

“Amos is not a large book, only nine chapters consisting of 146 verses and 2,042 words. However, in spite of its small size, it has been the object of intense study.”<sup>1</sup>

## THE BIG PICTURE – AMOS – “BURDEN”

- Historical Narrative – Amos preaches to the Northern Nation of Israel under the Kingship of Jeroboam II who perpetuates religious apostasy by Baal and rejecting the Law of God.
- Redemption – God continues to lead His people along a redemptive track. He will secure for Himself the fulfillment of His promise revealed in Genesis 3:15 refined in Genesis 12 and openly displayed in Isaiah 53.
- Christ – The name “Amos” means, “burden.” Amos, as God’s representative to the Northern Nation, is the burden bearer calling them to repentance and faith. Jesus Christ is God’s sin bearer who calls His people to repentance and faith.

2 Cor. 5:21 He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

1 Pet. 2:24 and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.

- Kingdom – The Kingdom of God sits divided with 10 nations in the North (i.e. Israel) and 2 nations in the South (i.e. Judah [and Benjamin]).
- The New Testament Witness – “The divine authority of the book is attested by the New Testament. Stephen in his speech before the Sanhedrin (Acts 7:42, 43) quotes from Amos (5:25-27). James, addressing the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:16), also cites the prophet (Amos 8:9-11).”<sup>2</sup>

## INTRODUCTION

Amos is one of the rare individuals who have no claim to fame other than the good working of God in and through their lives. He makes no claim other than that of the LORD God Almighty. Amos brings forth the Word of God to the nation of Israel as one who is sent with a mighty message of woe. Like all of his predecessors and those who would follow in his train his message is twofold: impending judgment and future restoration.

### WHAT TIME IS IT?

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## I. WHO WROTE THE BOOK?

1:1 **The words of Amos**, who was among the shepherders from Tekoa, which he envisioned in visions concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam son of Joash, king of Israel, two years before the earthquake.

Amos ('burden') was from Tekoa, a small town about 12 miles south of Jerusalem. He was neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet (7:14).

7:14 Then Amos replied to Amaziah, "**I am not a prophet, nor am I the son of a prophet;** for I am a herdsman and a grower of sycamore figs.

He was neither a priest nor a member of the prophet's school. He was a shepherd and dresser of the sycamore trees.

The figs of this sycamore tree are not edible unless the flesh is mechanically loosened and allowed to ferment through heat of the sun. So the dresser of the sycamore tree, we are told, must climb the tree and slit each fruit with his knife. Some commentators suggest that insects then put their eggs in these wounds in the figs and their maggots proceed to loosen up the meat of the fruit. The heat of the sun then ferments the pulp that is left. When the fig drops, it is edible, although not too tasty.<sup>3</sup>

The sycamore fig tree bears thousands of figs very much like the common fig, but smaller and not as good. Before this fruit could ripen properly, a small hole had to be pierced in the bottom of its skin. This piercing was done by hand and was a tedious and time-consuming task. Landowners would exchange grazing rights for labor. A shepherd could watch his flock while sitting on the broad limbs of the sycamore, piercing its fruit. Thus Amos was not a wealthy man. Wealthy sheep breeders hired shepherds to tend their flocks. Amos followed his flock himself (7:15), and when that meant piercing sycamore fruit, he pierced sycamore fruit.<sup>4</sup>

He **must have been educated**, for his book shows literary skill. Perhaps he traveled extensively selling his wool. The places he mentions may have been scenes of his visits.

"The terms together indicate that Amos, as a breeder, rancher, and farmer, was a **substantial and respected man in his community**."<sup>5</sup>

"Amos himself is **one of the giants of the ancient world**, one of the most powerful of the biblical prophets. He brought the prophetic word against social injustice and international terrorism and he preached repentance -- and, when that failed, he denounced the impenitent."<sup>6</sup>

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"The book was written by Amos, a herdsman (7:14) from Tekoa (near Bethlehem [1:1]). (1) This is substantiated by the claim of the book [1:1], (2) the **pastoral (shepherd's) language** [cf. 7:10f], and (3) the historical contents. "

"Apparently he was **an earnest student of the books of Moses**, for his style shows strong Pentateuchal influences. Yet he never enjoyed the advantages of a formal education in a 'school of the prophets.'"<sup>7</sup>

Leon Wood, *Prophets of Israel*, pages 286, 287 gives an excellent discussion on Amos' call and fitness for the ministry as a nonprofessional.

"Amos, as a boy, probably had known Jonah, and may have heard him tell of his visit to Nineveh. He may have known Elisha. Joel also may have been his contemporary, or near predecessor. Hosea was a co-worker with Amos. He may have been in Bethel at the time of Amos' visit. They, no doubt, knew each other well. **Hosea was the younger, and continued his work after Amos was gone.** Then, too, just as Amos was closing his work, Isaiah and Micah were beginning theirs."<sup>8</sup>

He was accused of treason against the state of Israel by Amaziah the priest (7:10-17). Such a charge was punishable by death.

## II. WHEN WAS THE BOOK WRITTEN?

"The superscription (1:1) places the book in the period of King Jeroboam II of Israel (782-753 BC) and of King Uzziah of Judah (767-739). Since the reigns coincide between 767-753 this might well define the limits of the prophecy."<sup>9</sup>

The earthquake in 1:1 must have been unique enough to be widely known.

"Both monarchs had exceptionally long reigns, covering most the first half of the eighth century BCE."<sup>10</sup> **Such long reigns lend toward stability.**

## III. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE BOOK?

This simple country preacher left his homes in Judah and traveled 22 miles to Bethel in the **Northern Kingdom** to preach to the kingdom of Israel.

"The book of Amos is a prophetic writing of nine chapters, **containing chiefly the**

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**announcements of judgment** upon the Northern Kingdom of Israel because of her social **injustices**, moral degeneracy and apostasy."<sup>11</sup>

"The main theme of the Book of Amos is God's passionate concern for justice. Justice is not an abstract issue with God. Instead, justice is relational; it promotes good relations between people and between groups of people. Injustice breaks down good relationships and breeds anger, hostility, and violence."<sup>12</sup>

Amos 5:24 "But let justice roll down like waters And righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

Amos 6:12 Do horses run on rocks? Or does one plow them with oxen? Yet you have turned justice into poison And the fruit of righteousness into wormwood,

Amos 8:4 Hear this, you who trample the needy, to do away with the humble of the land,

The issues of justice are inherent in the Mosaic Law. **An obeyed Law produced a just land**. Such feast days as the Sabbatical Year and the Year of Jubilee "forced" a just land when obeyed. The 70 years of captivity is God's corrective. Israel is dispersed by the Assyrians and Judah will be deported to Babylon. A reason one is dispersed and the other deported is because of the **Seed Promise**. Judah is the line of promise not the ten Northern tribes of Israel. God is keeping Judah for the purpose of fulfilling His promise to the nations.

"The prophet insists that religion and morality are inseparable; there can be no absolute separation between worship and conduct, between religion and life (5:21-24)."<sup>13</sup>

5:21 "I hate, I reject your festivals, Nor do I delight in your solemn assemblies. 22 "Even though you offer up to Me burnt offerings and your grain offerings, I will not accept them; And I will not even look at the peace offerings of your fatlings. 23 "Take away from Me the noise of your songs; I will not even listen to the sound of your harps. 24 "But **let justice roll down like waters And righteousness like an ever-flowing stream**. 25 "Did you present Me with sacrifices and grain offerings in the wilderness for forty years, O house of Israel?

