

Week 34

Hosea / הוֹשֵׁעַ / Hoshea

Yahweh Has Delivered (same meaning as Joshua)

We have already considered the prophets Joel, Isaiah, and Jeremiah, those that remain will be considered chronologically. Hosea is the first of the minor prophets (called minor for their relative brevity, not for their influence).

Hosea wrote during the last 50 years of the Northern Kingdom. The nation moved from relative stability and abundance to extreme instability. The last six rulers of Israel which only covered a 25 year period all died violently. The instability was brought on by the Western campaign of the Assyrian ruler Tiglath Pileser III. Hosea whole ministry is dedicated to turning his people back to God so that they do not "reap the whirlwind" (8:7)¹. Assassination was the air they breathed.

Hosea is best known for the symbolic act of marrying as a promiscuous woman (Gomer - probably a cultic prostitute) to symbolize the extent of God's love and the depth of Israel's rejection of God. Their children (?) are all given symbolic names. Jeremiah is another prophet also known for symbolic acts.

Infidelity (with God) is the sin Hosea is most concerned about. When he uses terms like "whore" or "whoredom", he is primarily talking about the people's unfaithfulness to God², rather than sexual ethics of the day.

Sunday, July 17

Hosea 1

For Reflection: Here we see the symbolic act. Tough request of God to Hosea, 'Go marry someone who you will love, but will be unfaithful to you.' *What's the hardest thing God has asked you to do?* It is unclear if the last two children are Hosea's.³ Remember, as you try to walk in Hosea's shoes (the symbolism continues through chapter 3) that "whore" is a metaphor for unfaithfulness to God – it is code for idolatry. When we look at the whole symbolic act we should ask, "*What does this symbolize?*" *What does this tell us about God's love? What does this tell us about the seriousness of our relationship with God? (consider chp 11 if you want)*

Lagniappe: 1 Peter 2:10⁴

¹ Possibly Hosea's most memorable words: "For they sow the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind."

² Hosea 1:2

³ The vagueness of the descriptions and the name Lo-ammi /Not my People (the 3rd child) leads many to that conclusion.

⁴ Paul also quotes this passage in Romans 9:25-26

Monday, July 18

Hosea 4

For Reflection: Here we move from symbolic acts, to God's indictment. In verse 6 Hosea writes/says, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge..." *What does he mean by this? Is it in any way relevant to our faith today?*

Lagniappe: Malachi 2:7-8

Tuesday, July 19

Hosea 8

For Reflection: *When have you risked the relationship with someone you loved and tried to warn them? When have you been warned by someone who loved you enough risk the relationship?*

Lagniappe: Matthew 7:21

Wednesday, July 20

Hosea 14

For Reflection: *What is the fruit of repentance? When have you experienced this?*

Lagniappe: 1 John 1:9

Amos / אִיָּמֹן

Amos was a contemporary of Hosea, he prophesied in the Northern Kingdom, but was from the Southern Kingdom. His prophetic window did not last as long as Hosea and only knew the times of stability and prosperity.

If Hosea was focused on sins against God – spiritual adultery, Amos was focused on sins against neighbor – social injustice. Clearly not much was going well in the soul of Israel, yet it was a time of peace and abundance for some.

Amos is known for his courage. Many have noted, “Amos feared God, and no one else.” He was a man of the land – a rancher we would say today. Because the prophets of Israel were not prophets he did not take the title, declaring rather, “I am no prophet, nor a prophet’s son.”⁵

Thursday, July 21 Amos 4

For Reflection: We see the concern with social justice in the first verse. Amos points out that the people are unteachable. No matter what God does, they will not return. Have you had unteachable seasons? Who are your teachers?

Lagniappe: Matthew 21:33-43

Friday, July 22 Amos 5

For Reflection: Famous verse in this chapter. This chapter continues the social justice concern in verses 1-17. Amos’ call is simple and clear – see 14-15. Deep and simple rancher talk. In verse 18 we turn to the day of the Lord, the day of judgement. *Do you yearn for this day?*

Lagniappe: Matthew 25:31-33

Saturday, July 23 Amos 7

For Reflection: Judgement: Locusts, Fire, and a Plumb line. A plumb line shows a carpenter true vertical. *How do you feel about being measured against vertical perfection? Are you out of plumb in any areas of your life?* A bit of Gospel for your Saturday: Jesus measures up! I love Amos’ courage and feistiness toward Amaziah. *When have you exercised courage in the name of God? What was going on in your life that might have encouraged courage?*

Lagniappe: Philippians 3:8-9

⁵ Amos 7:14-16 This passage makes me smile, I think I would have been friends with Amos - If he had any.