned their way toward national disaster.

There is probably no other book in the Old Testament that gives us greater insight into the love of God for His wayward people than does Hosea. We find a tension throughout this book between the love and the justice of God. When God carries out justice on the people of Israel, we see the compassion of His heart even in the meting out of that deserved judgment.

Let’s look a little at Hosea’s times in the Northern Kingdom of Israel. To understand the times helps us to understand God’s message. It was a time of material prosperity, seeming national security, and seeming religious devotion. Beneath the surface, however, the people were empty and shallow, and corruption could be found almost everywhere. Their religion was so shallow and so perverted that it angered God rather than pleased Him. The national security they thought that they had was an illusion because instead of trusting God, they trusted in foreign alliances. To summarize, the people had pretty much abandoned God and lived for themselves. Does that sound familiar? Into this false security, materialism, and phony religion come the prophet of God, Hosea.

#### I. An Adulterous Wife and a Faithful Husband (Chapter 1-3)

In this book we see something that seems unusual to us: Hosea’s life becomes the message that he preaches. His family life becomes a picture, an illustration of the message that God has for Israel.

##### A. God’s Unusual Leading (1:1-2) [Read]

Hosea was a young man and God gives him some strange instructions. Is God telling him to marry an immoral woman? Let’s look at the text a little more closely. Some Bible scholars disagree with what I am about to tell you, but I believe it best fits the text. As Hosea writes, he is looking back at how all of this began. While God certainly knows the future, I believe that Hosea is writing about what she became, not what she was when he married her. Notice that verse two speaks of “a wife of harlotry and children of harlotry”. Just as the children were not yet born when he married Gomer, she was not yet a harlot. She became a harlot after their marriage. However, God knew what she would become and yet He led Hosea to marry her. God’s ways sometimes seem strange to us, but they are always perfect. Don’t ever get the idea that if we follow God’s leading our way will be smooth and easy! I have known people who pray diligently about marrying a person. There are no obvious biblical principles violated in marrying this person, and they sense a peace from God about going ahead with the marriage. Then, after the wedding, they find out that their spouse is not who they thought they were. Did that person miss God? Not necessarily! Sometimes God allows His obedient children to be in a hard situation so that His child might be an example and an object lesson for the world as to the enabling and sustaining grace of God when in the midst of heart-breaking trials. Perhaps He desires to use your less than ideal marriage as a way of manifesting to the world the love of Christ for His church when the church is not really walking worthy of their calling. That is exactly what He did with Hosea. Hosea’s life pictures God, and Gomer’s prostitution pictures the spiritual adultery of God’s people against Him through loving the world and worshipping idols. We see that same symbolism in the New Testament in **James 4:4 (NKJV)** “Adulterers and

adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.” When we see Hosea’s broken heart over the unfaithfulness of his wife and the love he still has for her, we see a picture of God’s grief and yet continuing love for His own who are unfaithful to Him. We need to make sure that our views of what God will do and will not do fits with the Scriptures.

#### B. Gomer’s Unfaithful Life (1:3-2:5)

Hosea takes Gomer to be his wife and things seem to be going well. Soon a son is born to them. One of the unpleasant things about being the child of God’s prophet is that often God told the prophet to name their child something that had to do with what the prophet was prophesying. Verse 4 tells us that the boy’s name was Jezreel. That means “scattered” or “cast away”. Hosea’s son was to warn Israel of the time when the nation would be scattered among the other nations if they did not repent. Soon Gomer conceived again and bore a daughter. God told Hosea to name her “Lo-Ruhamah”. That name means “not pitied” or “not obtaining mercy”. God was saying to the people of Israel that there would come a time that if they did not repent that He would replace mercy with judgment. After Lo-Ruhamah was weaned, Gomer bore a third child – a boy named Lo-Ammi. That name meant “not mine”. I believe that this child’s name pictures the present time when ethnic Israel has been set aside for a time because of their sin and unbelief. Romans chapters 9 and 11 tell us that this setting aside is not permanent. What about the personal meaning of their names for Hosea? There are some hints as to what was going on with Gomer and Hosea. Notice the language relating to the first child in 1:3 [Read]. Notice a difference in the wording announcing the second child’s birth in Hosea 1:6 [read 1:6a]. There is nothing about Hosea as with the first child. Perhaps Hosea was already suspecting some things. It seems that by the time a third child was born that things were getting even worse [Read 1:8-9]. Again when “not mine” was born, there is no mention of Hosea.

