

Hosea Lesson 1 Chapters 1-3 | 12/29/12

- Overview
 - What we are going to examine today is how having sin in our lives creates a broken relationship with God. When you step back and think of the big picture we as Christians know that God is the creator and ruler of all things including us. We want to please God, we want God to bless us and we want to spend eternity with him. So you would think that logically speaking we would do anything we could to sustain that relationship because we want to be blessed. We certainly would not want to do something that God would not like we would always strive to be obedient. Well unfortunately us being human we do things that cause God to not be happy with us and that of course is sin.
 - We are going to look at the book of Hosea and see examples that show how our sin puts up a barrier between us and God and that a broken relationship could very well cause us to even miss out on some blessings that God would love to give us.
 - Like a parent who isn't going to reward their child for doing wrong and being disobedient we too get the same treatment.
- Hosea Background
 - Timeline
 - Hosea's prophetic career spanned at least 40 years 750-710 B.C.?
 - Message and Purpose
 - Indictment:
 - According to Hosea, Israel sinned in four ways.
 - Violated basic covenant requirements of faithfulness by rejecting knowledge of God and his Law.
 - They were engaged in idolatry, harlotry and cult prostitution.
 - Put their faith in kings, princes and warriors rather than God.
 - Guilty of injustice and violence including murder, theft, lying and oppression.
 - Instruction:
 - Through Hosea the Lord told the people to stop their promiscuity, idolatry, and iniquity and to return back to God with humility and faithfulness toward the law of the covenant.
 - Judgment:
 - Hosea told Israel that their present condition (which wasn't good) was because the Lord had abandoned them and that further discipline would come. This would include foreign domination, exile, destruction, desolation and death.
 - After King Jeroboam died in 753 B.C. Israel ran through 6 kings in 30 years, four of whom were assassinated. Assyria regained power during this time and Israel was pretty much doomed. Hosea and Amos messages both made clear that the real reason for Israel's falling was God's judgment on Israel for their sins.
 - Hope:
 - Hosea reminded Israel of the Lord's grace and love in making them a people, and all of his blessings in the past. He reminded them that God was their only hope and his ways were right.
 - The Lord also assured them that in response to their repentance and faith he would again have compassion on them and redeem them.
- Hosea 1:1-2 (*Read verses 1-2*)

- In verse 2 we see a strange command from God
 - Hosea 2:2
 - “When the Lord first spoke to Hosea, He said this to him: Go and marry a promiscuous wife and have children of promiscuity, for the land is committing blatant acts of promiscuity by abandoning the Lord.
 - This of course seems very odd as we know that God was very much against this as he initiated the sacred bond of marriage between one man and one woman.
 - Genesis 2:24
 - “This is why a man leaves his father and mother and bonds with his wife, and they become one flesh.”
 - The Bible is also very clear that the sexual act can only take place between a man and his wife and no others.
 - This seems very odd but the reason for this was that God had Hosea do this as a symbolic representation of Israel’s unfaithfulness to God.
 - So as we study these first 3 chapters of Hosea we will see a comparison between God and his people to that of a husband and his wife drawing a parallel between spiritual and marital unfaithfulness.
 - We see this with the scripture “committing blatant acts of promiscuity by abandoning the Lord” so we are in a sense committing adultery against the Lord.
- Hosea 1:3-11, 2:1
 - So in verse 3 we see that Hosea obeyed God’s command and married Gomer
 - The promiscuous wife
 - Her name was Gomer
 - Most likely she was engaged in the sexual immoral behavior that was associated with Baal worship and she also continued her immoral ways even after their marriage.
 - She bore him 3 children and God assigned them names that were actually prophetic pronouncements
 - Jezreel (*Read V.4-5*)
 - His name means “God Scatters” and conveyed a message of divinely sent disaster on Israel’s Northern Kingdom.
 - No Compassion – Lo-Ruhamah (*Read V.6-7*)
 - This name as it is translated “No Compassion” signifies a similar idea of coming judgment and that by the continual unfaithfulness of Israel God was not going to show them compassion or his love.
 - Not My People – Lo-Ammi (*Read V.8-9*)
 - His name signifies the broken covenant between the Lord and the people of Israel.
 - We can see here that these children started off life already being called “children of promiscuity” so the paternity of Gomers children would be questioned.
 - These children then bore the shame of their mother’s behavior while at the same time representing the shameful behavior and divine condemnation of the children of Israel.
 - This plays out today in our present time as well.
 - **Do you see children suffer today because of their parent’s sinful behavior?**
 - God does give hope however in verses 10-11 as the judgments expressed in the children’s names are reversed.
 - Read V.10-11, 2:1 (Read)

