

Chapter 1 : The Imagery of Hosea's Family and the Restoration of Israel | Religious Studies Center

The Global Message of Hosea for Today The book of Hosea is rich in relevance for the church today. Because Hosea describes God's relationship with his people in terms of marriage, we learn of the significance God attaches both to the institution of marriage as well as to the church's relationship to God.

Today, however, we will study Hosea only in this class. I still have ten more minor prophets to cover before the quarter is over. The prophet Hosea is recognized as one of the greatest prophets of the eighth century B. According to the introduction to his book, Hosea was the son of Beeri. However, nothing is known about his family, the place where he was born, nor the place where he preached. Hosea was the only classical prophet from the Northern Kingdom. He probably preached in the capital city of Samaria and maybe also at Bethel. Hosea ministered during the chaotic last days of Israel before the fall of Samaria in B. Hosea came to his vocation through a tragic experience in his life. Whenever one studies the book of Hosea, one is fascinated by the events related to his marriage to Gomer. Hosea and Gomer had three children; two sons and one daughter were born out of their marriage. According to the book, God commanded Hosea to marry a prostitute. The New Jerusalem Bible reads: Those who give a spiritual meaning to the story do so in order to avoid the moral problem of God commanding a prophet to marry a prostitute. Proposed Solutions Three views have been proposed which are compromises to the actual, historical view. The Proleptic View This view seeks to avoid the moral problem the marriage would have created for Hosea. This view says that God told Hosea to marry Gomer. Gomer was a pure woman before marriage. After her marriage to Hosea she became a prostitute. Thus, looking back, when God told Hosea to marry Gomer, he realized that God was asking him to marry a prostitute. The Spiritual Harlotry View This view proposes that the harlotry of Gomer was spiritual, that is, Gomer was an idol worshiper. This view says that God commanded Hosea to marry a woman who worshiped idols. The Cultic Functionary View This view proposes that God commanded Hosea to marry one of the women who served as a Baal priestess in the temple. Gomer would be a woman who served among the cultic prostitutes but was not a common prostitute. Although several scholars will be named, for the sake of space, a full bibliography will not be provided at this time. Von Rad says that the prophetic symbolism behind the marriage makes reconstruction impossible. Harrelson says that Gomer lapsed into prostitution after marriage. Robinson believes that Hosea married a sacred prostitute. Hengstenberg believes that this marriage never occurred. The marriage was only a vision or a dream of the prophet. Jerome and John Calvin. Many Jewish Rabbis believed that the marriage is only an allegory invented by Hosea to illustrate the love of God. Kaufmann believes that the marriage of Hosea was a stage play. James Newsome and C. Both scholars believe that the marriage was an actual experience in the life of the prophet, that is, Gomer was a prostitute before marriage. In his book *The Prophets*, Abraham Heschel provides several reasons why all these interpretations, except the literal view, should be rejected because the biblical text portrays an actual event in the life of Hosea. Many Christians reject this interpretation because they cannot believe that God would actually command his servant to marry a woman of ill repute, a prostitute. Such an act would be repugnant to many people. However, as Newsome wrote: Leave a comment and let me know your views.

Chapter 2 : God Told Hosea To Do What? | Today's Christian Marriage

This is God's Message to Hosea son of Beeri. It came to him during the royal reigns of Judah's kings Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. This was also the time that Jeroboam son of Joash was king over.

