

Studies in the Book of Hosea

DOOR of HOPE



CROWN
CHRISTIAN
PUBLICATIONS

Royal Reading

FAITHfortheFAMILY.com

DOOR *of* HOPE

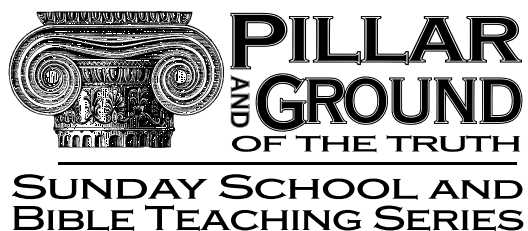
CLARENCE SEXTON

FIRST EDITION
COPYRIGHT
DECEMBER 2008



CROWN
CHRISTIAN
PUBLICATIONS
Royal Reading

FAITHfortheFAMILY.com



DOOR OF HOPE

Copyright © 2008

Crown Christian Publications

Powell, Tennessee • 37849

CrownChristianPublications.com

FAITHfortheFAMILY.com

ISBN: 978-1-58981-462-2

Layout by Ryan Keiter & Stephen Troell

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form—electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or any other—except for brief quotations embodied in critical articles or printed reviews, without the prior permission in writing from the publisher.

Printed in the United States of America

Dedication

*T*his book is affectionately dedicated to all those in the Lord's family who make it their ministry to encourage others in the wonderful work of the Lord.

Garance Sutton
Act 5:42

Introduction

*T*he study of the book of Hosea is a very serious and sobering study, but it brings us to a “*door of hope.*”

God reminds us that in times of affliction, people seek the Lord. I pray that we are on the threshold of a mighty, heaven-sent revival.

May the fresh wind of the Holy Spirit blow holy fire in our hearts and across our land.

Contents

<i>I</i>	<i>GOD'S MESSAGE THROUGH HOSEA</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>II</i>	<i>DOOR OF HOPE</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>III</i>	<i>GOD'S REDEEMING LOVE</i>	<i>45</i>
<i>IV</i>	<i>EPHRAIM IS JOINED TO IDOLS.....</i>	<i>55</i>
<i>V</i>	<i>IN THEIR AFFLICTION WILL THEY SEEK ME EARLY ..</i>	<i>69</i>
<i>VI</i>	<i>MURDER BY CONSENT.....</i>	<i>83</i>
<i>VII</i>	<i>UNAWARE.....</i>	<i>97</i>
<i>VIII</i>	<i>THEY HAVE SOWN THE WIND, AND THEY SHALL REAP THE WHIRLWIND</i>	<i>113</i>
<i>IX</i>	<i>WANDERERS AMONG THE NATIONS.....</i>	<i>127</i>
<i>X</i>	<i>AN EMPTY VINE</i>	<i>141</i>
<i>XI</i>	<i>I LOVED HIM</i>	<i>155</i>
<i>XII</i>	<i>FEEDING ON THE WIND</i>	<i>165</i>
<i>XIII</i>	<i>THE DEATH AND REBIRTH OF A NATION.....</i>	<i>177</i>



CHAPTER ONE

GOD'S MESSAGE THROUGH HOSEA



he Creator God chose to reveal His loving heart through His prophet Hosea. Striking parallels can be drawn when we compare ancient Israel to modern America.

Hosea delivered the Lord's message to the northern kingdom, Israel. He was the prophet for the zero hour in the nation of Israel. What Hosea was to the northern kingdom, the weeping prophet Jeremiah was to Judah, the southern kingdom, nearly a century and a half later.

Through the troubles in Hosea's home, he reached the consciousness of his calling. Hosea married Gomer in good faith, but her unfaithfulness and ultimate enslavement broke the heart of her husband. Gomer's adultery pictured Israel's apostasy.

