

I. NAME AND PERSONALITY OF THE PROPHET.

- A. The name *Hosea* means "salvation" or "deliverance."
- B. His work covered a period of 40 years or better.
- C. He was from the northern kingdom and is the only writing prophet of Israel.
- D. Hosea has been called the prophet of love.
- E. Hosea is best known for his unfailing love for Gomer even while she played the harlot while married to Hosea.
- F. Hosea speaks of Ephraim some 37 times in making reference to the entire Israelite nation.

II. DATE OF THE BOOK AND OF THE PROPHET.

- A. Date of the book: 750-735BC.
- B. During the preaching of Hosea the social and moral life of Israel was as equally chaotic as its political life.
- C. Sacred prostitution (harlotry), bestiality, and drunkenness were destroying family life.
- D. Israel's blacklist of sins were; falsehood (4:1), licentiousness (4:11), murder (5:2), robbery (7:1), and oppression (12:7).
- E. Israel lacked the following four things:
 - 1. Knowledge (4:1-2, 6; 6:3, 6; 8:12).
 - 2. A trust in God (5:13; 7:11; 8:5; 11:5-7).
 - 3. Leadership (4:4-6; 6:8-9; 9:7; 7:5-7).
 - 4. Love for God (Chapters 1-3; 11:1-4).
- F. The book of Hosea is both a prophecy and a poem; one of the most difficult of the prophets, but also a book of evangelical nature.

III. OUTLINES OF THE BOOK OF HOSEA.

- A. Simple outline:
 - I. Hosea's Personal Experiences (1:1-3:5).
 - A. His first marriage to adulterous Gomer (1:1-2:23).
 - B. His remarriage to Gomer (3:1-5).
 - II. The Prophet's Message to Israel.
 - A. The indictment of Israel (4:1-7:16).
 - B. Israel to be punished for her sins (8:1-10:15).
 - C. God's love for Israel (11:1-14:9).
- B. Supplemental Thoughts:
 - 1. Hosea stands for God (A loving, patient husband).
 - 2. Gomer stands for the nation of Israel (the lustful, immoral wife).
 - 3. Jezreel, Lo-Ruhamah, and Lo-Ammi (the individual Jews -- the scattered, un-pitied, and rejected).
- C. Seven Steps to Israel's Doom (Chapters 4-13).
 - 1. Lack of knowledge (4:6-11).
 - 2. Pride (5:5).
 - 3. Instability (6:4).
 - 4. Worldliness (7:8).
 - 5. Corruption (9:9).
 - 6. Backsliding (11:7).
 - 7. Idolatry (13:2).
- D. Israel's Future Hope (Chapter 14). This is a great chapter in the Bible for backsliders.

IV. THE THEME AND THE MESSAGE OF THE BOOK OF HOSEA.

- A. The theme of the book of Hosea is: **God is a God of Righteousness and love.**
- B. The message of the book of Hosea is: **Doom--due to lack of knowledge of God's nature.**
- C. The teachings of the book:
 - 1. The picture and true nature of God:
 - a. God is a great and unceasing lover.
 - b. God is a great sufferer who has found His love unrequited.
 - 2. The picture of the true nature of sin:
 - a. Sin in the final analysis is unfaithfulness, infidelity, and whoredom.
 - b. Sin ages a person and destroys their youthful spirit.
 - c. Sin is contagious.
 - d. Sin's effects are as certain and as natural as the power of gravity.
 - e. Sin robs a people of the power to make good moral distinctions.
 - 3. The picture of true repentance:

To Hosea, repentance is no mere change in the direction of one's life. It is a turning back upon one's self, a retracing of one's footsteps and a confession with acknowledgment of what one has abandoned.

V. PRACTICAL LESSONS OF PERMANENT VALUE.

- A. Without the knowledge of Jehovah and His law there can be no fellowship with God. See 1Jn. 1:5-7.
- B. The sacredness and sanctity of the marriage relationship.
- C. Sin destroys the nerve that enables men to make good moral distinctions.
- D. Inward corruption is more dangerous to a nation's existence than external enemies.
- E. The root of sin from which all others spring is unfaithfulness to Jehovah.
- F. Ignorance is not bliss, ignorance is damnation.

VI. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS.

- A. From what you know about the prophets, does being a prophet seem like a glamorous job to you? Explain.
- B. What might Hosea have been thinking or feeling through it all? What about Gomer?
- C. If Hosea and Gomer were your neighbors, what advice would you give Hosea? How does "tough love" fit into the message of the book of Hosea? What is the real point of the marriage of Hosea and Gomer?
- D. Hosea mentions an increase in lawsuits. Why would lawsuits be a sign of sin?
- E. God disciplines us "so that we may share His holiness" (Heb. 12:10). What were some aspects of God's discipline in Hosea's time? How does he discipline a contemporary believer in our country today?
- F. What are some experiences you have had in your walk with the Lord where you wanted to be rescued from suffering but not necessarily cleansed from your sin?
- G. God wanted to gather his people to himself, but they maintained their distance. Why are we often not willing to be drawn close to the Lord?
- H. Why are words so important in genuine repentance (14:2)? Why are words alone not enough? What else is important and why?