It seems that Hosea stuck with his wife even though he knew what was going on. Things went from really bad to even worse [Read 2:2]. Finally, Gomer turns away completely from her husband and leaves Hosea. He is also left with the children – a single dad, and it seems that he knew that two of the three children were not his [Read 2:5]. She left for the party life.

#### C. Hosea’s Unexplainable Love (Chapter 2:6-3:5)

God will not allow things to go well with us when we commit spiritual adultery with the world system [Read 2:6-7a; 2:11-13]. Gomer went down, down, down until she hit rock bottom. When we get to chapter three, she is being sold as a slave on the open market. She has doubtlessly lost her beauty and desirability. In my mind, I can see her gaunt, sickly, and unwanted by her lovers. They have used her and cast her away. What a picture of the world system that makes glitzy promises and then leaves you destitute.

When we get to chapter three, we see something astounding that God tells Hosea to do [Read 3:1]. Remember that Hosea pictures God. What amazing love our God manifests! God says, “Hosea, love her in spite of what she has done”. Oh, the love of God! I say with Charles Wesley, “Amazing love, how can it be?” Possibly Gomer had been involved in some type of temple prostitution that was a part of idol worship. God told Hosea to buy her back out of the slave market of sin. You know what that is? It is shocking scandalous grace! This price that Hosea paid to redeem Gomer from slavery tells us how far she had sunk into sin. **Hosea 3:2 (NKJV)** “So I bought her for myself for fifteen *shekels* of silver, and one and one-half homers of barley.” Fifteen shekels was half the normal price of a slave and 1 ½ homers of barley was the daily ration of a slave. The point is that she was so undesirable that no one else wanted her. Gomer got her for half price and a day’s rations. Sin is like that. Someone said, “Sin will take you further than you want to go, keep you longer than you want to stay and cost you more than you want to pay”.

When Hosea bought Gomer from the slave market, he took her back home and loved her and cared for her as his wife. What amazing grace. What a picture of God’s radical love for us when we are so undeserving! In 3:3 there is what we would call a renewal of the vows [read 3:3]. Oh the glorious pursuing love of God!

## II. An Unfaithful Israel and a Faithful Lord (Chapter 4-14)

Beginning in chapter 4, the focus turns away from Hosea and his wife to the nation Israel and God Himself. As Gomer, Hosea's wife played the harlot being unfaithful to Hosea, even so the People of Israel played the spiritual harlot against God who is pictured as their husband. Someone called chapters 4-14 "A succession of sobs". The three themes of this part of Hosea are sin, judgment, and restoration.

### A. The Sin of Israel

No doubt many in Israel had pointed the finger at Hosea and the problems in his home with his wife, Gomer. Now, Hosea points his finger at them and says, "What Gomer did in the physical realm, you have done in the spiritual realm". Hosea levels four different accusations against the people of Israel. We will approach this last section of Hosea topically rather than in an expository manner. The sin of Israel was manifested in:

#### 1. A Faulty Knowledge of God

We read in **Hosea 4:1 (NKJV)** "Hear the word of the Lord, you children of Israel, for the Lord *brings* a charge against the inhabitants of the land: 'There is no truth or mercy or knowledge of God in the land.'" **Hosea 4:6 (NKJV)** "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children."