- “Yet the number of the Israelites will be like the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or counted. And in the place where they were told: You are not my people, they will be called: Sons of the living God. And the Judeans and the Israelites will be gathered together. They will appoint for themselves a single ruler and go up from the land. For the day of Jezreel will be great. Call your brothers: My People and your sisters: compassion.”
- So as we have seen countless times in the OT the Israelites do good for a while then fall down get punished and eventually get back up again.
- Israel will once again be God’s people and they will receive compassion.
- Hosea 2:2-5 (*Read v. 2-5*)
 - Verse 2
 - Hosea is speaking to his children here and is telling them to rebuke their mother. This is because the mother was of course behaving promiscuously and he was commanding his children to rebuke their mother because what she was doing was wrong.
 - What Hosea is really getting at however is the relationship between the common people of Israel and Israel’s leadership or the synagogue who were worshiping idols (among other things).
 - **I think that today in our society we see this all the time. Where our government and leadership are “evolving” on what is right and wrong, where opinions overrule truth.**
 - Piers Morgan-Rick Warren
 - Truth VS Lie
 - Genesis 3:1-4 Satan’s first recorded lie
 - So like a child wanting to imitate their mother so the people of Israel were doing what their leaders were doing which was evil.
 - So Hosea of course didn’t want his children imitating the promiscuity of their mother, so he tells them to rebuke her.
 - This was actually an act of grace towards her as she was given a chance to change from her adulteress ways.
 - Just as being an adulteress was punishable by death Hosea was giving her another chance, so likewise God was giving the people of Israel a warning and a chance to turn things around.
 - This reveals to us the heart of God that he wants to give us an opportunity to make things right and to turn from our sinful ways.
 - **What if he did not do this for us?**
 - Verse 3
 - We see a prophetic warning to the people of Israel.
 - We have a description of a husband humiliating his wife by removing her clothes.
 - For Israel the description depicted that the Lord would bring humiliating defeats to the nation, which of course would bring great loss of resources and prestige.
 - We also see reference to God withholding rain which was done in Lev, Deut and 1 Kings.
 - Verse 4
 - So we talked about this earlier already that children born under these circumstances were considered illegitimate and would have been banned from the Lord’s assembly.
 - Deuteronomy 23:2

- “No one of illegitimate birth may enter the Lord’s assembly; none of his descendants, even to the tenth generation, may enter the Lord’s assembly”
 - So we see that these children were at a disadvantage because of the sins of their mother.
 - On a national level many of Israel’s citizens had identified themselves with pagan Gods. So they were Israel’s children but they were not God’s children.
 - In their idolatry they stood outside the Lord’s mercies and had no reason to expect to receive his compassion.
- Verse 5
 - Gomer in all of her sin thought that her illegitimate lovers were the source of all her material possessions and that these material possessions made her happy.
 - She was much like the pitiful church at Laodicea in Revelations.
 - Revelations 3:17
 - “Because you say ‘I’m rich; I have become wealthy and need nothing,’ and you don’t know that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind, and naked,”
 - Gomer thought she was rich in her possessions however she was wretched and just pitiful.
 - Gomer’s sins in a sense were Israel’s sins. Like Gomer the Israelites would pay a huge price for their sins.
- Verses 6-23 Summary
 - Punishment
 - God the true source of the Israelites well-being would bring this delusional thinking crashing down.
 - He would devastate the land and punish the nation because the people like Gomer forgot their Lord.
 - Hosea 2:12-13
 - Grace in the end
 - In the end however the Lord would take back his wife in righteousness, justice, love, and compassion
 - Hosea 2:19
 - “I will take you to be my wife forever. I will take you to be my wife in righteousness, justice, love, and compassion.”
 - He will remove the names of the Baal’s from her mouth Hosea 2:17
 - He will give the Israelites a gateway of hope so the people would once again call the Lord “My God”
 - Hosea 2:15,23
 - **We should be thankful that God does this with us as well**
- Hosea 3:1-5 (*Read 1-5*)
 - Verse 1
 - Here we see that the Lord has asked Hosea to do something very hard, to show love to his wife who has been frequently cheating on him and sinning against God.
 - But God did not ask Hosea to do something that he had not already done, as the Lord love the Israelites though they turn to other gods and love raisin cakes.
 - We see the heart of God here in this statement and it has some similarities to Romans 5:6-8
 - Romans 5:6-8

- “For while we were still helpless, at the appointed moment, Christ died for the ungodly. For rarely will someone die for a just person though for a good person perhaps someone might even dare to die. But God proves His own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us!
- Verse 2
 - Although the initial reading of this verse it may seem odd or un-substantial the statement that he bought Gomer his wife for 15 shekels of silver and five bushels of barley.
 - Bible scholars assume here that Gomer had left Hosea at some point chasing her lovers and ended up becoming enslaved to pay her debts.
 - The amount that Hosea paid was significant for that time period and could very well have been all that he owned.
- Verse 3
 - So Hosea gives his wife a couple of great gifts and direction. That they would be together for many days so he expected them to live together as husband and wife and we would care for her and that she was to quit her promiscuous behavior and he would act the same to her.
- Verse 4
 - Here we see the comparison with the Israelites that just as Gomer was to no longer be promiscuous the Israelites were to live many days without a king with our sacrifice and without their idols.
 - The Israelites had put all of these things above God, they trusted in their earthly king more than their heavenly King.
 - They worshiped other Gods instead of the one true God.
 - History shows us that kingship for Israel ended when the Assyrians conquered Israel’s Northern Kingdom in 722 BC the people’s idolatry following their exile.
 - They would seek God during this time of exile.
- Verse 5
 - Hosea then prophetically foresaw that they Israelites would again seek the Lord their God.
 - This prophecy was fulfilled by their return from exile.
 - This passage also looks beyond the OT and at the coming of Christ
- Closing
 - The big picture is we need to realize that our sins create a broken relationship with God.
 - We see a glimpse of God’s heart from this story and we know that when we have broken that relationship, he gives us the opportunity to come back although there are consequences.