"The central theme of his prophecy was Jehovah's faithfulness to His covenant and to His holy law, and the strict accountability of His people Israel to a practical observance of their covenant obligations."<sup>14</sup>

"The message God gave him was primarily one of judgment, though it **ended with words of hope**."<sup>15</sup>

Externally, flourishing business, solid economy, and stable government marked the

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Northern Kingdom. Nevertheless, internally--where only God could see--the diagnosis of the nation's condition was grim. Idolatry, injustice, greed, hypocrisy, oppression, and arrogance indicated a growing malignancy of deep-seated sin. Amos, a farmer by trade, dons the mantle of a prophet to make God's message crystal clear: "**Repent, or perish.**" The storm clouds of judgment are soon to break over God's people.

Amos 5:14 Seek good and not evil, that you may live; And thus may the LORD God of hosts be with you, Just as you have said! 15 Hate evil, love good, And establish justice in the gate! Perhaps the LORD God of hosts May be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.

"The immediate purpose of Amos's prophetic ministry was to call the leaders of ancient Israel to repent and reform."<sup>16</sup>

Although Amos speaks primarily to the nation of Israel, his message is inclusive and is equally applicable to the nation of Judah in the South.

Am 2:4 Thus says the LORD, "For three transgressions of **Judah** and for four I will not revoke its punishment, **Because they rejected the law of the LORD** And have not kept His statutes; Their lies also have led them astray, Those after which their fathers walked.

#### IV. TO WHOM DID THE PROPHET PREACH?

The **Northern Kingdom of Israel** is mentioned twenty-six times in Amos. Moreover, **Bethel** in particular is mentioned throughout (3:14; 4:4; 5:5, 6; 7:10, 13).

Am 3:14 "For on the day that I punish Israel's transgressions, I will also punish the altars of Bethel; The horns of the altar will be cut off And they will fall to the ground.

Am 4:4 "Enter Bethel and transgress; In Gilgal multiply transgression! Bring your sacrifices every morning, Your tithes every three days.

Am 5:5 "But do not resort to Bethel And do not come to Gilgal, Nor cross over to Beersheba; For Gilgal will certainly go into captivity And Bethel will come to trouble.

Am 5:6 "Seek the LORD that you may live, Or He will break forth like a fire, O house of Joseph, And it will consume with none to quench it for Bethel,

Am 7:10 Then Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, sent word to Jeroboam king of Israel, saying, "Amos has conspired against you in the midst of the house of Israel; the land is unable to endure all his words.

Am 7:13 "But no longer prophesy at Bethel, for it is a sanctuary of the king and a royal residence."

What's up with Bethel? Beth-el means "house of God." Jacob's ladder dream in Genesis 28 prompted him to call the place "Bethel." It is a place he would refer to as the place where God spoke to him (Gen. 35:1-15). Bethel would be one of the judgeships for Samuel during the days of the judges (1 Sam. 7:16). When the kingdom of Israel divided after

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King Solomon in 933BC, Jeroboam set up his golden calves in Bethel and Dan in order to keep the people from migrating back to Jerusalem (1 Kings 12:25-33). Bethel is prominent in the ministries of Elijah and Elisha (2 Kings 2).

In the pre-exilic prophets only Hosea and Amos site Bethel. Bethel will show up in the post-exilic prophets only once in Zechariah 7:2. Commenting on Zechariah 7:2 one resource notes the following.

“Over two hundred Jews from Bethel returned from Babylon in 538BC (Ezra 2:28; Neh. 7:32), and the city was reoccupied during the restoration period (Neh. 11:31). It seems most likely that the people of Bethel sent a delegation to ask a question of the priests in Jerusalem.”<sup>17</sup>

“At the time Amos prophesied, **Israel was secure** from outward enemies and inwardly prosperous. She was far removed from any expectation of judgment and ruin which was to befall her about forty years thence.”<sup>18</sup>

“With the prophet Amos we come to the flourishing age of Jeroboam II. This **produced an atmosphere of materialism and carelessness in the carrying out of worship.**”<sup>19</sup>

“When Amos appeared in the North there was pride (6:13, 14), plenty, and splendor in the land, elegance in the cities, and might in the palaces.”<sup>20</sup>

## V. SOME BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Israel’s moral failure is noted in 6:1-6. What sins can you note by reading the text?

6:1 Woe to those who are at ease in Zion And to those who feel secure in the mountain of Samaria, The distinguished men of the foremost of nations, To whom the house of Israel comes. 2 Go over to Calneh and look, And go from there to Hamath the great, Then go down to Gath of the Philistines. Are they better than these kingdoms, Or is their territory greater than yours? 3 Do you put off the day of calamity, And would you bring near the seat of violence? 4 Those who recline on beds of ivory And sprawl on their couches, And eat lambs from the flock And calves from the midst of the stall, 5 Who improvise to the sound of the harp, And like David have composed songs for themselves, 6 Who drink wine from sacrificial bowls While they anoint themselves with the finest of oils, Yet they have not grieved over the ruin of Joseph. 7 Therefore, they will now go into exile at the head of the exiles, And the sprawlers' banqueting will pass away.

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## VI. AN OUTLINE FOR AMOS

"Amos was not only a **prophet of doom**; he also called the people to **reform**, and when they failed and disaster became inescapable, he pointed to the hope of **future restoration** (9:11-15)."<sup>21</sup>

"The main ingredients are prophetic oracles of many different kinds. In addition, the book contains a considerable number of wisdom sayings as well as several liturgical hymns."<sup>22</sup>

"Amos' book is a collection of sermons preached against the transgressions of Israel. These discourses are arranged in a way that they present a progression in God's dealings with his sinful people. The main divisions are Introduction and Presentation of Charges (1.1-2.16), Call to Repentance (3.1-5.17), Pronunciation of Woes (5.18-6.14) and Certainty of Future Events (7.1-9.15). Except for the first section, each emphasizes the gravity, imminence and urgency of the situation with an oath uttered by the Lord (4.2; 6.8; 8.7). Repeated introductory formulae give the reader distinctions for discerning the divisions."<sup>23</sup>

"The three short poems that celebrate the power of Yahweh in creation and history (4:13; 5:8-9; 9:5-6) are **distinct hymnal-creedal statements**, possibly fragments of earlier epic recitals. They have been skillfully used in the final composition of Amos' message to secure a vital theological component. Their scope is cosmic; **God's claims on the whole world -- all nations, not just Israel -- are grounded in his relationship and interest as creator, owner, and judge of the universe**. The historical perspective is likewise vast. God's dealings with Israel are reviewed in the light of events that have taken place over centuries."<sup>24</sup>

"**The book is a hymn** to God's omnipotence and to the permanence of the Covenant."<sup>25</sup>

"Amos' primary mission is not to predict, but to exhort and to persuade (cf. 5:4, 6, and 14)."<sup>26</sup>

- A. A Revelation of their Transgressions (1, 2 [8 Oracles]) – "The LORD roars" (1:2) – "Thus says the LORD" (1:3, 6, 9, 11, 13; 2:1, 4, 6).

The revelation of God is like a lion roaring. This section is built around the word, "Transgressions" (1:3, 6, 9, 11, 13; 2:1, 4, 6 [3:14; 5:12]). It is a revelation of impending judgment against the nations of the world.

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## B. An Exhortation to Repent (3-6 [3 Sermons])

This section is built around the phrase, “Hear this Word” (3:1; 4:1; 5:1). This section assures the reader that the lion has roared (3:8, “A lion has roared!”). The language of the prophets is graphic and imaginary. It is intended to grip the emotion and mind of the audience.