Scholars believe Hosea prophesied for approximately 38 years. The Major and Minor Prophet division of the Holy Bible does not denote the importance or rank of the writing prophets, but the length of the Holy Books which bear their prophecies. Hosea was the only writing prophet known to have originated from the Northern Kingdom. Four of the six kings suffered devastating deaths Zechariah, Shallum, Pekahiah, Pekah were murdered by their successors while on the throne, one captured in the midst of battle Hoshea for disloyalty and only one to reign as king long enough to be succeeded by his son, Menahem. Why did such tragedy continually occur during the ministry of Hosea? We are told that these earthly kings were selected by God "in anger" and then were taken away "in wrath" Hosea We are further given this visual description of the era "bloodshed followed bloodshed" Hosea 4: It is of no great wondering the Northern Kingdom saw its end during the era of Hosea. Hosea ardently warned the Israelites of the external threat of Assyria. He predicted the Israelite Nation would be plunged into certain anarchy! No, political unrest would ensue for some time. Not only did Hosea live during the time of political unrest but in the first part of the Holy Book of Hosea we learn that the prophet himself was ordered by God to marry an adulterous wife, Gomer. Not only was the faithful prophet Hosea forced to marry an adulterous wife but she bore the prophet three children of whom were given foreboding names to carry. The firstborn a son was named "God Sows". The second child a daughter was named, "Not Pitied. Further family unrest was to be encountered when the children were instructed to drive the unfaithful mother from their home. Yet, the obedient prophet with all this marital discourse was ordered by God to continue loving and caring about his wife. Hosea was instructed to buy back his wife from her paramour for 15 shekels of silver, chastise her, and once more offer her his love and support. How could all this be? God was using Hosea under very disturbing circumstances and unrest for especially a prophet as symbolic representation for the time to demonstrate as a lesson His relation to Israel. When the children drove their mother from the household it was for her benefit not simply cruel punishment. Reform and a change in behavior were sought in the manner appropriate for that day. The prophet was ordered to continue caring for his wife and not to discard her permanently but to take her back in to his home and place her in isolation for a period of time Hosea 3. How was this symbolism related to the Israelites? They had been disloyal to God by worshipping Canaanite gods. The Israelites went through exile. The Lord through all of this though continued to keep the Israelite nation in His heart and took them back as Hosea took Gomer back. The Israel exile would not be a final act of God. Tertullian, a fiery Christian writer from Carthage North Africa c. Israelite survival depended upon repentance; they must forsake their idols and return to the Lord their God Hosea 6 and Hosea envisioned the basic problem of the Israelite nation was that they as a people failed to recognize God Hosea 4: Israel was at an extreme in spiritual adultery. They worshipped Baal and sacrificed at pagan sites, associated with pagan prostitutes at the sanctuaries Hosea 4: Materialism was rampant among the Israelite Nation. History records that in BC the Assyrians captured the capital of Samaria after a three year strong hold and the Northern Kingdom existed no more. A faithful love, a Fatherly love. Unfaithfulness of the nation went punished, yet Israel was restored in the heart of God after repentance. When we refuse to be children of God just as Hosea prophesied there are consequences to our actions. Hosea warned his listeners to change their ways. They refused to respond to the call of God and had to be brought to repentance. Is there a lesson to be found in the Holy Book of Hosea for us as well today? Do we fail to listen to the voice of God? In the busyness of life, with full calendars, with an active family life are we too weary to hear the call? Are we praying from our hearts during the Divine Liturgy or do we easily become distracted or tired? Just as the Israelites were taught the consequences of their actions we will taught the consequences of our own. As we enter into the Holy Great Fast may we all take time for the Lord with prayer, repentance, and confession. Let us not be too busy and have too many things of the world to do so we can experience the wholeness of life by putting our Lord first. The Lord Jesus Christ came into the world not to condemn us but to save us all John 3:

Chapter 3 : Enter the Bible - Books: Hosea

An in-depth look at the Book of Hosea and how it applies to today.

His prophecy began with Jeroboam II, when the northern kingdom of Israel was at its zenith, and continued for the next 40 years until just before Samaria fell to Assyria in B. About years before the time of Hosea, the 10 northern tribes Israel had separated from the southern tribes of Judah and set up an independent kingdom. When Hosea arrived on the scene, Israel was experiencing the greatest time of peace and national prosperity since the separation. However, the good times were not to last, as social injustice, political disorder and moral decay began to eat away at the fabric of the society. His message comes straight from the heart. And this is what makes the book unique. His early years overlapped with Amos; and his later years, with Micah. Israel, described as an unfaithful wife, is exhorted to return to her God who will show mercy and compassion. Because the nation does not repent of its sins, it will suffer judgement. The Universal Bible Dictionary states: The slide away from God into national decline and decay was worsened by: Pursuit of materialism as a dominant way of life. Dependence on international alliances, demonstrating a lack of faith and trust in God. Moral corruption of the priests leading the people away from God and His ways. A combination of these and other factors ultimately led Israel into captivity and cruel bondage by the Assyrians. Use of metaphors Hosea employs a string of metaphors to describe the relationship between Israel and God. The nation is an unfaithful wife chapters ; a stubborn heifer 4: Certain metaphors are also used to describe how God deals with His people. In matters of judgment He is referred to as: Yet the God of mercy is also depicted as a forgiving husband chapters ; a loving parent Some shock, by exposing the ugliness and depth of sin and straightforwardly compelling repentance; others comfort and encourage the faithful to trust in the goodness of God and persevere through the coming judgement. It is important to emphasize that the overriding pictures of Yahweh and his people point to restoration. This has resulted in much discussion and some controversy among biblical scholars. What the prophet experienced serves as a meaningful lesson of how God views the spiritual adultery and unfaithfulness of His covenant people Israel. After leading the Israelites out of Egypt, which typifies sin and evil, God offered to make a covenant an agreement with them at Mount Sinai Exodus God required that the people of Israel keep their part of the agreement by obeying Him. The people readily affirmed they would keep their part in the agreement verse 8. A marriage agreement God then spoke the 10 Commandments they were to obey as part of the covenant Exodus He considered His covenant with Israel a marriage agreement Ezekiel As a result, Israel was cut offâ€”divorcedâ€”from God and His blessings Jeremiah 3: Jezreel was the firstborn son Hosea 1: The second child was named Lo-Ruhamah 1: God did not reject the people of Israel, but they rejected Him Hebrews 8: Hosea then repeats two of the names in chapter 2: A time will come when both Israel and Judah will unite as one and be restored to greatness Ezekiel Unprecedented blessings will be poured out on a transformed and humble people Ezekiel Outline of Hosea Below is a suggested outline of the book of Hosea with some key passages. Hosea recognized a major problem: Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you. A record of evil and corruption. Punishment for idolatry and forgetting to honor God. God continues to love His people. But the people continue to sin and bring punishment on themselves. Repentance; salvation by God; restoration. Future restoration As with all the prophets, Hosea points to a future time when God promises to restore Israel and all nations. God lays the blame at the feet of the priests who failed to teach right from wrong Jeremiah Yet in the future, changes will be implemented. Notice what God inspired Jeremiah to record: What a wonderful time that will be! Each person has a choice to share in the solution to the problems that beset the nations today Revelation As we read in 1 Corinthians 2:

