

HOSEA: COVENANT JUDGMENT AND LOVE

(RE-INTRODUCTION)



- ❖ **** Foundation of *Morality***: Culture? God's People (*a fortiori*): Biblical or Secular *Worldview*?
- ❖ **** Honoring *Covenants***? (~ *Compact* → Rights and Responsibilities)
 - U.S. Culture?
 - Constitution → **Quote** (John Adams): Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.
 - Marriage (Contracts/Treaties—**Illus**: Seal)
 - Church Culture? Biblical or Secular Influence?
- ❖ **** Love?**
 - Our/Culture's Definition (Personal/Subjective/Transactional)? Our *Experience*?
 - God's Definition → Based on His **Covenants** (Objective Word/Transformational) → Biblical Covenants (~ means of establishing and defining a relationship—promises and responsibilities):
 - Noahic ~ stabilize the “nest”
 - Abrahamic ~ Personal/Family: Seed/Land/Blessing
 - Mosaic ~ National: Special Treasure/Law (Pentateuch) → ****Covenant Stipulations**
 - Davidic ~ Dynastic: Throne/Seed → Messiah
 - New ~ “Community” (*in Christ*): Grace/Peace → Obedience/Enjoyment
- ❖ **Text**: **Hosea 1:1** (OT) **Deuteronomy 4:20-31**
- ❖ **Series Big Idea**: God's *covenant* with His people—reflecting His *holiness* and *love*—must be central to our daily lives. Simple? We make it difficult...

THE SITUATION

- ❖ **Context and Background**:
 - Biblical: ****2 Kings 14:23-15:38, 17:1-6**
 - Historical:
 - International: Reenergized Assyria (~ after decline while fighting Urartu in the north, weak kings—**Jonah**)
 - National: Prosperity/Power/Privilege (abused!) → Godlessness and Neglect of the Law (Torah) → International Contact - Alliances - Cosmopolitan - Polytheism - Syncretism - Idolatry - No Central Worship
 - NB: Affected both Israel and Judah ~ Jeroboam II (793-753 BC—**2 Kings 14:24**) and Uzziah (792-740 BC)
 - Result: Political/Dynastic Instability (6 Kings ~ 30 years—****Dates**: Edwin Thiele)
 - Zechariah (753 BC—6 months → assassinated)
 - Shallum (752 BC—1 month → assassinated)
 - Menahem (752-742 BC—10 years) ~ Tribute to Pul (Tiglath-Pileser) in Assyria
 - Pekahiah (742-740 BC—2 years → assassinated)
 - Pekah (752*-732 BC—8 years → assassinated) ~ War (Ally: Rezin of Syria) against Judah (Syro-Ephraimite War) → Ahaz asked Tiglath-Pileser of Assyria for aid
 - Hoshea (732-722 BC) ~ Vassal/Tribute to Shalmaneser V of Assyria (**2 Kings 17:3**) → Conspired with Egypt → Taken captive
 - ◆ Sargon II (722 BC) ~ Besieged Samaria → Captivity of Israel (“10 Lost Tribes”—**2 Kings 17:6**)
 - **Summary**: Period of Pagan Worship – Cultural Decay – Political Instability – Captivity!
- ❖ **Author** (Who?): *Hosea* (“Salvation”—Joshua, Jesus) *the son of Beeri*
 - Audience: (Primarily) Israel (also called Ephraim) → Judah mentioned
 - Provenance: (Prob.) Capital of Samaria (**1 Kings 16:24**) or “Religious Center” of Bethel (**1 Kings 12:28-33**)
- ❖ **Date** (When?): ~ 755-710 BC (based on the kings of Israel and Judah mentioned)
 - Other Prophets Active: **Jonah, Amos, Micah, Isaiah**
 - NB: Hosea prophesied during the reigns of more kings than any other prophet