In the first three chapters, the story of Hosea's home life sets the stage for understanding God's relationship with His people. The prophet, through the heartbreak of his own marriage, comes to see in a more meaningful way Israel's sin against God. Hosea represents God, our loving heavenly Father. Gomer represents the nation of

Israel and the people of that nation. The Lord's message for each one of us is the message of His love and our responsibility.

Entering this book of the Bible brings us into the heart of God. Hosea 1:1-11 says,

The word of the LORD that came unto Hosea, the son of Beeri, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel. The beginning of the word of the LORD by Hosea. And the LORD said to Hosea, Go, take unto thee a wife of whoredoms and children of whoredoms: for the land hath committed great whoredom, departing from the LORD. So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim; which conceived, and bare him a son. And the LORD said unto him, Call his name Jezreel; for yet a little while, and I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu, and will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel. And it shall come to pass at that day, that I will break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel.

And she conceived again, and bare a daughter. And God said unto him, Call her name Loruhamah: for I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel; but I will utterly take them away. But I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by the LORD their God, and will not save them by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, by horses, nor by horsemen.

Now when she had weaned Loruhamah, she conceived, and bare a son. Then said God, Call his name Loammi: for ye are not my people, and I will not be your God.

Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God. Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land: for great shall be the day of Jezreel.

This book of the Bible is divided into fourteen chapters. We find a natural division between the first three chapters and chapters four through fourteen. This is God's message given through His messenger Hosea to His ancient people Israel. I give you a warning as we enter into this study—if you see the message of this book only as God speaking to a nation and fail to apply it to the individual, then you will miss the great truth God has for you.

In Hosea's day, God's people were divided into two kingdoms. Ten tribes made up the northern kingdom called Israel, and two tribes made up the southern kingdom called Judah. Hosea's message was given as the northern kingdom stood on the threshold of captivity. They would be dispersed at the hands of their Assyrian captors. Later, the southern kingdom of Judah would fall to the Babylonians. This prophet Hosea preached to Israel telling them that Israel had become a nation with no truth. Let us all understand that we may possess many things, but without truth, we are certainly not going to be what God would have us to be.

Let us begin where the Lord begins this message. In this book, the Lord immediately introduces us to Hosea and his family. As we become acquainted with this family, we are going to discover God's message to each of us. Of course, there is a national emphasis to Israel, but the application is to the individual.

HOSEA

Verse one begins, *"The word of the LORD that came unto Hosea."* This is a defining statement. God's Word came to Hosea, and when God spoke to him, he was obedient. Hosea points us to our loving God.



God's redeeming love seeks sinners. It should not be difficult for us to recognize that when God came seeking you and me, He did not come after some great prize.

The Lord gives us the particular setting and time. Hosea 1:1 says, *"The word of the LORD that came unto Hosea, the son of Beeri, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel."* We know the time and place in which this story comes to pass. This is the amazing story of God's redeeming love.

An author named Graham Scroggie has written a wonderful Bible survey book entitled *The Unfolding Drama of Redemption*. Mr. Scroggie refers to the Bible as God's unfolding drama of redemption. It is! When we open our Bibles, we see God at work in this unfolding drama of redemption.

Early in the Garden, when man sinned against God, it was God who came in the cool of the day crying out, "Adam, Adam, where art thou?" When man sinned against God, God provided a way of salvation and the promise of the Redeemer in shedding the blood of the innocent. In the skins made for Adam and Eve, we see the death of the innocent for the guilty.

As we follow the Bible through, we find this scarlet thread of the blood of Jesus Christ pointing us to Calvary. When God's people were in bondage in Egypt, the blood was placed on the door, and the

death angel passed over. God revealed again this unfolding drama of redemption. However, there is no place in the Old Testament where we find such a vivid picture of God's redeeming love as we do in this book of Hosea.