Chapter 4 : Hosea the Prophet – Literature Resources

*The Message of Hosea (The Bible Speaks Today) [Derek Kidner] on blog.quintoapp.com *FREE* shipping on qualifying offers. Go and marry a prostitute. These are the first words God spoke to his prophet Hosea.*

Smith If God gave you the assignment of marrying someone you knew would be unfaithful, what would you think? What would you do? This actually happened to the Old Testament prophet Hosea. In fact, the Apostle Paul said that God chose this people even before they were born and totally without respect to any foreseen merit on their part Romans 9: God first shared these promises in Genesis chapters 12 to 22, and in a sense these eleven chapters are the very heart of the Bible. In other words, the whole story of the Bible is about how God is working in the lives of his people, Israel, to bring about the fulfillment of the promises he made to Abraham and his seed. The Bible is an epic drama of how God wants to show his love for his chosen people, and he wants to do that by fulfilling the special promises he made to them; but there is a snag: So, in order for God to fulfill his promises to Israel, as a nation, somehow God is going to have to bring the nation of Israel to repentance and faith. Now I think we could agree that the salvation of an entire nation is an epic challenge. However, the promises will not be fulfilled to unbelievers in that line. The promises will be fulfilled to a generation of Israel in the future that turns to the Lord with their whole heart. So, in order for the promises to be fulfilled, it will be necessary for Israel, as a nation, to be regenerated, because the fulfillment of the promises involves an intimate personal relationship with God. So, not surprisingly, the theme of the Bible is how God is working in the lives of his people, Israel, to bring them to faith in him, his word, and his Messiah, without which, they cannot be born again cf. The story of the book is about how God, who found Israel to be stubbornly faithless and spiritually rebellious, had to allow them to experience the consequences of their waywardness. Obviously this is not a passage we should use for advice on how to find a mate. We can find that kind of advice in the book of Proverbs, as well as in the New Testament. So, with regard to marriage, this is a special case, with a special purpose. God said there was no faithfulness, or kindness, or knowledge of him 4: Virtually every hill and shade tree in Israel had become a place for the immoral revelries involved in the worship of Baal and Ashtarte the male and female fertility idols, cf. He married Gomer, and in the course of time three children were born. The first child was named, Jezreel. This name comes from two Hebrew words: It would not be long after this prophecy that Israel would be invaded by Assyria; that invasion happened in B. The Assyrians were undoubtedly one of the cruelest people in history. In fact, you may recall that the prophet Jonah was sent to proclaim judgment upon the city of Nineveh, the ancient capital of the Assyrian Empire. When the Assyrians invaded a land, they had no mercy on the people they conquered. When they conquered a city, they were known to throw the children off the city walls, or if there were no wall, they would take them to a nearby cliff and throw them onto the rocks below. Conquered people they thought would not make good slaves, or anyone they particularly disliked, they would impale on large pikes set upright in the ground. They were experts at making their victims suffer as much, and as long, as possible. Those that survived had metal hooks driven through their jaws and were connected to chains and led away into captivity. If God had continued to shield Israel from the consequences of their sins, they would have never understood the true nature of their choices. If we were to put this into modern terms, we might imagine God saying something like this: Of course the prophetic symbolism is that just as Gomer had brought forth a child born of her harlotry, so Israel had brought forth its children in spiritual harlotry by going after idols. Israel, having been unfaithful, is about to experience the full effect of being cut off from God. When a person persistently sins and never has to pay a penalty, what happens? Well, often they develop a distorted view of reality. They begin to think they can sin without consequences. So even though it can be very painful, having to deal with the consequences of sin can be a positive thing if it leads to repentance. I will also take away My wool and My flax given to cover her nakedness. Some other man might have been happy to see his wayward wife fall on such hard times, but not Hosea. So while Gomer was living in her adulterous relationship, Hosea was behind the scenes making sure she had clothes, food, and money. In time the consequences she had been protected from began to roll in. Now even though Gomer deserved what she got, this is a sad story. You shall not play the harlot, nor shall you have

