

Hosea



GOD'S FAITHFUL LOVE
FOR HIS FAITHLESS PEOPLE

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Hosea's Messy Home Life

I wonder if you've ever thought you were doing fine, or something that you did wrong wasn't a big deal, only to get reamed out for it. Have you ever felt the sting of finding out too late that something was a much bigger deal to your boss than you ever thought it was? Have you ever upset your friend over something you didn't think would matter? Have you ever sat through a sermon and realized a sin you didn't think mattered was a big deal to God?

God takes all of our sins very seriously. Too often we give ourselves a pass and think that our wrongs don't really matter. We think our sin is a small problem, easily overlooked. But the passage we are about to read is a startling, at times dark reminder that God does not trifle with sin

God takes sin seriously and so should you.

I. **God takes sins seriously by describing it graphically (v 2)**

A. **God describes sin as whoredom.**

The word "whoredom" refers to sexual relationships outside of marriage, particularly those of a prostitute. It also was used as a metaphor for the sins of the people, especially when they pursued the help of other nations or worse, their gods. In Hosea this word refers to

adultery (1:2), seeking help from pagan rituals (4:12) and sacrificing to other gods (4:13), and general sexual immorality (4:14).

In the NT, idolatry is seen as being covetous because we are desiring other things more than God (Colossians 3:5), and such idolatrous cravings are also viewed as infidelity (James 4:1-4).

B. God describes sin as forsaking him.

Israel did not see themselves as having forsaken God, but he did. God views empty ritual on his behalf with a heart that is far away as forsaking him.

II. God take sin seriously by punishing it severely (vv 3-5)

A. God describes the judgment to come with a name.

You may wonder why God chose the name Jezreel means when the 2nd and 3rd name are such obvious judgments, but this name is quite rich and demonstrates God's judgment in at least 3 ways.

1. Jezreel was the site where Naboth was murdered by Jezebel for his vineyard (1 Kings 21), and as divine punishment where Jehu murdered Jezebel and Ahab's descendants (2 Kings 9:30-36, 10:11).
2. Jezreel sounds like Israel in Hebrew (yīsrā'ēl [Israel] yizrē'ēl [Jezreel]) and so serves as a model of the corruption and violence that came to characterize all Israel.

3. Jezreel means “God scatters” and can refer both to the scattering of the nation and the planting of them later (Hosea 2:22-23).

B. God details the judgment to come with a prophecy.

1. God warns he will bring bloodshed on the land.
2. God warns he will end the kingdom of Israel.
3. God warns he will crush the military of Israel.

III. God takes sin seriously by running out of mercy (vv 6-7)

A. God warns that he will cease showing mercy (v 6).

1. God will no longer feel for the nation of Israel.

This word for mercy could be translated either “compassion” or “mercy.” It is related to the Hebrew word for stomach, because it is something you feel deep down in the pit of your stomach when someone is in a pitiable condition (Psalm 103:13). It is often used in connecting with orphans and widows (), and with captives of war (Jeremiah 42:12).

2. God will remove Israel from the land.

This is another difficult passage to translate. The ESV has “that I will forgive them at all” while the HCSB has “I will certainly take them away.” While both are possible, the HCSB is better in this instance and think this is God specifying what his lack of mercy will look like: the removal of Israel from their promised land.

B. God contrasts with the mercy he will show others (v 7).

As if to add insult to injury, God informs the northern ten tribes that while they will no longer be shown mercy, the southern tribes will be. He prophesies here

that he himself will miraculously save the southern tribes, which 2 Kings 18-19 (especially 19:35-37) confirms did in fact happen.

IV. God takes sin seriously by rejecting those who persist in it (vv 8-9)

A. God rejects Israel from being his people.

He annuls the sacred covenant he made with Israel under Moses (Exodus 6:2-8) by ending his special, personal relationship with them.

B. God rescinds his personal name with his people.

Translated word for word the last phrase reads, "And I not I am to you." God is taking back the personal name that he had given to his people in Exodus 3:13-14.

This has been a heavy message, but a necessary message. It reminds us that God's judgment against sin is both real and earned. It brings us face to face with a God who is filled with wrath against our sin and brings us almost to the point of hopelessness. But the message of Hosea doesn't stop there. And with the dark background of God's wrath and anger comes the brilliance of his forgiveness and mercy, which we will explore in our next lesson.