There are many famous sermons from this book of sermons.

Amos 4:11 "I overthrew you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, And you were like **a firebrand snatched from a blaze**; Yet you have not returned to Me," declares the LORD.

Amos 4:12 "Therefore thus I will do to you, O Israel; Because I will do this to you, **Prepare to meet your God**, O Israel."

Amos 5:24 "But **let justice roll down like waters And righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.**

## C. An Illustration of their Future (7-9 [5 Visions])

This section is built around five pictures or illustrations.

1. Locusts (7:1) – devour the land
2. Fire (7:4) – devour the land
3. Plumb line (7:7) – a crooked nation
4. Summer fruit (8:1) – past harvest/rotten
5. The Altar (9:1)

## VII. KEY DOCTRINAL IDEAS IN AMOS

There are two primary doctrinal thoughts asked by Amos. DOES GOD REPENT or CAN GOD CHANGE HIS MIND? Amos 7:3, 6 states that the LORD repented.

3 **The LORD changed His mind** about this. "It shall not be," said the LORD. 6 **The LORD changed His mind** about this. "This too shall not be," said the Lord GOD.

There are two sets of Scripture that come into play when discussing this topic. First, God does not, nor can He, change or repent.

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**Numbers 23:19**

19 "God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent; Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?"

**1 Sam. 15:29**

29 "Also the Glory of Israel will not lie or change His mind; for He is not a man that He should change His mind."

**Malachi 3:6**

6 "For I, the LORD, do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed."

**Romans 11:29**

29 for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

**Hebrews 13:8**

8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

**James 1:17**

17 Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.

In all of these verses, it is apparent that God does not change in His essence or basic nature. God never alters or adjusts who He is. In addition, God in His plans or decrees never wavers. The plan of God is sure. We can be confident that what He has spoken and willed shall happen. We are assured of this because of whom God is.

However, there is also another side to the discussion. Second, God does repent or change His mind.

**Genesis 6:6, 7**

6 ¶ The LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. 7 The LORD said, "I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky; for I am sorry that I have made them."

**1 Sam. 15:11, 35**

11 "I regret that I have made Saul king, for he has turned back from following Me and has not carried out My commands." And Samuel was distressed and cried out to the LORD all night.

**2 Sam. 24:16**

16 When the angel stretched out his hand toward Jerusalem to destroy it, the LORD relented from the calamity and said to the angel who destroyed the people, "It is enough! Now relax your hand!" And the angel of the LORD was by the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.

**Jere. 18:8, 10; 26:3; 42:10**

18:8 if that nation against which I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent concerning the calamity I planned to bring on it.

26:3 'Perhaps they will listen and everyone will turn from his evil way, that I may repent of the calamity which I am planning to do to them because of the evil of their deeds.'

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Amos 7:3, 6Jonah 3:9

9 "Who knows, God may turn and relent and withdraw His burning anger so that we will not perish."

How are these two Scriptural truths harmonized? Although all truth is true as it reflects the character and purpose of God, not all truth operates on the same level. I call this "the pyramid of truth." All that Scripture says is true, but not all Scripture exists on the same level and thus carries the same weight of priority or importance. For example, the truth of man's dominion over all things created and God's dominion over all things created are both truths, but they do not carry the same priority or importance. One of those two ideas has more weight than the other. The idea of God repenting when certain actions are taken in a cause and effect sequence reflects a certain truth (i.e. causation or causality), but the idea of God changing His mind as it relates to His character and purpose has greater priority or importance than the other. The one, causation, fits inside of or under the other, God's immutability or unchanging character and purpose.

## SIDE NOTE:

"Among the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS), the book [of Jonah] was only found in half of the ten Minor Prophets manuscripts and is not even mentioned among the non-biblical manuscripts (Abegg 443). If scholarly consensus is correct in its assessment that the DSS were the product of the Essenes, this would be no surprise. **The book of Jonah not only posed problems for Jews because it tells of God changing His mind**, it also demonstrates God's favor to one of Israel's gentile enemies."<sup>27</sup>

There are numerous themes inside of Amos.

## A. The sovereignty of God

"It goes almost without saying that Amos shares with the other canonical prophets his belief in the sovereignty of Israel's God over the historical process."<sup>28</sup>

Consider these two wonderful passages.

Amos 4:13 For behold, He who forms mountains and creates the wind And declares to man what are His thoughts, He who makes dawn into darkness And treads on the high places of the earth, The LORD God of hosts is His name.

Amos 5:8 He who made the Pleiades and Orion And changes deep darkness into morning, Who also darkens day into night, Who calls for the waters of the sea And pours them out on the surface of the earth, The LORD is His name. 9 It is He who flashes forth with destruction upon the strong, So that destruction comes upon the fortress.

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Amos 9:5 The Lord GOD of hosts, The One who touches the land so that it melts, And all those who dwell in it mourn, And all of it rises up like the Nile And subsides like the Nile of Egypt; 6 The One who builds His upper chambers in the heavens And has founded His vaulted dome over the earth, He who calls for the waters of the sea And pours them out on the face of the earth, The LORD is His name.

## B. The sin of rebellion

In an ever-restricting circle, Amos calls the surrounding nations and then ultimately Israel to account for their rebellion against God through a broken Law. It is interesting that non-covenant nations are held accountable before God. All nations bow before God.

**“The central idea of the book** of Amos according to most scholars is that Yahweh puts his people on the same level as the nations that surround it -- Yahweh expects the same morality of them all.”<sup>29</sup>

## C. Obedience to the verbal word of God (3:1; 4:1; 5:1)

Israel is exhorted to hear God’s Word through the prophet to repent. It is a warning of woe to come. The Word of God still has a place of centrality and must be heard.

Amos 8:11 ¶ "Behold, days are coming," declares the Lord GOD, "When I will send a famine on the land, Not a famine for bread or a thirst for water, But rather for hearing the words of the LORD. 12 "People will stagger from sea to sea And from the north even to the east; They will go to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, But they will not find it. 13 "In that day the beautiful virgins And the young men will faint from thirst.

This passage is similar to the one we read in the calling of young Samuel to the prophetic office (1 Sam. 3:1).

1 ¶ Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the LORD before Eli. And word from the LORD was rare in those days, visions were infrequent.

The Bible is God’s Word to us. Through His Word He speaks to us. He tells us who He is, what He is doing, and who we are in relation to Him. There is nothing else like it in all of creation. The only thing eclipsing the written Word of God is God incarnate, Jesus Christ (Heb. 1:1-3; John 1:18). Although we do not desire to make the study of God’s Word overbearing or oppressive, it behooves His people to read it daily. “Why,” one might ask? Listen to how the Psalmist describes its vibrant nature and life giving qualities.

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Psalm 19:7 ¶ The law of the LORD is perfect, **restoring the soul**; The testimony of the LORD is sure, **making wise the simple**. 8 The precepts of the LORD are right, **rejoicing the heart**; The commandment of the LORD is pure, **enlightening the eyes**. 9 The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous altogether. 10 **They are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb**. 11 Moreover, **by them Your servant is warned; In keeping them there is great reward**.

This is what the Holy Spirit does in and through the Word in and through His people. It is because His people rejected the Word that they faced both the Assyrian Dispersion and the Babylonian Deportation. Although I would caution any New Testament believer from making direct application of Israel's theocracy to America's Democratic Republic, we would still do well to read the Word and to see it shape one's worldview and daily life.