a man; so I will also be toward you. Gomer may have been sold into slavery, but Hosea never forgot her and never stopped loving her, and when God revealed to him that the time was right, Hosea went and redeemed Gomer out of slavery. Their relationship needed a lot of mending before they could again live together as man and wife. We notice that Gomer, though purchased, was not immediately restored to her former status as a wife, and things would remain that way until her heart changed. The same is true with God and Israel. God allowed Israel to experience the consequences of their unfaithfulness. He allowed them to experience the destruction of their nation, and captivity; and although he purchased them, they have remained in an unrestored condition for all these years. So what is God waiting for? Did you notice when? Then you will know the LORD. Now aside from the obviously important truth that God has a future for Israel, you may be wondering how any of this applies to us today. Did you notice the cycle that Israel went through? They belonged to God. Somewhere along the way they got their eyes onto other loves. Finally they reached a point where there was no alternative but to expose them to the consequences of their choices. Later, after God would redeem them out of their enslavement it would be a long process before they could be fully restored. Did God stop loving them? Does he still want a relationship with them? Can they be restored? Some of you reading this might have walked close to the Lord at one time, but something happened; you allowed other things to come between you and him. It seemed that you took your eyes off of him for only a moment, but that moment turned into an hour, and the hour into days, weeks, months, perhaps even years. You used to hear his voice calling you back, but now all you hear is deafening silence. You pray, but there is no answer. But I want you to know that no matter how horrible your failure may seem to you, God has never stopped loving you, and he will never give up on you. Just like Hosea knew before he married Gomer that she would be an unfaithful wife, and just like God knew before he chose Israel that they would be an unfaithful people, so he has always known everything about you, and me; and he chose to love us in spite of what he has always known. God can fix your life if you will step out of the shadow, and allow him to put his arms around you, unworthy though you feel. Restoration might not happen instantly, but be assured that God has not stopped loving you; and if you have ever known him, he will never abandon you, no matter where your choices may have led you. You can begin that relationship today. Jesus said even a tiny bit of faith can accomplish great things, and God will even give you the faith you need Eph.

Chapter 5 : The Ministry of Hosea: A Call to Faithfulness (Hosea)

Enduring Love: Hosea's Message for Today does more than comment on the verses of the prophetic text; each chapter is a practical lesson about the unfailing compassion of God toward sinful people. Explore God's enduring love and learn how it impacts your life right now.

The Messages of the Prophets This table summarises the messages of the sixteen prophets in chronological order. Some guesswork is involved here, as not all of the books of the prophets specify when they were written, or originally preached. Almost immediately afterwards comes a batch of four important prophets, spread out over a period of about sixty years: More than fifty years after the end of these ministries, starting around BC, comes another batch. These five prophets minister leading up to the fall of Jerusalem: Nahum prophecies to Nineveh the capital of Assyria, who had conquered Israel ; Zephaniah, Jeremiah and Habakkuk to the remaining Southern kingdom; and Obadiah to neighbouring Edom. Almost as soon as the first group of exiles are sent to Babylon before the final fall of Jerusalem , Ezekiel and Daniel, among them, begin to prophesy to their contemporaries there. Their ministries last through most of the the exile. Finally, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi ninety years after the other two prophesy to the remnant of Judah that returned to the land to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple. Prophet Key Verse and Summary of Message Joel Judah "Even now", declares the Lord, "return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning. The Day is seen as one of division: Part of his prophecy was fulfilled at Pentecost. Jonah Nineveh When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he had compassion and did not bring upon them the destruction he had threatened - Jonah 3: The message of the book, however, is that God is unlimited by geography, can use circumstances to achieve his own ends, and loves everyone: God is both holy and loving. Hosea Israel "How can I give you up, Ephraim? How can I hand you over, Israel? Isaiah Judah "To whom will you compare me, or who is my equal? And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God" - Micah 6: Emphasises the need for ethical behaviour in secular life as well as religious purity. Nahum Nineveh The Lord has given a command concerning you, Nineveh. Zephaniah Judah "The great day of the Lord is near - near and coming quickly" - Zephaniah 1: Jeremiah Judah "O house of Israel, can I not do with you as the potter does? Warnings to repent are unheeded, and Jerusalem falls. Jeremiah then predicts future restoration after seventy years of exile, and warns the remaining Judaeans not to go down to Egypt. Habakkuk Judah "Though it linger, wait for it. It will certainly come, and will not delay" - Habakkuk 2: Habakkuk asks God why he allows injustice to continue in Judah. When God replies that he will end it by means of the Babylonians, he asks God how he can use those even more unrighteous as agents of judgement. God replies that all wickedness will surely be judged at the proper time. Habakkuk concludes that he can rejoice in God whatever the circumstances. Obadiah denounces their pride and security in their mountain strongholds, predicting a total annihilation of the Edomite nation. Ezekiel Exiles "I saw the glory of the God of Israel coming from the east. His voice was like the roar of rushing waters, and the land was radiant with his glory" - Ezekiel The rest was written after this point, and the theme is that restoration will follow. The book is punctuated by complicated, confusing and occasionally terrifying visions, and by symbolic actions on the part of the author. The overriding theme is the glory of God. The remainder of the book is a series of highly figurative prophecies concerning the rise and fall of subsequent empires, and the eventual end to all things. Throughout, the emphasis is on the sovereignty of God. The early part of the book is concerned with rebuilding the temple; the later part is a glimpse into the New Covenant future. A contemporary of Haggai, the substance of at least parts of his message is similar; but the style totally different. Malachi emphasises that God wants the best we have to offer, not just the least we can get away with.

