

Seven Bible Studies 2017

Prophecy

August 25: Hosea 1-7 (Wade Stanley)

Good morning all!

After reviewing Hosea 1-6 this week, I decided that a brief summary was all that was needed for today.

Hosea ministered to the northern 10 tribes (known as both Israel and Ephraim throughout) as well as to Judah. Hosea was a contemporary of Isaiah whose ministry concerned the southern kingdom.

The unique feature of Hosea is the "living allegory" enacted by the prophet. He is told to marry an unfaithful woman who would remain unfaithful and bear illegitimate children. In this, the prophet's relationship with his wife would mirror God's relationship with his people.

As you read through Hosea, you will notice many of the familiar themes from previous prophets -- exposure of immorality, predictions of a coming captivity, the redemption of God's people, and the approach of the Messiah. Having flexed your interpretational muscles elsewhere, I am confident you will easily pick up the gist of Hosea's message. Feel free to post questions and/or comments below.

Happy reading!

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:
Thank you, Wade!

Comment:

Kevin Crittenden:
Thank you Wade! Just an off-the-wall thought: Is there some connection between the name Hosea and the word of praise Hosanna?

Replies:

Charles Fry:
Psalms 118:25 (NIV)
25 Lord, save us!
Lord, grant us success!

Hosanna in the NT is transliterated from the phrase in the Psalms, "Lord save us." The Hebrew word "save" is the root of the name Hosea, Hoshea, Joshua, and Jesus.

September 2: Hosea 8-14 (John Morris)

Reading for September 1, 2017
HOSEA 8-14

Hope you were blessed by yesterday's reading (Rev. 1:3).
How 'bout one highlighted verse/passage per chapter?

8:7- "They sow the wind, and reap the whirlwind." Nine times Ecclesiastes speaks of "grasping for the wind." Wind comes and goes, is impossible to capture, and fleeting. It's a perfect symbol for things that are vain and empty. The northern kingdom had poured immense time, treasure, and trouble into serving false gods and courting the favor of heathen nations. All this was vanity and grasping for the wind! What would it yield? What would be the harvest? The whirlwind. Whirlwinds are connected with God's judgment (Ezek. 1:4; Zech. 7:14). The harvest would be worse than than what they'd sown! The law of unintended consequences. A law of the harvest remains in place for us, today (Gal. 6:7-8).

9:10- "I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness; I saw your fathers as the firstfruits on the fig tree in its first season." The nation had once been a true delight to God, like grapes one might happen upon while wandering in the wilderness, hot and hungry. The first figs of the year were considered a delicacy (Jer. 24:2), and Israel had been like the first figs of the first year—that is, the tree (the nation) had not only been a delight, but had shown promise and appeared it was going to fulfill its purpose. But the nation went after Baal. In Jesus' day, the nation would be likened to a fig tree again (Mk. 11:12-14).

10:12- A verse of hope! A fallow field, a life allowed to fall into unfruitfulness, can be replowed and replanted! God will come and rain righteousness on that soul. But we must be serious and sincere farmers. We will seek Him and find Him when we search for Him with our whole heart (Jer. 29:12-13).

11:1-4, 8-9- Perhaps more frequently than any of the other prophets, Hosea speaks of the nation's youth, its early days (see also 2:15; 9:10). God reminisces about how it used to be. In these verses, God talks about the love He had for Israel in its youth, how He gently reared the nation to maturity (cf. Ezek. 16:1-14). He thinks back to how He was merciful to them, like a farmer who would lift the yoke from his animal to give it a rest, and then stoop and handfeed it. In vss. 8-9, God's heart for the nation is still such that He cannot bear to destroy them completely. The full force of His anger will not be exerted.

12:4-6- A lot could be said about these verses. Jacob wrestled with the angel, even while his hip was out of socket. He cried during the struggle. Why? He wanted the Lord's blessing! He knew He needed the Lord. How bad do we want the Lord's blessing? How bad do we think we need it? Only by the help of God can we do His will (vs. 6; Jn. 15:5; Phil. 2:13).

13:1- "When Ephraim spoke, trembling." When Ephraim feared the Lord, that is, and possessed a measure of humility and sense of dependency on God, he was exalted. When he turned to Baal, that all ended. "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up" (Jas. 4:10).

14:2- "we will offer the sacrifices of our lips." The Septuagint rendered this passage "the fruit of our lips." This may be where the Hebrew writer, guided by inspiration, got the expression (Heb. 13:15).

Comment:

Debbie Bolinger:
So true!!!

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:
Thank you, John!