

Outline of Hosea

1-3	Hosea's Marriage Adulterous Wife Yet Faithful Husband
4-13	Hosea's Message Adulterous Nation Yet Faithful God
14	Love's Ultimate Restoration

Author

Hosea 1:1 identifies the author as the Prophet Hosea. He prophesied for some time (785 to 725 BC). The book was likely written between 755 and 715 BC. Hosea's name means "Salvation of Jehovah". This is likely a reference to Hosea as a beacon of hope to those who will repent and turn to God. Hosea was the only writing prophet to come from the northern kingdom of Israel.

Summary

Hosea lived in the tragic final days of the northern kingdom of Israel. It was also a time of material prosperity unequalled since Solomon (2Ch.26:2, 6-15; 2Ki.14:25-28). The people had more than food on the table. They had many forms of recreation and distractions. These distractions came as worship of idols. This was the big issue with Israel. Because of the disloyalty of Hoshea (Pekah's successor), Samaria was captured and its people exiled (722 BC).

The book of Hosea is very powerful because he ministered out of his deep personal emotion. His intellectual appeals to Israel of his day arose out of the great personal tragedy in his own life. He appreciated the pain God

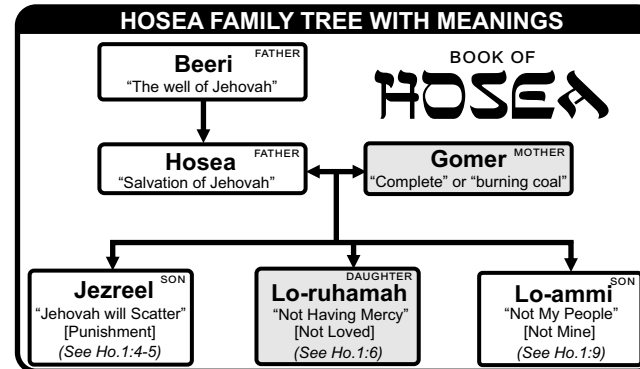
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Though the symbolic presentation of the marriage of Hosea and Gomer, God's love for the idolatrous nation of Israel is displayed in a rich metaphor in the themes of sin, judgment, and forgiving love.

felt over his own wife's unfaithfulness.

Message

God ordered Hosea to marry an adulterous wife, Gomer, and their three children were each given a symbolic name representing part of the ominous message. He was ordered to continue to love her though she



would be unfaithful. Gomer represented the nation of Israel. She had been disloyal to him by worshiping Canaanite deities as the source of their abundance. Thus Israel would go through a period of exile (7:16; 9:3,6,17; 11:5). The more light (revelation from God) people have, the greater their responsibility (Ro.1-3). They had experienced more blessing than any other people on earth, yet they sinned against God's love as well as against His light. Hosea saw the failure of Israel to acknowledge God as their basic problem (4:1,6; 8:2-3; 13:4). God, however,

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continued a relationship of love toward them (2:19; 4:1; 6:6; 10:12; 12:6). Disloyalty to God was spiritual adultery (4:13-14; 5:4; 9:1). Israel had turned to Baal worship and had sacrificed at the pagan high places. This included associating with "sacred prostitutes" at the sanctuaries (4:14). The book assures us of God's unconditional love for His people. It also is a picture of how God is dishonored and angered by the actions of His children.

Hosea's message must be understood against the instruction of Deuteronomy 28. This is the covenant between the Lord and Israel. Obedience would bring blessing (Du.28:1-4), and disobedience would bring judgment and eventual exile (Du.28:15-68). His own reconciliation illustrates Israel's ultimate restoration. The three great revelations of sin, judgment, and love is the living message of Hosea. The book illustrates that no one is outside God's offer of forgiveness.



CHRIST IN HOSEA

- Ho.3:5 refers to "David their king" in the "latter days" which could be literal David, or Christ Himself who we know will rule as the One from the line of David (Is.9:7; Ps.132:11; 1Ki.8:25).