The word used in Hosea that is translated knowledge is from the Hebrew word *yadah*. This word as it is used in the passages we just read speaks of intimate, experiential, relationship type knowledge. It was even used of the intimate physical act of marriage. For instance, we read in **Genesis 4:1a (NKJV)** "Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain..." It is the lack of this intimate relationship knowledge of God that Hosea points out as the sin of Israel. To the Israelites, God had become simply a concept, a far away deity. God desires a love relationship with His people and it is sin when we trivialize and marginalize that relationship so that it becomes no more than empty ritual. **Hosea 6:6 (NKJV)** "For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings." Let's make this personal. I agonize because I believe that we as a church are as guilty of this as was Israel in Hosea's day. We learn the facts; we go through the motions, but how much real knowledge of God is there? How much intimacy with God is there? Could this lack of truly, intimately knowing Him be the reason that we see so little of the power of God in our church? **Daniel 11:32b (NKJV)** "...but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out *great exploits*." We can say the opposite of this verse – "The people who do not know their God will be powerless and fruitless".

#### 2. Continual Backsliding

**Hosea 11:7 (NKJV)** "My people are bent on backsliding from Me. Though they call to the Most High, none at all exalt *Him*." These sins of Israel are connected. When there is little intimate knowing of God, it is natural to backslide. That word means to turn back from God. The word "bent" speaks of continual action. When we are not walking in intimate relationship with Him the default mode is to backslide, to turn away from His Word and His person, and His ways. In 1758 Robert Robinson said it well in a poem but to music that we sometimes sing:

*Oh to grace, how great a debtor,  
Daily I'm constrained to be!  
Let Thy grace, Lord, like a fetter  
Bind my wandering heart to Thee:  
Prone to wander, Lord I feel it,  
Prone to leave the God I love;  
Here's my heart Lord, take and seal it,  
Seal it for Thy courts above.*

- Robert Robinson (1758)

Let me give you the backsliding test. If there has ever been a time in your life that you loved God more than you love Him now, you are backslidden. It was their continual backsliding that brought the judgment of God upon the Israelites.

### 3. Practicing Idolatry

**Hosea 4:12 (NKJV)** “My people ask counsel from their wooden *idols*, and their staff informs them. For the spirit of harlotry has caused *them* to stray, and they have played the harlot against their God.” Idolatry is spiritual adultery. **Hosea 4:13 (NKJV)** “They offer sacrifices on the mountaintops, and burn incense on the hills, under oaks, poplars, and terebinths, because their shade *is* good. Therefore your daughters commit harlotry, and your brides commit adultery.” **Hosea 6:4 (NKJV)** “O Ephraim, what shall I do to you? O Judah, what shall I do to you? For your faithfulness is like a morning cloud, and like the early dew it goes away.” When we no longer walk in an intimate “knowing” relationship with God, we begin a continual backsliding. Something creeps in to fill that void and it is idolatry. For us it may not be offering literal sacrifices on the high places or bowing before a golden calf, but our idols are just as real. An idol is anything or anyone you love more than you love God, trust more than you trust God, or turn to for what God told you to turn to him for.

### 4. Ignoring God

Now, instead of looking to God as their supply, their protection, their security, they looked elsewhere. **Hosea 5:13 (NKJV)** “When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah *saw* his wound, then Ephraim went to Assyria and sent to King Jareb; yet he cannot cure you, nor heal you of your wound.” **Hosea 7:11 (NKJV)** “Ephraim also is like a silly dove, without sense-- they call to Egypt, they go to Assyria.” **Hosea 8:9 (NKJV)** “For they have gone up to Assyria, *like* a wild donkey alone by itself; Ephraim has hired lovers.” **Hosea 10:13 (NKJV)** “You have plowed wickedness; you have reaped iniquity. You have eaten the fruit of lies, because you trusted in your own way, in the multitude of your mighty men.” This is the final manifestation of sin. God is now irrelevant. I have seen individuals go through this process and it is heart breaking!

There are many other sins that Hosea points out but most fit under one of these four categories.