"Harsh is God's intolerance of injustice, but the gate of repentance remains open."<sup>30</sup>

#### D. The God of the covenant

YHWH is God's personal name and it is His covenant name with the nation. Fifty-six times Amos uses the word YHWH (1:2, 3, 5, 9, 11, 13, and 15; 2:1, 3, 4, 6, 11; etc.). Amos' use of LORD speaks of His covenant union with the nation of Israel. They have been unfaithful to His Law.

Amos 9:8 "Behold, the eyes of the Lord GOD are on the sinful kingdom, And I will destroy it from the face of the earth; Nevertheless, **I will not totally destroy the house of Jacob**," Declares the LORD.

9 "For behold, I am commanding, And **I will shake the house of Israel among all nations As grain is shaken in a sieve, But not a kernel will fall to the ground**. 10 "All the sinners of My people will die by the sword, Those who say, 'The calamity will not overtake or confront us.' 11 ¶ "In that day **I will raise up the fallen booth of David**, And wall up its breaches; I will also raise up its ruins And rebuild it as in the days of old; 12 That they may possess the remnant of Edom And all the nations who are called by My name," Declares the LORD who does this. 13 "Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "When the plowman will overtake the reaper And the treader of grapes him who sows seed; When the mountains will drip sweet wine And all the hills will be dissolved. 14 "Also **I will restore the captivity of My people Israel, And they will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them**; They will also plant vineyards and drink their wine, And make gardens and eat their fruit. 15 "**I will also plant them on their land**, And they will not again be rooted out from their land Which I have given them," Says the LORD your God.

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## E. The Day of the LORD (DOL)

Amos 5:16 Therefore thus says the LORD God of hosts, the Lord, "There is wailing in all the plazas, And in all the streets they say, 'Alas! Alas!' They also call the farmer to mourning And professional mourners to lamentation. 17 "And in all the vineyards there is wailing, Because I will pass through the midst of you," says the LORD. 18 Alas, you who are longing for the day of the LORD, For what purpose will the day of the LORD be to you? It will be darkness and not light; 19 As when a man flees from a lion And a bear meets him, Or goes home, leans his hand against the wall And a snake bites him. 20 Will not the day of the LORD be darkness instead of light, Even gloom with no brightness in it?

The Day of the LORD encompasses both judgment and blessing. It is something that is both near and far. The ten Northern Tribes of Israel will face the judgment of God in their dispersion by the Assyrians.

### APPLICATION

What strikes me directly is how God chose to use a “simple” farmer for His redemptive purpose to the corrupt and non-repentant Northern Nation. Who you are might not appear to be much but let us not deceive ourselves into thinking that He is not using us for His redemptive purpose. No one is insignificant or unintentional in the larger purpose of God.

<sup>1</sup> Raymond B. Dillard and Tremper Longman III, *An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 373.

<sup>2</sup> Merrill F. Unger, *Introductory Guide to the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1951), 342.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/1975/March/amos-the-non-prophet>

<sup>4</sup> “Amos,” in *Nelson’s NKJV Study Bible*, ed. Earl D. Radmacher, Ronald B. Allen, H. Wayne House (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, inc. 1979), 1473.

<sup>5</sup> Donald R. Sunukjian, “Amos,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary, An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary Faculty – Old Testament*, ed. John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1985), 1425.

<sup>6</sup> Francis I. Andersen, “Amos, The Book of,” in *The Oxford Companion to the Bible*, ed. Bruce M. Metzger and Michael D. Coogan (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 24.

<sup>7</sup> Gleason L. Archer, Jr., *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1964), 318.

<sup>8</sup> *Halley’s Bible Handbook* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1961), 358.

<sup>9</sup> Hobart E. Freeman, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophets* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1968), 187 [cf. Leon J. Wood, *The Prophets of Israel* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979), 284 for a good discussion on this subject].

<sup>10</sup> Francis I. Andersen, “Amos, The Book of,” in *The Oxford Companion to the Bible*, ed. Bruce M. Metzger and Michael D. Coogan (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 24.

<sup>11</sup> Hobart E. Freeman, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophets* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1968), 184.

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- <sup>13</sup> Hobart E. Freeman, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophets* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1968), 185.
- <sup>14</sup> Gleason L. Archer, Jr., *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1964), 316.
- <sup>15</sup> Donald R. Sunukjian, “Amos,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary, An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary Faculty – Old Testament*, ed. John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1985), 1426.
- <sup>16</sup> “Amos,” in *Nelson’s NKJV Study Bible*, ed. Earl D. Radmacher, Ronald B. Allen, H. Wayne House (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, inc. 1979), 1474.
- <sup>17</sup> “Zechariah,” in *Nelson’s NKJV Study Bible*, ed. Earl D. Radmacher, Ronald B. Allen, H. Wayne House (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, inc. 1979), 1544.
- <sup>18</sup> Hobart E. Freeman, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophets* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1968), 188.
- <sup>19</sup> Eugene H. Merrill, *An Historical Survey of the Old Testament* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1966), 271.
- <sup>20</sup> Abraham J. Heschel, *The Prophets* (Peabody, MA: Prince Press, 2001), 27.
- <sup>21</sup> Francis I. Andersen, “Amos, The Book of,” in *The Oxford Companion to the Bible*, ed. Bruce M. Metzger and Michael D. Coogan (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 24.
- <sup>22</sup> Francis I. Andersen, “Amos, The Book of,” in *The Oxford Companion to the Bible*, ed. Bruce M. Metzger and Michael D. Coogan (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 25.
- <sup>23</sup> <https://graceandknowledge.com/theology/theology-of-amos/>
- <sup>24</sup> Francis I. Andersen, “Amos, The Book of,” in *The Oxford Companion to the Bible*, ed. Bruce M. Metzger and Michael D. Coogan (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 25.
- <sup>25</sup> <http://www.catholic.com/thisrock/1994/9402otg.asp>
- <sup>26</sup> Abraham J. Heschel, *The Prophets* (Peabody, MA: Prince Press, 2001), 37.
- <sup>27</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Book\\_of\\_Jonah](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Book_of_Jonah)
- <sup>28</sup> Raymond B. Dillard and Tremper Longman III, *An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 382.
- <sup>29</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Book\\_of\\_Amos](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Book_of_Amos)
- <sup>30</sup> Abraham J. Heschel, *The Prophets* (Peabody, MA: Prince Press, 2001), 35.

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# SERMON STUDY

Date: Gloria 2018 - Minor Prophets  
 Title: The Lion has roared; who will not fear?  
 Text: Amos 3:1-15  
 Theme: The judgment against sin is inevitable [it is coming], unanswerable [you have no answer for it], and inescapable [you will face it]. There is no answer for sin's demerit and God's judgment apart from the person and work of Jesus Christ.  
 Introduction:

See outline in Class Notes on Amos

1. What is the **author's structure** of this passage? Please a) show *sections with verse references*, b) state the *author's emphasis*, and c) explain what *strategies* you used to see this structure.

