



Biblical Literacy

Scripture • Substance • Spiritual Passion

Lesson 45.2

Old Testament Survey: The Fall of Israel (part 2), Hosea

Outline for Class

- Welcome
- Theme Today
Hosea was one in a long line of prophets that were ignored and even persecuted for the sake of the message. Yet his message did not go out and fail to return. Hosea is often called "the Foundation Prophet," for Hosea's words and themes found expression in the subsequent works of Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Jeremiah. Hosea is repeatedly quoted in the New Testament, and his experience forms a basis for understanding the crucifixion of Christ.
- Prayer for Wisdom
- Video (39 minutes)
- Discussion & Points for Home

Points for Home

- ❖ **"...they would not listen" (2 Kings 17:14).** Hosea issued a cry of warning, "Whoever is wise, let him understand these things" (Hos. 14:9), yet the people did not listen. They had ears, to be sure. They had eyes and could see the life of Hosea, even as he spoke of its significance to them. Yet their eyes did not see truly, just as their ears did not hear truly. As Kings says, "...they would not listen, but were stubborn, as their fathers had been, who did not believe in the LORD their God." Stubbornness and lack of faith/belief was the downfall of the people. This is likely their lack of knowledge as well ("My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because you have rejected knowledge, I reject you from being a priest to me" Hos. 4:6).
John in Revelation echoed the warning of Christ to the churches in his day, "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches" (Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 29, 3:6, 13, 22). Let us take this to heart and practice. Step out in obedience and live for the Father who speaks!
- ❖ **"For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings" (Hos. 6:6).** A key here returns to Hosea 4:6 referenced in the first point for home: "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." "Knowledge" is a bit different from our word today in both the Old Testament Hebrew as well as the New Testament Greek. For the Biblical languages, "knowledge" intones an intimate relationship. We get this in the Old King James where it notes "Adam knew Eve" and produced offspring. God is not interested in deeds of service or sacrifice that proceed from anything other than from a relationship with him. Jesus even said his coming was so that we would "know" God. This is again a reference to an intimate relationship with God. Too often, we equate this "knowing" or "relationship" simply with a saving faith in Christ. Think this through. Then make decisions on how you can live your life to better grow in relationship with the Lord. Get to "know him" better!
- ❖ **"And the Lord said to me, 'Go again'... SO I bought her for fifteen shekels of silver..." (Hos. 3:1-2).** God's orders to Hosea reflected God's love and actions for his own people. God was never content to let his people wander under condemnation. He promised and showed his character as one who loves even an unfaithful people. He would give of himself to buy back that which wrongfully yet willfully left him. This puts a very human spin on the love of God. How powerful is the love takes back and unfaithful mate, at great personal cost? What kind of love yearns to restore a healthy relationship of trust, where trust has been destroyed? What a love and what a God that loves like that! This is the true good news, the "gospel" as Paul termed it. "Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you... that Christ died for our sins" (1 Cor. 15:1). Is it any wonder that as Paul drew out the implications of this sacrificial "buy back" (another word for "buy back" is "redemption") quoting from Hosea, that now death has no sting? How can we do anything but love in return as we respond to this amazing love and sacrifice!

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