Chapter 6 : The Messages of the Prophets

Hosea's message was primarily for the northern kingdom of Israel, although he occasionally refers to the southern kingdom of Judah. His prophecy began with Jeroboam II, when the northern kingdom of Israel was at its zenith, and continued for the next 40 years until just before Samaria fell to Assyria in B.C.

The religious leaders of the people are singled out by Hosea for condemnation. Their job was to lead the people in faithfulness, but they actually did the opposite. The prophet also criticizes the political leaders of the nation for forming covenants with Egypt and Assyria, rather than relying on the Lord. The book also includes messages of hope, most notably the tender image of God as the parent who taught the child Israel to walk and will not, in the end, abandon the nation. Where Do I Find It? Hosea is the twenty-eighth book in the Old Testament. It is the first of the so-called "minor" or shorter prophets, the twelve books that make up the final portion of the Old Testament. Most of the messages in the book of Hosea were spoken by Hosea. We do not know if he wrote them down himself; his words were most probably collected by followers who were convinced that Hosea spoke for God. It is also likely that the editor arranged the books so that each major section ; ; ends with a word of hope. When Was It Written? Hosea most likely spoke his messages between the years 750 and 700 B.C. Sometime after that, the messages of Hosea were collected, edited, and copied. It is not clear when this process was completed, but it is likely that it was finished before the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. How Do I Read It? The prophetic messages in the book of Hosea can be read both individually and as a group. The particular messages should be studied individually to determine what they say and how they apply to life today. Marriage as a Metaphor for the Covenant Hosea 1: According to this metaphor, God is like a faithful husband who is married to Israel, a faithless wife. This section of Hosea has been the source of much controversy and debate. This section announces judgment on Israel and then promises restoration following punishment. Hosea gives the children symbolic names--"Jezreel," which means "God sows," but was also the name of a place in which the kings of Israel had committed atrocities; "Lo-ruhamah" or "Not Shown Mercy" , because God no longer will have mercy on the people; and "Lo-ammi" or "Not My People". In the message, God first says, "She is not my wife, and I am not her husband" 2: God promises to punish the people for their unfaithfulness. The chapter closes with God promising restoration and reunion: "And I will take you for my wife forever" 2: It is not clear whether the chapter is referring to the same incident as chapter 1, to a different incident that also involves Gomer, or to an incident with a different woman see below. Prophetic Messages of Hosea 4: Chapters present one subsection; chapters a second subsection. Further Messages of Judgment 4: Hosea also condemns the moral evil and political intrigues of the nation. God the Loving Parent God promises that on the other side of judgment, the relationship will continue: "I will not execute my fierce anger" Messages of Judgment The messages highlight the corrupt and wicked political leadership of Israel; they also include the announcement that God has a lawsuit with Judah. A Call to Repent God the Faithful Gardener Rolf Jacobson, Associate Professor of Old Testament The book of Hosea is one of the four books that come to us from prophets who were active during the eighth century B.C. Unlike Amos, Hosea himself was a citizen of the northern kingdom. Hosea had a very long prophetic ministry, probably from about 750 to 700 B.C. Hosea began his prophetic activity in the northern kingdom during the reign of Jeroboam II who died in 746 B.C. As Assyrian might increased, political stability in Israel decreased. In about 722 B.C. Assyria prevailed over the revolting countries; Pekah was murdered by Hoshea, who reigned over a brief period of peace. The interpretation of these chapters is controversial. It is possible that Hosea came from a priestly lineage, although this is uncertain. Hosea was particularly critical of the priests and prophets, who had been given the responsibility to teach the people the ways of the Lord but who neglected that responsibility. Like Amos and other prophets, Hosea did not teach a new morality. His message was conservative in that he called people to faithfulness to the laws of Moses. Hosea served up a withering attack on the religious and political structures of Israel. God had made a covenant with Israel. In spite of the coming punishment, Hosea also knew that on the other side of judgment, God would graciously continue a relationship with the people. Using tender and emotional language, Hosea proclaimed that God longed for a relationship with the people and would not finally let them go. It should also