- I. The audience addressed ([who are they] vv. 1, 2)
  - A. Their Position (vv. 1, 2a)
    1. The Exodus ([a redeemed family / Exod. 12])
    2. The Election (a chosen nation / Deut. 7:7, 8)
  - B. Their Punishment (v. 2b)
- II. The evidence provided ([why they will be punished] vv. 3-8)
  - A. The logic of God judgment is overwhelming (vv. 3-6)
  - B. The certainty of God's judgment is well-known (vv. 7, 8 [it isn't as if no one knew what was about to happen])
- III. The witnesses called (vv. 9-12 [the surrounding nations stand as witnesses against Israel's transgressions])
  - A. The shameful witnesses (vv. 9, 10 [your pagan neighbors will be witnesses against you])
  - B. The formal sentencing (v. 11)
  - C. The confirming evidence (v. 12 [pieces will be brought to show that judgment actually happened; although a "tiny" remnant would be preserved])
- IV. The judgment described (vv. 13-15)
  - A. It is inescapable ([everyone] the house of Jacob, Israel, the altars of Bethel [no mercy])
  - B. It is inclusive ([everything] the horns of the altar [spiritually / religion], the houses of ivory and the great houses [financially / resources])

Author's Emphasis:

God's judgment against sin is inevitable as is His mercy and grace. First the one, then the other. No one can escape the judgment of God against sin. Humanity's only hope is in Jesus.

- Where is the surprise in this text? You should expect the text to surprise you.

The judgment against sin is inevitable [it is coming], unanswerable [you have no answer for it], and inescapable [you will face it]. There is no answer for sin's demerit and God's judgment apart from the person and work of Jesus Christ.

Author's Strategies:

There is a logical presentation and progression of evidence that concludes with Israel's destruction.

2. How does the **context inform the meaning** of this passage? Answer this question using a) the *literary context* (the passages on either side), b) the *historical context* (circumstances and culture of the audience), and c) the *biblical context* (connections to other places in the Bible).

Literary Context: 3:1; 4:1; 5:1

Historical Context: Even though the nation prospered under Jeroboam II, she was rotten within. Her abuse of power in the exploiting of the vulnerable and abandonment of God caused the intrinsic demerit of sin to crush her.

Biblical Context:

3. In light of the emphasis of this passage in its context, state the **author's main idea** for *his audience* (in one short sentence).

No one escapes the judgment against sin.

4. What parts of this passage **connect to the gospel** of Jesus Christ? What *particular facet of the gospel* is in view? [What are its Christological / Christo-centric contributions?]

Q. How does this descriptive in this chapter contribute to and advance our Christology?

A. If Jesus is not our answer for sin, then nothing awaits us but death.

5. In light of your gospel connection, what **argument** (one short sentence) will you make to **your audience**? What **applications** from this argument will you make for the believer? The unbeliever?

To the believing: Anyone's only hope is in the person and work of Jesus. Continue to cast yourself on the mercy and grace of God in the person and work of Jesus.

To the unbelieving: The judgment against sin is inevitable [it is coming], unanswerable [you have no answer for it], and inescapable [you will face it]. There is no answer for sin's demerit and God's judgment apart from the person and work of Jesus Christ. If you do not know Jesus as your Savior from sin and death, nothing awaits you but inevitable and inescapable judgment.

6. What is your **preaching outline**? [See above]

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## THE BIG PICTURE – HOSEA – “SALVATION”

“Hosea's personal tragedy speaks to readers at the deepest level, moving them emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually.”<sup>1</sup>

- Historical Narrative – The Nation of Israel is about to fall under the destructive hand of God (722BC). Because of their disobedience to the Law, they would now face the wrath of God and be cut off from the land. God’s tool for destruction would be the Assyrians. *He will deliver them into the hands of the Assyrians.*
  - The theme of this book is an earnest testimony against the Northern Kingdom because of its apostasy from the covenant and its widespread corruption in public and private morals.
  - “From the historical record in 2 Kings 14-17 it would appear that Hosea exercised his prophetic ministry in a **chaotic period, filled with disorder, bloodshed and strife.**”<sup>2</sup>
  - “Hosea was the last writing prophet to minister to Israel before they fell to the Assyrians in 722 B.C.”<sup>3</sup>
- Redemption – The faithfulness of God to His word becomes prominent. None of God’s promises will fail.
- Christ – God is portrayed as the lover of man’s soul. He keeps His promise to those He calls His bride. “The name *Hosea* means salvation and his message to Israel was one of saving love.”<sup>4</sup>
- Kingdom – The Kingdom of God sits divided with 10 nations in the North (i.e. Israel) and 2 nations in the South (i.e. Judah [and Benjamin]). The actions of God toward the 10 Northern tribes are within His redemptive purpose. We must not allow our inability to see all of its meaning to rob us of believing by faith that God is working.
- The New Testament Witness – “The divine authority and authenticity of the book is vouched for by numerous quotations found in the New Testament (Hosea 1:9, 10; 2:23 with Rom. 9:26; 1 Pet. 2:10; Hosea 10:8 with Luke 23:30; Hosea 13:14 with 1 Cor. 15:54, 55)”<sup>5</sup>

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Hosea's Ministry @755 BC - 712 BC

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- “More than thirty direct and indirect quotations from the prophet are contained in the Gospels and Epistles.”<sup>6</sup>

1:10	Romans 9:26
2:23	Romans 9:25
6:6	Matthew 9:13; 12:7
10:8	Luke 23:30
11:1	Matthew 2:15
13:14	1 Corinthians 15:55

## INTRODUCTION

“Hosea stands first in the book of the book of the Minor Prophets. The prophecy is not arranged according to chronological order, however, since Hosea is preceded in history by Obadiah, Joel and Jonah, and was a contemporary of Amos, Micah and Isaiah.”<sup>7</sup> It is important to remember Obadiah and Joel do not have date markers internally. Both are contested as to whether or not they are pre-exilic or post-exilic. Their placement fate is intertwined.

Hosea fits into the Hebrew section called the Prophets. In the Hebrew Bible, the twelve Minor Prophets are simply called the twelve and are made up of one singular scroll.

Hosea was the last writing prophet to minister to Israel before they fell to the Assyrians in 722 BC.<sup>8</sup> He was the only one of the writing prophets to come from the northern kingdom (Israel), and his prophecy is primarily directed to that kingdom.

In the language of the text, Hosea married a prostitute. Why would a prophet of God marry a soiled woman? Why would he continue to stay with her, why would he continue to take her back? The answer lies in the symbolism of the relationship. Like many of the prophets, his marriage to Gomer was symbolic of God’s relationship to the nation of Israel.

“The **use of marriage** as a comparison to describe God's relations with Israel will acquire **its fullest meaning in the pages of the New Testament**: Jesus' intimacy with his Church is very appropriately described in these terms (cf. Eph. 23-32).”<sup>9</sup>

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As it relates to the Seed Promise Israel is the womb carrying the divine seed. Often Israel's unfaithfulness and idolatry are placed in the language imagery of marriage and adultery. Israel's defection from God, her betrayal of Him is pictured as whoredom.

"Hosea faithfully executed his office for the space of seventy years, though they remained still in their vices and wickedness and derided the Prophets, and condemned God's judgments."<sup>10</sup>

Why do we find it odd that his ministry was "unsuccessful" in turning the people's hearts back to God? In today's religious landscape where would Hosea's tenure fall? Is the "success" of his ministry determined by size and popularity or is there some other means/criteria measuring his ministry?

## I. WHO WROTE THE BOOK?

According to the text, Hosea, son of Beeri wrote the book (1:1, 2).

1 **The word of the LORD which came to Hosea** the son of Beeri, during the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and during the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel. 2 **When the LORD first spoke through Hosea**, the LORD said to Hosea, "Go, take to yourself a wife of harlotry and have children of harlotry; for the land commits flagrant harlotry, forsaking the LORD."

The name of this prophet, Hosea, means "salvation."<sup>11</sup> Hosea was at the tail end of Amos' ministry and both speak to the nation of Israel. Isaiah and Micah were also contemporaries but were speaking to Judah in the South.