The Bible says in verse two, *"The beginning of the word of the LORD by Hosea. And the LORD said to Hosea, Go, take unto thee a wife of whoredoms and children of whoredoms: for the land hath committed great whoredom, departing from the LORD."* Three times in one verse the Bible uses this word "whoredom" meaning repeated sexual sin. Fourteen times we find this expression throughout the book of Hosea. God said to this godly man, *"Go, take unto thee a wife of whoredoms."* His wife will prove to be unfaithful.

One of the great problems that commentators try to solve in this book of the Bible is whether or not God commanded Hosea to take a wife who was already engaged in whoredom, or to take a wife that would become engaged in this type of behavior. The fact remains that God revealed to Hosea that this is what his wife would become, even if she were not already engaged in this type of sinful behavior.

If you are thinking, "It is hard for me to imagine that God would command a man to do that," remember, Hosea is a picture of our God. When we look at the life of Hosea, we are to see our Lord. The Bible says in John 3:16, *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."* God's redeeming love seeks sinners. It should not be difficult for us to recognize that when God came seeking you and me, He did not come after some great prize. He came after sinful people who could not make their own way to God. The only hope we had was for our God to love us and seek after us.

God is going to allow this good man Hosea to live through a great tragedy, to seek after his own wife in unseemly places, to cry out for her in dens of iniquity, and to bring her food and supplies when

she is starving at the hands of her lovers. We are going to see him seeking and seeking until he finds her. With every move of this book of the Bible, as this man seeks after his wife, we get a glimpse of our God who loves us “so” much that He “gave His only begotten Son.”

GOMER

Next, let us consider Gomer, Hosea’s wife. Hosea’s name means “salvation”; Gomer’s name means “completeness.” It seems she does everything but complete. She is a woman who engages in the most abominable behavior. She gives her life to the most disgusting things. The Bible says that she is engaged in whoredoms. She forsakes her husband and her children to go after other men, yet Hosea loves her. Nothing is as powerful as the seeking love that God has for us.

Jeremiah 31:3 says, “*The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.*” Take special notice of the expression that God has loved us “*with an everlasting love.*” God’s love for us was never initiated; it had no beginning. He loves us with an everlasting love. There is nothing we can do to make God stop loving us; there was nothing we could do to make God start loving us. God’s love is pictured in the love Hosea had for his wife Gomer. Every time you think about her vile behavior, think of what God says concerning you and me and His great love for us.

We read again of God’s love in John 13:1, “*Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.*” He did not stop loving them! When we read the book of Hosea and discover the behavior of Gomer, we find that there was every reason to tell this man, “Why don’t you find someone else? Why don’t you cast her out and be done with her!” But that is not his love, and that is

not the behavior of the love of God. As we look at Gomer, we see ourselves. Our rebellious hearts are laid bare.

We have been conquered by Calvary. The love of Christ constrains us. There was a time in all of our lives when someone could have said, “I do not see what anyone sees in him.” But still God loves us.

If you visited the home of Hosea, and you found out that Gomer was that kind of wife, you would not want to eat at her table. As a decent person, you would not want to make friends with her. But, oh dear friend, every one of us is seen in her. She is loved as we are loved with an everlasting love. This is God’s message to us.

We grow so weary and impatient with people. We are such respecters of persons! God spoke here to His ancient people Israel about their sin, their behavior, their idolatry, and their spiritual whoredoms. He is also speaking to us. The Bible says in Isaiah 53:6, “*All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*”

Occasionally, I meet missionaries who say, “I am going to a certain part of the world because people are so needy; they have never heard the truth, and I want to love them and help them and point them to Jesus.” A few years later, we meet those same missionaries, and they have returned from the mission field. It is not loving those people that keeps them there, because they find out that those people have hearts like every other human being—just as black as the charred walls of hell. It is not the people’s good behavior that keeps the missionary there. It is the love of Christ, loving lost sinners like you and me. We go for God. We stay for God. Our work is done for Him,



*In each
Christian home,
we are to carry
on the heritage
of the Lord.*

not them. Of course we love people; but we love the people because God has conquered our hearts with His love.