be noted that interpretation of Hosea is complicated by the fact that the Hebrew text of Hosea is very difficult. At many points, the text is not clear. One likely reason for this is that the prophet spoke a northern dialect of Hebrew that we do not fully understand. Perhaps the most difficult issue to deal with when interpreting Hosea is the issue of divine violence. The book of Hosea portrays God as one who will exercise judgment on Israel by means of military defeat and national destruction. While the book does promise that God will remain faithful both in the midst of and on the other side of the violence, this assurance does not erase the impression that God seems to find violence an appropriate means of judgment. However, it is not even certain if sexual acts were part of the Canaanite religion or if there were cultic prostitutes in ancient Israel or its neighbors. A second interpretation that has been popular is to view Gomer as a common prostitute, one who earns a living by means of sexual activity, but whose activities have no religious content. An interpretation that is gaining wide acceptance is that Gomer was not a prostitute at all, but a "promiscuous woman," one who was unfaithful to her husband. Are the narratives of chapters 1 and 3 meant to be taken as historical descriptions, or are they metaphorical? If historical, do the two chapters simply describe the same event, using different words? Or do the two chapters tell of two different events involving the same woman? Or are the women of the two chapters actually two different women? Hosea suggests that Gomer bore three children, but it is unclear if Hosea was the biological father of the children; the fact that he gave the children names suggests that he was at least their legal father. Or are chapters meant to be interpreted metaphorically and not as historical reports? Many commentators have thought so, believing that God would not order a prophet to marry a prostitute. One basic problem is that when God is seen as the faithful husband and Israel as the unfaithful bride, some interpreters have drawn very bad conclusions about the nature of marriage and about the nature of women in marriage. Because the book of Hosea shows "God the husband" disciplining "Israel the wife" by violent means, some misguided and sexist interpreters have concluded that the book of Hosea seems to endorse the physical abuse of women and children within marriage. This is such a large problem, that some recent interpreters have questioned whether people of faith should even study Hosea 2, in which the problem is most difficult. A second basic problem has to do with the metaphor of the unfaithful wife as a primary image for human unfaithfulness. Because women are so often the victims of abuse and unfaithfulness on the part of men, to draw on the metaphor of the unfaithful wife as a primary image for human infidelity can lead to the false conclusion that women are more unfaithful or sinful than men. Hosea began to prophesy during a time of relative peace and prosperity. The Egyptian Empire to the southwest and the Assyrian Empire to the northeast were at lower ebb as Hosea began his ministry, but that soon changed as Assyrian power grew and its dominance began. It is likely that Hosea lived to know the destruction of the northern kingdom. Hosea is a book made up of messages once spoken by the prophet Hosea, but he is not the "author" of the book. Most of the speeches in Hosea were once spoken by the prophet, but they were most likely collected by other people--probably followers or disciples of Hosea--and gathered into a book by these people. The editors shaped the book into sections ; ; , which evidence a pattern: It is also likely that the editors shaped the individual prophetic messages of the book in subtle ways; the handiwork of the editors cannot be untangled from the words of the original prophet. Hosea is aware of the history of Israel and draws on that history to condemn the people. He refers to traditions from the wilderness see chapters , the Ten Commandments 4: Hosea does not preach a new social morality, but calls Israel to faithfulness to the Law of God 4: Some interpreters in the past have seen the prophets as presenting a new ethical system or advancing the moral reflection of Israel. But like the other prophets of the eighth century B. Because God loves people, God is angry when they suffer. In the New Testament, Jesus teaches that the two greatest commandments are to love the Lord and to love the neighbor. Hosea taught that to love God is to love the neighbor and to refrain from doing evil. He also proclaimed that the love of gods other than the Lord led people to commit acts of injustice and oppression. Because God is just, God will neither ignore the wickedness of the people nor will God end the covenant relationship with them. Unlike the other eighth-century prophets, Hosea did not emphasize the word "justice" in his preaching as much as he did the "knowledge" or "understanding" of God 4: The term "knowledge" extends beyond merely a sense of intellectual acknowledgement to include the sense of "obedience" and even "lifestyle."