"It is likely that an editor placed Hosea's messages in the present order and composed the narrative descriptions of Hosea's family life (chapters 1 and 3). It is also likely that the editor arranged the books so that each major section (1-3; 4-11; 12-14) ends with a word of hope."<sup>12</sup>

## II. WHEN WAS THE BOOK WRITTEN?

1:1 The word of the LORD which came to Hosea the son of Beeri, during the days of **Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah**, kings of Judah, and during the days of **Jeroboam** the son of Joash, king of Israel.

"Jeroboam--the second; who died in the fifteenth year of Uzziah's forty-one years' reign. From his time forth all Israel's kings worshipped false gods: Zachariah (2Ki 15:9), Menahem (2Ki 15:18), Pekahiah (2Ki 15:24), Pekah (2Ki 15:28), Hoshea (2Ki 17:2). As Israel

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was most flourishing externally under Jeroboam II, who recovered the possessions seized on by Syria, Hosea's prophecy of its downfall at that time was the more striking as it could not have been foreseen by mere human sagacity. Jonah the prophet had promised success to Jeroboam II from God, not for the king's merit, but from God's mercy to Israel; so the coast of Israel was restored by Jeroboam II from the entering of Hamath to the sea of the plain (2Ki 14:23-27)."<sup>13</sup>

"Through being clearly a prophet to Israel, he dates himself more by the reigns of the kings of Judah than by the kings of Israel, mentioning four of the former and only one of the latter."<sup>14</sup>

Since he continued his ministry at least until the beginning of the sole reign of Hezekiah, which dates at 715 BC, he had a **comparatively long ministry** of between forty and fifty years."<sup>15</sup>

"He began his ministry when Israel, under Jeroboam II, was at **the zenith of its power**. He was a younger contemporary of Amos; an older contemporary of Isaiah and Micah."<sup>16</sup>

We are justified in regarding the book as combining **excerpts from sermons** delivered over a period of at least twenty-five years. Possibly the final compilation was published in 725 BC, perhaps thirty years after Hosea's preaching ministry had begun."<sup>17</sup>

It is important to keep in mind that the larger books of the Bible were not written at one seating. They are a compilation of works that were edited by the author to serve a distinct purpose. The doctrine of inspiration protects the process and guarantees the outcome.

### III. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE BOOK?

"The purpose of the author is to convince his fellow countrymen that they need to repent and return in contrition to their patient and ever-loving God."<sup>18</sup>

The fulfillment of the Seed Promise does not rely on Israel's faithfulness. None of the ten Northern tribes were chosen to be carriers of the Seed. Their repentance and faith is personal and individual. They are not "saved" because they were of Israel. They would be saved "by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone."

"The principle significance of Hosea as a prophet is that he sounded **a final call** to Israel for repentance before the death knell of the country. Other prophets had given warning earlier, but Israel had not heeded. Sin had continued quite unabated, God now sent

#### WHAT TIME IS IT?

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Hosea's Ministry @755 BC - 712 BC

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Hosea as **a final emissary**, and the people would have to heed him or else the crushing punishment would fall.”<sup>19</sup>

“Hosea provides **the last word of hope to the northern kingdom** that has always been under the shadow of the apostasy and schism of Jeroboam I. Yet, while the purposes of God continue to be focused on the Davidic dynasty in Judah, **Israel always remains an integral part of God’s plan** for the coming of his kingdom. **The heart of this account** in Hosea 1-3 is recalled in two notable places in the New Testament. Paul in Romans 9:25, 26 quotes Hosea 1:10 and 2:23 in connection with God’s election and the mystery of Israel’s unbelief.”<sup>20</sup>

“The theme of this book is an **earnest testimony against** the Northern Kingdom because of its apostasy from the covenant and its widespread corruption in public and private morals. The purpose of the author is to convince his fellow countrymen that they need to repent and return in contrition to their patient and ever-loving God.”<sup>21</sup>

“Hosea’s role as a prophet was **to expose the nation’s breach of covenant** and announce God’s intention to implement the covenant curses. The major themes of Hosea’s message can be summarized in three words: **sin, judgment, and salvation.**”<sup>22</sup>

#### IV. AN OUTLINE FOR HOSEA

“A man of such literary skill could be expected to write a well-structured product. And such indeed is the case. Two major divisions in the book are recognized by nearly all expositors (chs. 1-3, 4-14). The first division centers upon Hosea’s marriage to Gomer, itself symbolic of God’s relation to Israel. The second contains a collection of prophetic oracles dealing with the infidelity of God’s people and their need of repentance as well as the Lord’s faithfulness and love despite the need for his judgment against his people. An opening superscription (1:1) and a closing subscription (14:9) enclose the entire prophecy.”<sup>23</sup>

Thematic and verbal associations are observable in both sections. Thus chapters 1-3 are structured chiasmically with a rebuke of Israel’s infidelity forming the center of the chiasmus (2:14-23 [HB 2:16-25]). Chapters 4-14 fall into three distinct subdivisions, each climaxed or concluding with the prophet’s advice to his people followed by statements regarding the Lord’s continuing burden for his people (6:1-7:16; 10:12-11:11; 11:12-14:8 [HB 12:1-14:9]). The first two subdivisions are introduced by imperatives: “Hear the word of the LORD” (4:1); “Sound the alarm” (8:1), while the third subdivision is initiated by a statement of God’s charge against Israel (11:12 [HB 12:1]).<sup>8</sup>

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“As a prophet and a poet, Hosea uses an arsenal of rhetorical and poetic techniques to communicate his message in a memorable and persuasive manner. He uses a variety of metaphors as he depicts a broad range of themes. Hosea employs images that were familiar to his contemporaries, drawing extensively from agriculture and nature. Hosea paints some of the most moving, terrifying, and exhilarating word pictures in all of the Bible.”<sup>24</sup>

“The style is very concise and sententious [judgmental/moralistic], above any of the prophets; and in some places it seems to be like the book of Proverbs, without connection, and rather to be called Hosea's sayings than Hosea's sermons.”<sup>25</sup>

Hosea, like most writers, was incredibly skilled with “pen and paper.”

“Hosea provides a vivid illustration of God’s love for unfaithful Israel (11:3, 4; 14:4, 5).”

11:3 Yet it is I who taught Ephraim to walk, I took them in My arms; But they did not know that I healed them. 4 I led them with cords of a man, with bonds of love, And I became to them as one who lifts the yoke from their jaws; And I bent down and fed them.

14:4 I will heal their apostasy, I will love them freely, For My anger has turned away from them. 5 I will be like the dew to Israel; He will blossom like the lily, And he will take root like the cedars of Lebanon.

The book consists of two unequal sections:

Superscription (1:1)

A. Israel’s Disloyalty illustrated by Hosea’s Marriage (1-3)

I offer two perspectives on this one section.