We read in Romans 3:9-19,

What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; as it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways: and the way of peace have they not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes. Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

As we look at Gomer and her behavior, we see ourselves. When we look at Hosea and see love, we see our God.

THE CHILDREN

We have met the man and his wife; now let us meet the children. There are three children in this family. Each of them brings a message from God to us. It is God's message. It is primarily, in interpretation, God's message to Israel, but do not allow this to hinder God's Word from your heart. The people are about to go into Assyrian captivity and be scattered throughout the earth. Even to this day, they are scattered from Nazareth to New York.

My wife and I have two sons, two beautiful daughters-in-law, and six wonderful grandchildren. They love the Lord and are a tremendous joy to us. The family is God's design. In each Christian home, we are to carry on the heritage of the Lord. What sadness we find when this is not the case! The Bible says in Hosea 1:3-5,

So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim; which conceived, and bare him a son. And the LORD said unto him, Call his name Jezreel; for yet a little while, and I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu, and will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel. And it shall come to pass at that day, that I will break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel.

Meet the oldest child of Hosea and Gomer, whose name is Jezreel. Hebrew names are extremely significant. *Jezreel* means "scattered." He says, "My name is 'Scattered.'"

God says, "I am going to scatter my people; I am going to judge my people. I am going to judge this nation." His name declares God's message, "I am going to scatter my people. They are going to suffer defeat and be captured by the Assyrians and dispersed throughout the world."

So what does it mean to meet this boy? It means that they could have been obedient to God and have been blessed. They could have been the objects of God's favor. But not now. They are going to be scattered and not blessed.

Let us apply this to your life and mine. It is our God's passionate desire to bless



*We go for God.
We stay for God.
Our work is
done for Him,
not them. Of
course we love
people; but we
love the people
because God
has conquered
our hearts with
His love.*

us and our families and to bring us together to do a mighty work in the lives of His people. But when we allow sin to enter in, when we go our own way and not God's way, we cannot be blessed and used of God. We are scattered and defeated and weakened. That is the message this first child brings to us.

The Lord continues His introduction of the children. The Bible says in Hosea 1:6-7,

And she conceived again, and bare a daughter. And God said unto him, Call her name Loruhamah: for I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel; but I will utterly take them away. But I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by the LORD their God, and will not save them by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, by horses, nor by horsemen.

Next, we meet this little girl. We ask her what her name is, and she says, "Loruhamah." Now, when we saw the boy, the boy looked a lot like his father. We really do not know about this daughter. She may or may not resemble her father; we are not sure whether or not Hosea is her father. But when we hear her Hebrew name, we know God's message to us.

What she says to us is that God will no longer have pity or mercy. He will no longer have this intimate fellowship and relationship that He desires to have with us. Something has happened!

Our God desires for us to be near Him. He wants to bless us, have mercy upon us, pity us, and meet our needs. He wants us to have a relationship with Him that we have with no other. But when sin comes in, that sin prohibits God from having that kind of relationship and fellowship with His people.

God desired to have this kind of crowning, intimate relationship with Israel, but because there was sin and spiritual adultery, that

relationship became impossible. Hosea and his wife and children were living examples of what happened nationally. One family displayed what was happening to an entire nation. This daughter's name tells us that God will no longer have mercy and pity upon His children. The tenderness and intimacy is gone.

Some of you once walked with God and had such close communion with God, but now your Christian life is all mechanical. You have all the right answers, and you show up at the right places, but there is no life or real intimacy in your walk with God. This is the message Loruhamah brings to us.

There is a third child born as a result of whoredom. The Bible says in Hosea 1:8-9, "Now when she had weaned Loruhamah, she conceived, and bare a son. Then said God, Call his name Loammi: for ye are not my people, and I will not be your God." If you come to the house when this son is born and look at him, you notice something right away. He does not look at all like his father. You look at Hosea and wonder, "Is this really his son? There is no family resemblance here!" The reason for this is that it is not his son. This is the offspring of an adulterous relationship. The son bears no resemblance to the man that was supposed to be his father. God says, "Give him a name. When he says his name, his name says that he does not belong to Me."