- ❖ **Purpose** (Why?): To pronounce the:
 - Imminent curses and **judgment** on God's people (Israel) because they have disregarded (broken) His covenant (~ SIN of the *faithless* "mother and children")
 - NB: Not a popular message (Then and Now!?)
 - Future blessings and salvation of the LORD's people because of His covenant **love** for them (~ GRACE of the *Faithful* Father)
 - NB: Not an understood message (Then and Now!?)
 - **Important Themes:**
 - Mosaic Covenant ~ Blessings and Curses (20 of 27 mentioned!)
 - Marriage Analogy ~ Exclusive Relationship! (Experience Betrayal and Passion)
 - Redemption ~ "2nd Exodus"
- ❖ **Outline** (How?—Cycles ~ Important!):
 - Structure:
 - Introduction/Superscription **Hosea 1:1**
 - Personal: Wife (-) and Husband (+) **Hosea 1:2-3:5**
 - National: Israel (-) and LORD (+) **Hosea 4:1-14:8**
 - Wisdom Epilogue **Hosea 14:9**
 - Style:
 - Prophetic Oracles (~ sovereign wisdom/authoritative message from God)
 - Poetic Imagery (~ Metaphors/Simile/Wordplay)
 - Text: Difficult Hebrew ~ Northern Dialect (*hapax legomena*) ** Reflected in Translations
 - Terms:
 - Prostitute/Prostitution (16x)
 - Return (23x)
 - *Hesed* (6x)
 - Abandon (1x)
 - Love (16x—11x wrt neg. Israel)
 - Know (18x)
 - Egypt (13x—wrt foreign captivity and deliverance)
 - Assyria (9x)
 - **Transition:** *Prolegomena* → Help establish Meaning and Significance of the text.

THE SCRIPTURE (MEANING AND SIGNIFICANCE)

- ❖ **Introduction/Superscription** **Hosea 1:1**
 - Context: Author (Hosea) and the Background (listed Kings)
 - *word of the LORD* ~ Divine Oracles
 - **Transition:** Message for us?

THE SO WHAT? (APPLICATION)

- ❖ **Revelation** (*Theology*)
 - God's Word (Law/Covenant): Understanding? Importance? Authority?
 - ** Impact on Life

❖ **Religion** (*Anthropology*)

- Secular Culture (Cf. *Interpreting the Prophetic Word*, Willem VanGemeren): Man/Self-Centered → gods → world (~ Secular/ Humanism) → ** Syncretism
 - *Realpolitik* ~ Power Politics/Pragmatism (Illus: Bismarck)
 - *vox populi* ~ Popular (~ PC)/Relative Values/Opinions (cf. *demagogues*)
- **Question:** Which is master? “*And do not be **conformed to this world**, but be **transformed by the renewing of your mind**, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*” **Romans 12:2**

❖ **Judgment** (*Hamartiology*)

- SIN – Breaking the Covenant – *Faithless* (“Mother” Church)
- ** *Temporal Experience* (Lessons of Discipline)

❖ **Love and Grace** (*Soteriology*)

- GRACE – Hope – Salvation – *hesed* – *Faithful* (Heavenly Father)
- ** *Eternal Experience* (Hope and Passion!)

❖ **So Far in Hosea** (Where we’ve been...):

- *Family Problems* (**Hosea 1:2-2:1**) → Hosea’s family problems are a picture of God’s relationship with Israel ~ **Big Idea:** Sin brings deserved judgment, but God’s grace brings hope and restoration.
- *Confronting Unfaithfulness* (**Hosea 2:2-23**) → Spiritual adultery has consequences and requires judgment/discipline that leads to restoration ~ **Big Idea:** Unfaithfulness demands judgment and discipline, but love provides restoration.
- *Restoration* (**Hosea 3:1-5**) → God’s love forgives, redeems, and is forever ~ **Big Idea:** Love restores broken relationships.
- *Results of Rejecting Knowledge* (**Hosea 4:1-19**) → Lack of knowing God is exacerbated by apostate priests and leads to debauched worship and its consequences ~ **Big Idea:** When we reject a knowledge of God, it has catastrophic consequences on our lives.
- *Decay and Conflict* (**Hosea 5:1-14**) → The decay of bad leadership/decisions brings immorality and human-based solutions ~ **Big Idea:** Cultural and spiritual decay bring conflict and judgment.

❖ **Conclusion**

- ** Relevant for our times? Culture and Church →
 - Period of Pagan Worship – Cultural Decay – Political Instability
 - Economic Prosperity – Spiritual Poverty (Idolatry) – Accommodation (Syncretism)

❖ **Series Big Idea:** God’s *covenant* with His people—reflecting His *holiness* and *love*—must be central to our daily lives.

- **Hosea** addresses these “Opposite Extremes” (Judgment and Love) ~ The *New Covenant* (JESUS—Advent: Light and Darkness) → ** Practical for us today!

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