#### B. The Judgment of Israel

Sin always has consequences. Sometimes the judgment of God on our sin is to just allow us to suffer the natural consequences of our sin.

##### 1. Shame

**Hosea 4:7 (ESV)** “The more they increased, the more they sinned against me; I will change their glory into shame.” **Hosea 10:6 (NKJV)** *The idol* also shall be carried to Assyria *as* a present for King Jareb. Ephraim shall receive shame, and Israel shall be ashamed of his own counsel.” The Hebrew word translated “shame” means dishonor, confusion, and to be confounded. Sin always brings shame and that is a part of the judgment of God on sin.

##### 2. The Withdrawn Presence of God

**Hosea 4:17 (NKJV)** “Ephraim *is* joined to idols, let him alone.” **Hosea 5:6 (NKJV)** “With their flocks and herds they shall go to seek the Lord, but they will not find *Him*; He has withdrawn Himself from them.” Here is the scariest judgment on sin that I can imagine. I know that God is omnipresent. What I am speaking of is the manifest presence of God – our awareness of His presence. If you have ever walked in the manifest presence of God, it is misery to be without it. If a church experiences the manifest presence of God, they can’t continue on without it. God’s manifest presence will not co-exist with sin.

##### 3. Oppression by the Enemy

**Hosea 11:5-6 (HCSB)** “<sup>5</sup> Israel will not return to the land of Egypt and Assyria will be his king, because they refused to repent. <sup>6</sup> A sword will whirl through his cities; it will destroy and devour the bars of his gates, because of their schemes.” For Israel, the national enemy was Assyria, but the ultimate enemy of every nation and individual is Satan himself. One result of sin is that we are vulnerable to the enemy to be oppressed by him and his demon army. Sin always leads to some type of oppression. On the personal level it may be addiction, loss of health, etc. On the national level it may be economic woes, repression by another nation, or inner turmoil. Our ultimate enemy will be behind it.

##### 4. Withheld Blessing

**Hosea 9:11-14 (NKJV)** “<sup>11</sup> *As for* Ephraim, their glory shall fly away like a bird-- no birth, no pregnancy, and no conception! <sup>12</sup> Though they bring up their children, yet I will bereave them to the last

man. Yes, woe to them when I depart from them! <sup>13</sup> Just as I saw Ephraim like Tyre, planted in a pleasant place, so Ephraim will bring out his children to the murderer. <sup>14</sup> Give them, O Lord-- What will You give? Give them a miscarrying womb and dry breasts!" Those blessings taken for granted such as children, national peace, and others are taken away as the result of our sin. I don't mean that the person who loses a child suffers that because of their sin; I am speaking on a national level as to the nation's judgment for sin.

When we sin without repentance, there will be judgment.

### C. The Restoration of Israel

The heart of God is a heart of compassion. He desires to restore His people. **Hosea 11:4 (NKJV)** "I drew them with gentle cords, with bands of love, and I was to them as those who take the yoke from their neck. I stooped *and* fed them." God loves His people with a powerful love. God loves YOU and desires that walk with Him and value Him above all things.

#### 1. God Exhorts His People to return to Him

**Hosea 10:12 (NKJV)** "Sow for yourselves righteousness; reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground, for *it is* time to seek the Lord, till He comes and rains righteousness on you." **Hosea 14:1 (NKJV)** "O Israel, return to the Lord your God, for you have stumbled because of your iniquity".

#### 2. Israel Will Be Restored

All of chapter 14 deals with this promised restoration of Israel. I believe that this will happen at Christ's return, but it will happen. **Hosea 14:4 (NKJV)** "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely, for My anger has turned away from him." **Hosea 14:8a (NKJV)** "Ephraim *shall say*, 'What have I to do anymore with idols?'"

### Conclusion

God desires for you to walk in intimate communion with Him. He desires for you to walk in a love relationship with Him. Sin robs us of that walk. God's heart is for you, that you be restored from idolatry and backsliding. Come to Him in repentance.