More than any other prophet, Hosea linked his message closely with his personal life. By marrying a woman he knew would eventually betray his trust and by giving his children names that sent messages of judgment on Israel, Hosea's prophetic word flowed out of the life of his family.

This horrific perception is that God in the book of Hosea had instructed the Prophet Hosea to marry sexually intimate a prostitute. It is a theory that truly displays a lack of understanding in Biblical marriage and its sanctity, which He designed, as well as the consequences of its violation. The church has used this prophetic book to support their perception of the church being the bride of Christ and that Christ is constantly forgiving the church for its sins, past and present, which Hosea symbolized by marrying Gomer and taking her back. This incorrect theory, then, is applied to the attitude of conduct, which they say should be displayed within a Christian marriage of a man and woman when one of them commits fornication against the other. The innocent spouse is to be like Hosea Christ-like "forgiving", and take their fornicating spouse back if they repent, even though Gomer never showed any indication of repentance. Others use it as a justification in taking their fornicating spouse back. I have already outlined my reasons for the church being in error in believing that the bride of Christ is the church and how applying that theory in the dealings of marriage and fornication is damnable. This is evident, but must be put in a proper perspective. It also points to the promises of hope for Israel in the near future, and to the redemption that would come, further out, to all men through the work of Jesus Christ "those circumcised in the heart by faith. Howbeit, until then, there was going to be horrendous judgment and punishment upon Israel and Judah for their wickedness. As one commentator described it "This picture is one of a loving husband who yearns desperately to have a faithful wife. Israel, however, will have none of it, and the consequences of its sins must play themselves out, although hope for the future is never lost. They only seem to hear what they want to hear and see what they want to see. This, along with a lack of knowledge, makes for some false doctrines and applications to life, particularly marriage and its violation. Without writing a whole commentary on the book of Hosea, I will just point out some of the main points where errors in interpretation are vivid: Neither is the prophecy of Hosea an instruction on how to deal with an errant spouse. The oneness He initiates with the church today is through the covenant redemption of Jesus Christ. We are married joined to Him, yet not as His wife, but as His body, like a wife is to her husband. It is a holy connection. Once born again, the church made up of each member is connected to Him as His body through His Spirit, once born again, as is also the wife connected to her husband as his body once they are sexually intimate. However, if you have read my book or articles you will know that both of these unions can be fornicated. The earthly marriage union illustrates, for the lack of a better word, our oneness with Christ. Both of these institutions of oneness are a mystery. That is because each union is enacted by God Himself and is not seen by the human eye nor implemented by man. Secondly, to think that God would entreat a prophet to commit an abominable act of fornication by being sexually intimate with a prostitute is ridiculous. Should we believe that God would direct a holy man into committing this abomination fornication with a prostitute see my previous articles or book for the purpose of reproving the abominations of others? How could Hosea be the instrument for exposing and condemning the sin of Israel when He would be just as guilty as they? Where is the sense and wisdom in this, as the means for Israel to change? How does one marry a prostitute and then condemn her afterward for being a prostitute, considering it shameful? This crazy idea is also like certain so-called ministries today where one spouse commits fornication against the other spouse, are taken back, and, then, set out to tell others that their marriage is now better than before. Anymore, to have a viable marriage ministry one must commit the sin of fornication beforehand. Then you are qualified to be a help to others. Hosea was the true sinless minister. He represented and exemplified the true, righteous, and faithful God. For God to direct Hosea to commit this defiling act would have been the most unrighteous thing for a righteous God to do. I would hope not! The reason I made the claim as I just did is because Gomer was not a prostitute when Hosea married her. The book of Hosea itself makes this fact very clear for these reasons: It is not saying to go take a wife that is already in the sin of whoredom, but to go take a wife among people

