

December 15, 2013 Sermon Application handout

“Hosea’s Difficult Life”

Hosea 1:1-9

I. Hosea’s B_____

1. Before you begin, take time to pray and thank God for His mercy and grace.
2. Read Hosea 1:1-11 and make some general observations. How is Hosea introduced? Who was King of Israel during his day? List out the names of Hosea’s family. What was Hosea’s vocation more than likely (cf. Hosea 8:7; 10:13)? Who was his message primarily for (cf. Hosea 4:1; 5:1; 9:1; 11:8; 14:1)?

II. Hosea’s T_____

3. For historical context, read 2 Kings 15:8-30. What do you think it would have been like to be living during Hosea’s time? How do you think the unrest and uncertainty impacted the people?
4. What eventually happened to Israel during the reign of Pekah? How do you think our nation would be affected if an enemy power suddenly took over the New England states and threatened further action?
5. You’ll recall from the lessons in the book of Amos that Israel was described as unjust and a great oppressor of people. Had things changed much? Had Israel repented of their sin? Jump ahead and read Hosea 4:1, 10, 14; and 12:7. How does Hosea best summarize for the reader what was really going on in their hearts (see Hosea 8:1)?

III. Hosea’s F_____

6. Read Hosea 1:1-3. How does Hosea’s ministry begin? Did Hosea obey the Lord? Do you find this troubling? What’s the good news? What’s the bad news?

7. Define the adjective used to describe Hosea's wife. Pay close attention to the word in the Hebrew (G2183 – *zanuwn*). What kind of impact do you suppose this was on a godly man like Hosea? Does it amaze you that he did as the Lord commanded? Why or why not?
8. According to verse 2, what was Hosea and Gomer's marriage to be a reflection of?
9. In the same way Hosea married someone who was presently immoral, Israel herself was not a chaste bride when Yahweh committed Himself to her. Does this resonate with your heart? Before Christ, were you like Gomer? Do you continue to feel deep shame, guilt, and regret over your past? Does it bother you to hear such words like harlot, whore, or even immoral? Beloved the good news is this, if you have repented of your sin and placed your faith and trust in the finished work of Christ then you are no longer a slave to such sin rather you now are a slave to Christ (Rom. 6:3-11). So rejoice and praise God for your present condition! Be encouraged by these words, "This is what you used to be like. But you were cleansed, you were made holy, you were made right with God by calling on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. 6:11 – *emphasis added*).
10. What about Hosea and Gomer's children? How are they described in verse 3? Compare verse 3 to verse 6 and 8; had Gomer repented? What seems to be missing? **Hint:** For Jezreel, the Hebrew literally says 'she bore him.' What does it say about the next two children? What might you be able to surmise from this?
11. According to verse 4, when it came time to name these children, what did God tell Hosea to name his first son?
12. The name of Hosea's son has prophetic significance. What would the Jehu dynasty be punished on account of? (See 2 Kings 9:16-10:31 for a better understanding).

13. According to verses 4 and 5, what did Yahweh declare about the house of Israel? What do you think the “bow” symbolizes? If Jezreel’s name in Hebrew means “to scatter,” what do you think God was going to do to Israel in judgment for her rebellion?

14. What is the name of the second child born to Gomer? If her name signified what God’s response would be when judgment comes upon Israel, how do you think Hosea and Gomer might be feeling at this point? Keep in mind that God had been showing compassion to the northern kingdom during the reign of Jeroboam, but no longer.

15. But what of Judah? What had Yahweh their God promised to them? When did this come to pass (cf. 2 Kings 19; Isaiah 37)?

16. What about the third child that Gomer conceived? What would God say to name him and why? What does this signify? Can you imagine how Hosea responded when he heard this?

17. When you ponder what is going on in verses 4 -9, what do you learn about the God you have committed to? Does it nurture within you a sense of reverence and thankfulness? Why or why not? What are some truths you are thankful for today? What about your relationship with God? Upon repentance and faith in Christ, what are you promised (cf. Jn 10:27-28)? How does this give you hope?

18. In spite of the coming judgment upon the northern tribes of Israel and the scattering that will take place, at some point in the future what will God do (vv. 10-11)? What leader is Hosea referring to (cf. 3:5)? As you go forward in history, who will be the one Head who will lead his people out of the bondage of sin into the promised land (heaven)?

19. Although Israel was faced with impending doom, so was Hosea's marriage. Indeed this man suffered anguish, burden, and pain. By the time you reach chapter 3, Hosea's wife has become an adulterous. Can you imagine anything more difficult? Not only has his nation fallen apart, but so has Hosea's home. This chronicles most of Hosea's life; he dealt with this day in and day out for years! His life was hard and difficult but it wasn't because of sin, or unwise choices, or him running from God; it was simply God giving him a difficult life. What does this teach you about the Christian walk? Are we ever promised it would be easy? In spite of the circumstances we are facing what does God promise the Christian (1 Cor. 10:13; Rom. 8:28-29)?

20. Do you find yourself in a long painful trial presently? How does knowing that Hosea who faced great difficulty but ultimately trusted God give you encouragement today? How does knowing that He chose to walk by faith give you hope? How does knowing that he obeyed God without complaint motivate you toward obedience?

21. Read through the following verses. As you experience trial and hardship, why is your God someone you can run to?
 - a. Ps 46:1
 - b. Ps. 62:2
 - c. Mt. 11:28
 - d. Heb. 13:5

22. This week, take one of the verses above, write it out on an index card, seek to memorize and treasure it in your heart by reviewing it at least 3 times each day.

23. God used Hosea as a beacon for Himself. In the same way, God will be the one to strengthen you as you strive to show the love of Christ despite your trial. End your time in prayer:

- Pray that God will give you a greater understanding of Him and the Gospel in the days ahead.
- Thank God that despite the fact that we were all sinners, which angers and grieve God—He out of love for us chose to buy us back even when there was nothing inherently beautiful about us.
- Praise God for His Mercy and His Forgiveness.

RESOURCES

Specific Resources for Hosea

Hosea by Derek Kidner

Hosea: the Heart and Holiness of God by G. Campbell Morgan

With Bands of Love by David Allan Hubbard

General Resources for the Minor Prophets

The Minor Prophets by James Montgomery Boice

The Minor Prophets by Charles Feinberg

The Prophets of Israel by Leon Wood

Major Points from the Minor Prophets by John Blanchard

A Survey of Old Testament Introduction by Gleason Archer

Interpreting the Minor Prophets by Robert Chisholm Jr

The Ultimate Priority on Worship by John MacArthur

Knowing God by J.I. Packer