God declares to His people, "My heart's desire is to be your God and for you to be my people; but because of your sin, you are not my



Our God desires for us to be near Him. He wants to bless us, have mercy upon us, pity us, and meet our needs. He wants us to have a relationship with Him that we have with no other.

people.” Of course this troubles people when they are thinking about the Jews. Did God disinherit His people? No, the promise God made to Abraham He will keep. But they are set aside. They do not know God as their Father in their present blindness. They do not know God the way He desires them to know Him.



*A Christian can
behave in such
a way that he
passes down a
godly heritage,
or he can
behave in such a
way that there is
no godly
heritage to
pass on.*

Many people in some way identify with the name of Jesus, and yet bear no evidence of being a Christian. There are many people who will say when pressed, “Oh, I have made a profession of faith. Sure! There was a time when I trusted Christ.” But they look nothing like a believer in the way they live. This is what we find when we come to Hosea’s home. What a shame! The mother could have behaved in such a way that the children could have rejoiced in the heritage handed to them, but she did not. Remember, the mother represents you and me.

A Christian can behave in such a way that he passes down a godly heritage, or he can behave in such a way that there is no godly heritage to pass on. It is a serious matter to say that you are a Christian and not live like a Christian.

God is laying the groundwork for this entire book in this first chapter as we are introduced to the family of Hosea. Hosea’s name means salvation; Gomer means completion, and these children’s names mean scattered, no mercy, and not my people.

Hosea.....Salvation
Gomer.....Completion
Jezreel.....Scattered

Loruhamah.....No Mercy

Loammi.....Not My People

The Lord does not leave us here. In Hosea 1:10, the Bible says,

Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God.

Notice that little word “yet” in the beginning of this verse. This is one of the great “yets” of the Bible. You see, God does keep His promises. He knows the promises that He has made. The Bible says in Genesis 12:1-3,

Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will shew thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

God says, “With all of this, you are going to be set aside. You are going to be carried captive. You are going to be scattered like the wind, ‘Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God.’”

God is going to bring this to pass someday. Hosea 1:11 says, “Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered

together, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land: for great shall be the day of Jezreel."

The Spirit of God gave Peter this message when he wrote in I Peter 2:9-10,

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

What a precious promise! You may say, "My life has fallen apart. I am so far removed from God and the things of God." I want you to know that at this moment you may not be a people, but God can make you His people! He can show you His mercy! This is the story of God's redeeming love.

God is speaking to you and me by His great love. The most powerful message for mankind is the love of God. His grace is greater than all our sin. Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.



The most powerful message for mankind is the love of God. His grace is greater than all our sin.

I do not think I will ever forget the personal testimony given by Dr. Richard Dion. Dr. Dion is a personal friend and faithful pastor in Great Falls, Montana. I share his testimony with you, though it reveals some very personal matters, because He has taken the liberty to tell it publicly.

Pastor Dion said that he was born to a woman out of wedlock. He had no father. He took the name of Richard Griffin. But his loving mother met a good man, who became

a godly man, by the name of Dion. Dr. Dion said, "I remember the day as a boy when my mother and stepfather took me to a courthouse. I will never forget going into the courthouse with no father and the name Richard Griffin. But when I came out, I had a father, and my name was Richard Dion."

There was a day when I had no heavenly Father; but someone walked me into a little room and took the Bible and showed me that Jesus Christ died and rose again to save me from my sins. I asked God to forgive my sin, and I believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. I went in that room a lost, hell-deserving sinner. But after trusting the Lord Jesus Christ as my Saviour, I came out of that little room with a heavenly Father and with my name written in the Lamb's Book of Life. I came to know the story of God's redeeming love.