A. Rejection—Symbolized in Hosea’s marriage (1:2-9)

B. Restoration—On the basis of the covenant (1:10-2:1[HB 2:1-3])

C. Rebuke—Due to Israel’s infidelity (2:2-13 [HB 2:4-15])

B'. Renewal—Based on the covenant (2:14-23 [HB 2:16-25])

A'. Reconciliation—Symbolized by Hosea’s marriage (3:1-5)

1. The marriage bond and the birth of the children as symbolic imagery (chapter 1 [Hope: 1:10-2:1]).

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2. The adulterous conduct and Yahweh's measures to win her back (chapter 2 [Hope: 2:14-23]).
3. Commencement of a new marriage covenant (chapter 3 [Hope: Entire chapter])

"Each of these units is concluded with a message of hope: 1:10-2:1 [2:1-3]; 2:16-23 [18-25]; 3:5."<sup>26</sup>

#### B. Israel's Adultery declared by Hosea's Messages (4-14)

"Each of the book's five major sections begins on a sour note but concludes with a positive affirmation of God's commitment to His people and the expectation that He will restore them."<sup>27</sup>

1. The Spiritual Adultery of Israel (4:1-6:3)
2. The Refusal of Israel to Repent of Her Adultery (6:4-8:14)
3. The Judgment of Israel by God (9:1-10:15)
4. The Restoration of Israel to the Lord (11:1-14:9)

Subscription (14:9 [HB 14:10])

#### V. SOME BACKGROUND INFORMATION

"An interpolated list of kings reveals that Hosea prophesied *c.* 780-710 BC, and was a **contemporary of Isaiah and Amos** (compare Ho 1.1, Is 1.1, and Am 1.1). Along with Amos, Hosea's target audience was the Northern Kingdom, while Isaiah's prophecies were directed primarily towards the Southern Kingdom of Judah."<sup>28</sup>

Hosea was addressing the **northern ten tribes**. Remember, in the north there were **no good kings**.

In Judah, several of the kings are mentioned in the opening verse. Uzziah (Hosea 1:1) was the son of Amaziah and was good. He reigned from 790 BC to 740 BC. Next was Ahaz who was the son of Jotham and Ahaz married Jezebel and was evil to the core. He

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was but a puppet in Jezebel's evil hands and heart. He reigned from 735 BC to 715 BC. Hezekiah was next being the son of Ahaz. He was good and reigned from 715 BC to 686 BC.

In Israel, only Jeroboam II is mentioned. He was of the fifth dynasty being the son of Joash. He was evil and reigned from 793 BC to 753 BC. Several other Israel kings were present though not mentioned. They were Zechariah (5<sup>TH</sup> dynasty), Shallum (6<sup>th</sup> dynasty), Menahem and Pekahiah of the seventh dynasty, Pekah (8<sup>th</sup> dynasty) and Hoshea (9<sup>th</sup> dynasty). Hoshea was the king of the captivity. Israel fell in 722 BC to the Assyrians.

## VI. KEY DOCTRINAL IDEAS IN HOSEA

- A. The God of the covenant (1:1, 2, 4, 7; 2:13, 16, 20, 21; 3:1, 5; 4:1, 10, 15, 16; etc.)

"Israel's covenant relationship with God is at the heart of Hosea's message."<sup>29</sup>

LORD is God's covenant name with Israel. He is described as a God who speaks with authority and expects absolute obedience. God has given His Word and will fulfill that Word. "The message of Hosea stresses **the steadfast love of God.**" Thirty-nine times Hosea uses the covenant name of God, YHWH.

"Hosea is the apostle of God's **unchanging love** for Israel."<sup>30</sup>

- B. The judgment of God (5:1, 11; 6:5; 10:4; 12:6)

Hosea, as with all the prophets, preaches a message of judgment upon the nation of Israel because of a broken law. This judgment is because of the nation's iniquity (4:8; 5:5; 7:1; 8:13; 9:7,9; 12:8; 13:12; 14:1,2) and sin (4:7; 8:11; 10:9; 13:2). Judgment falls upon the nation because of a broken Law. The breaching of that Law is called an "iniquity."

"Hosea emphasized the reality and enormity of Israel's sin."

The intrinsic and inherent nature of sin requires, yea demands retribution. All sin has as its wage death.

- C. God is seen as both creator and owner (1:7; 2:23; 3:1, 5; 4:1, 6, 12; 5:4; 6:6; 7:10; etc.).

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Twenty-three times Hosea uses the name *God*. Elohim expresses God as Creator thus owner of all things including Israel. As God, He may do what He wants with what is His and what He does is always right.

D. The mercy of God (1:6, 7; 2:1, 4, 23).

Twenty-one times Hosea uses the word “turn” (2:7, 9; 3:5; 4:9; 5:4, 15; 6:1, 11; etc.) The Lord’s invitation to the nation is one of turning back to His Law. “Mercy” (1:6, 7; 2:1, 4, 23; 14:3) and “Loving-kindness” (2:19; 4:1; 6:4, 6; 10:12; 12:6) are those actions God extends to or withholds from His people as they respond properly to His work in their midst.

The Law is only a shadow of the substance. To return to the Law is to return to the Lord.

## APPLICATION

As we think of Hosea and the picture he paints of God’s undying love for His people, let us think of His love for us. We often see ourselves as Hosea, when we are actually **Gomer**. Our idolatry makes us adulterous. We are the objects of His unfailing covenant. He will fulfill His promises to us.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionaries/bakers-evangelical-dictionary/hosea-theology-of.html>

<sup>2</sup> Hobart E. Freeman, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophets* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1968), 177.

<sup>3</sup> Gleason L. Archer, Jr., *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1964), 321.

<sup>4</sup> Norman L. Geisler, *A Popular Survey of the Old Testament*, [Prince Press, 2007], 240.

<sup>5</sup> Merrill F. Unger, *Introductory Guide to the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1951), 336.

<sup>6</sup> Hobart E. Freeman, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophets* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1968), 336.

<sup>7</sup> Hobart E. Freeman, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophets* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1968), 173.

<sup>8</sup> Irving Jensen, *Minor Prophets of Israel – A Self-Study Guide* (Chicago: Moody), 77, 81.

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.catholic.com/thisrock/1994/9402otg.asp>

<sup>10</sup> 1599 Geneva Bible Notes on Hosea 1:1.

<sup>11</sup> Gleason L. Archer, Jr., *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1964), 320.

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.enterthebible.org/oldtestament.aspx?rid=22>

<sup>13</sup> Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary on Hosea 1:1.

<sup>14</sup> Leon J. Wood, *The Prophets of Israel* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979), 276.

<sup>15</sup> Leon J. Wood, *The Prophets of Israel* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979), 276.

<sup>16</sup> Halley's Bible Handbook (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1961), 353.

<sup>17</sup> Gleason L. Archer, Jr., *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1964), 322.

<sup>18</sup> Gleason L. Archer, Jr., *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1964), 321.

<sup>19</sup> Leon J. Wood, *The Prophets of Israel* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979), 282.

<sup>20</sup> Graeme Goldsworthy, *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 173.

<sup>21</sup> Gleason L. Archer, Jr., *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1964), 321.

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<sup>22</sup> Robert B. Chisholm, Jr., "Hosea," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary, An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary Faculty – Old Testament*, ed. John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1985), 1378.

<sup>23</sup> <https://bible.org/seriespage/introduction-hosea-literary-and-theological-context>

<sup>24</sup> "Hosea," in *Nelson's NKJV Study Bible*, ed. Earl D. Radmacher, Ronald B. Allen, H. Wayne House (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, inc. 1979), 1445.

<sup>25</sup> *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible* on Hosea 1:1.

<sup>26</sup> Paul A. Kruger, "A Theology of Hosea," in *A Guide to Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, Willem A. VanGemeren, General Editor (Grand Rapids: Zondervan), 230.

<sup>27</sup> "Hosea," in *Nelson's NKJV Study Bible*, ed. Earl D. Radmacher, Ronald B. Allen, H. Wayne House (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, inc. 1979), 1445.

<sup>28</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Book\\_of\\_Hosea](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Book_of_Hosea)

<sup>29</sup> "Hosea," in *Nelson's NKJV Study Bible*, ed. Earl D. Radmacher, Ronald B. Allen, H. Wayne House (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, inc. 1979), 1446.

<sup>30</sup> Merrill F. Unger, *Introductory Guide to the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1951), 334.

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# METAPHOR AND SIMILE

## IN HOSEA THE PROPHET

Prepared by Patrick J. Griffiths  
Scripture (NAS95)

Hosea 1:8 ¶ When she had weaned Lo-ruhamah, she conceived and gave birth to a son.<sup>9</sup> And the LORD said, "Name him Lo-ammi, for you are not My people and I am not your God." <sup>10</sup> **Yet the number of the sons of Israel Will be like the sand of the sea**, Which cannot be measured or numbered; And in the place Where it is said to them, "You are not My people," It will be said to them, "You are the sons of the living God." <sup>11</sup> And the sons of Judah and the sons of Israel will be gathered together, And they will appoint for themselves one leader, And they will go up from the land, For great will be the day of Jezreel.

Ho 2:3 Or I will strip her naked And expose her as on the day when she was born. **I will also make her like a wilderness**, Make her like desert land And slay her with thirst.

Hosea 4:15 Though you, Israel, play the harlot, Do not let Judah become guilty; Also do not go to Gilgal, Or go up to Beth-aven And take the oath: "As the LORD lives!" <sup>16</sup> Since **Israel is stubborn Like a stubborn heifer**, Can the LORD now **pasture them Like a lamb in a large field**? <sup>17</sup> Ephraim is joined to idols; Let him alone. <sup>18</sup> Their liquor gone, They play the harlot continually; Their rulers dearly love shame. <sup>19</sup> **The wind wraps them in its wings**, And they will be ashamed because of their sacrifices.

8 ¶ Blow the horn in Gibeah, The trumpet in Ramah. Sound an alarm at Beth-aven: "Behind you, Benjamin!" <sup>9</sup> Ephraim will become a desolation in the day of rebuke; Among the tribes of Israel I declare what is sure. <sup>10</sup> The princes of Judah have become like those who move a boundary; On them **I will pour out My wrath like water**. <sup>11</sup> Ephraim is oppressed, crushed in judgment, Because he was determined to follow man's command. <sup>12</sup> Therefore **I am like a moth** to Ephraim And **like rotteness to the house of Judah**. <sup>13</sup> When Ephraim saw his sickness, And Judah his wound, Then Ephraim went to Assyria And sent to King Jareb. But he is unable to heal you, Or to cure you of your wound. <sup>14</sup> For **I will be like a lion to Ephraim And like a young lion to the house of Judah**. I, even I, will tear to pieces and go away, I will carry away, and there will be none to deliver. <sup>15</sup> I will go away and return to My place Until they acknowledge their guilt and seek My face; In their affliction they will earnestly seek Me.

Hosea 6:1 ¶ "Come, let us return to the LORD. For He has torn us, but He will heal us; He has wounded us, but He will bandage us. <sup>2</sup> "He will revive us after two days; He will raise us up on the third day, That we may live before Him. <sup>3</sup> "So let us know, let us press on to know the LORD. **His going forth is as certain as the dawn**; And **He will come to us like the rain, Like the spring rain watering the earth**." <sup>4</sup> ¶ What shall I do with you, O Ephraim? What shall I do with you, O Judah? **For your loyalty is like a morning cloud And like the dew which goes**

**away early.** 5 Therefore **I have hewn them in pieces** by the prophets; I have slain them by the words of My mouth; And the judgments on you are **like the light that goes forth.** 6 For I delight in loyalty rather than sacrifice, And in the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings. 7 But like Adam they have transgressed the covenant; There they have dealt treacherously against Me. 8 Gilead is a city of wrongdoers, **Tracked with bloody footprints.** 9 And as **raiders wait for a man,** So a band of priests murder on the way to Shechem; Surely they have committed crime. 10 In the house of Israel I have seen a horrible thing; Ephraim's harlotry is there, Israel has defiled itself. 11 Also, O Judah, **there is a harvest appointed for you,** When I restore the fortunes of My people.

Ho 7: 2 And **they do not consider in their hearts That I remember all their wickedness. Now their deeds are all around them;** They are before My face. 4 They are all adulterers, **Like an oven heated by the baker Who ceases to stir up the fire From the kneading of the dough until it is leavened.** 6 **For their hearts are like an oven** As they approach their plotting; Their anger smolders all night, In the morning it burns like a flaming fire. 7 **All of them are hot like an oven,** And they consume their rulers; All their kings have fallen. None of them calls on Me.

Ho 7:11 So **Ephraim has become like a silly dove,** without sense; They call to Egypt, they go to Assyria.

Ho 7:12 When they go, I will spread My net over them; **I will bring them down like the birds of the sky.** I will chastise them in accordance with the proclamation to their assembly.

Ho 7:16 They turn, but not upward, **They are like a deceitful bow;** Their princes will fall by the sword Because of the insolence of their tongue. This will be their derision in the land of Egypt.

Ho 8:1 ¶ Put the trumpet to your lips! **Like an eagle the enemy comes against the house of the LORD,** Because they have transgressed My covenant And rebelled against My law.

Ho 8:8 ¶ Israel is swallowed up; **They are now among the nations Like a vessel in which no one delights.**

Ho 8:9 For they have gone up to Assyria, **Like a wild donkey all alone;** Ephraim has hired lovers.

Ho 9:4 They will not pour out drink offerings of wine to the LORD, Their sacrifices will not please Him. **Their bread will be like mourners' bread;** All who eat of it will be defiled, For their bread will be for themselves alone; It will not enter the house of the LORD.

Ho 9:10 **I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness;** I saw your forefathers as the earliest fruit on the fig tree in its first season. But they came to Baal-peor and devoted themselves to shame, And they became as detestable as that which they loved.

Ho 9:11 ¶ As for Ephraim, **their glory will fly away like a bird--No birth, no pregnancy and no conception!**

Ho 10:4 They speak mere words, **With worthless oaths they make covenants; And judgment sprouts like poisonous weeds in the furrows of the field.**

Ho 10:7 Samaria will be cut off with her king **Like a stick on the surface of the water.**

Ho 11:10 They will walk after the LORD, **He will roar like a lion;** Indeed He will roar And His sons will come trembling from the west.

Ho 11:11 **They will come trembling like birds from Egypt And like doves from the land of Assyria;** And I will settle them in their houses, declares the LORD.

Ho 12:11 Is there iniquity in Gilead? Surely they are worthless. In Gilgal they sacrifice bulls, Yes, **their altars are like the stone heaps Beside the furrows of the field.**

Ho 13:3 Therefore **they will be like the morning cloud And like dew which soon disappears, Like chaff which is blown away from the threshing floor And like smoke from a chimney.**

Ho 13:7 So **I will be like a lion to them; Like a leopard I will lie in wait by the wayside.**

Ho 13:8 I will encounter them **like a bear robbed of her cubs,** And I will tear open their chests; There I will also devour them like a lioness, As a wild beast would tear them.

Ho 14:5 I will be **like the dew** to Israel; He will **blossom like the lily,** And **he will take root like the cedars of Lebanon.**

Ho 14:6 His shoots will sprout, And **his beauty will be like the olive tree And his fragrance like the cedars of Lebanon.**

Ho 14:7 Those who live in his shadow Will again raise grain, And **they will blossom like the vine. His renown will be like the wine of Lebanon.**

Ho 14:8 ¶ O Ephraim, what more have I to do with idols? It is I who answer and look after you. **I am like a luxuriant cypress;** From Me comes your fruit.