who are and are the children of whoredoms idolaters , who will later become a prostitute and have illegitimate children, as Israel had prostituted itself and produced illegitimate idolatrous, lawless children. For Israel "hath committed great whoredom, departing from the Lord. She had not yet known a man. It is this virgin that Hosea covenanted for and married sexual intimacy. I will go and return to my first husband Who was her second, third, fourth It speaks of her sexual intimacies as husbands and not through covenant, vows, or documents. Israel was a young innocent child when God called married him out of Egypt, not a defiled fornicated one. Israel was unformed in Egypt and, then, formed and nurtured by God when called out and given His law. Israel, the nation, fornicated itself afterward; just as Gomer did. He represented the righteous seed that was and would be sown in Israel. The other children Lo-ruhamah and Lo-ammi were children from her fornications. This is seen in Hosea 2: Plead with your mother, plead; for she is not my wife, neither am I her husband For their mother hath played the harlot; she that conceived them hath done shamefully How could God say that Gomer conceived these children, Lo-ammi and Lo-ruhamah, shamefully and yet not declare the same concerning Jezreel, if she was a harlot before Hosea took her? Does a covenant or a marriage certificate, as some might say would make a difference, cause a harlot to not be a harlot anymore, Biblically? Do these procedures and documents wipe away all fornications adulteries? The reason there was no wrong with Hosea taking Gomer and bearing Jezreel is because, when he was conceived the union was a true marriage, void of her being a fornicating adulterous prostitute. Not only this, why would Hosea declare that they were not husband and wife anymore? Did he put her away? If He married her as a prostitute, why would her continuing in prostitution hinder their marriage? Was the prophet all of the sudden disobeying God by not being married to her anymore? So, just why did Hosea declare such a thing? When you understand true Biblical marriage you can answer all these questions with clarity Thirdly, many regard what is said in Hosea 3: What, did Hosea remarry her again? Well, interpreting verse 1 as meaning this is not at all correct. This verse itself is rife with signaling that he does not take her back as a wife. Here is what verse 1 says, "Then said the Lord unto me, Go yet, love a woman beloved of her friend, yet an adulteress, according to the love of the Lord toward the children of Israel , who look to other gods, and love flagons of wine. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married [sexually intimate] to another man, she shall be called an adulteress An adulteress is not a wife of one man, but of more than one and, therefore, a fornicator of a legitimate marriage from sexual bodily defilement. The husband cannot take her back. I already indicated how that Hosea was her first husband. Hosea, her original husband, is now no longer her husband. Their holy marriage union had been defiled made illegitimate by her fornication adultery with her "lovers [sexual]. The "love" God entreats Hosea to now show is not sexual in nature. That is the perversion of our culture, adopted by the church. He still loved them, but it would be an estranged relationship. He would care for them, yet, they would not benefit from all that they had when they were His alone. They would be " He is telling Jezreel, his blood son from Gomer when she was his wife, to tell his half brother and half sister that their mother, who had them by another man or other men through her adulteries, is now no longer his wife. The only answer when fornication is committed is to repent and live celibate. This is the only way to not commit fornication again. Therefore, for God to instruct Hosea to take her back would be forcing him to commit a declared abomination of violating the forbidden law of not taking back a spouse who had married another after being put-away Deut. So, according to the church, God causes Hosea to defile his self twice with this whorish woman through acts that were an abomination before God. What Hosea actually did resembled the sacrifice of God caring for Israel at the present time, and yet not having them as a people or a nation that are His in a holy way. The covenant of Christ and His Spirit would eventually change this situation including both Jew and Gentile, declared in Hosea 2: This is the new and intended Israel - the descendents of Abraham by faith. Therefore, in chapter 3: Through this possession, she is to stay celibate and he also commits to staying celibate along with her in order to care for her. He sacrifices both his finances and his physical sexual needs for her well-being. This is the true love story of sacrifice that people should be writing about. I will close with these two Scripture verses: There is forgiveness, but however, the sin of fornication produces consequences. Recommended initial article reading order for a Biblical marriage foundation: The Honor of Biblical Marriage Fornication: Dear Lord I Messed Up! A Sacred Law Divorce:

Chapter 8 : The Marriage of the Prophet Hosea | Dr. Claude Mariottini – Professor of Old Testament

This table summarises the messages of the sixteen prophets in chronological order. Some guesswork is involved here, as not all of the books of the prophets specify when they were written, or originally preached.

Have they been fulfilled yet? Dispensationalists use passages like these where God makes these types of promises to Israel to base their belief in a literal future kingdom where Israel will occupy the land in peace and experience the blessings of God. The Symptoms of the Problem How do we know if we have the same problem that Jeroboam had - that Jehu had - that all of Israel had? Gomer is our object lesson. Gomer was a picture of Israel. We need to see if we are like Gomer. She was a prostitute. The Adulterous Look 2: This woman thought her actions would satisfy her soul and she was out and about accomplishing her own goals. She thought her actions would do something for her own soul, but in fact, her actions would destroy relationships. Notice also that she hides behind religious activity - vs She was just going through the motions. But the truth is - God is here. He is always here and He can fulfill us. But we have a good description of what this adulterous look is all about: So it seems more appropriate to apply this to how they looked to Baal to give them life and happiness. For us it refers to how we look to things or our spouses to give us life. Dryness Then we see in Jeremiah 3: This is the same punishment as mentioned in Hosea 2: This is a symbol of the bareness and desert-like condition of our souls when we try to live by our own means, playing the harlot with everything else and forsaking God. Their plans did not satisfy them. This shows us that our own efforts are not going to work. They are going to lead to dryness. What was their response? They came pridefully and angrily. We see what they said in verses Anger - Blaming God This is not actually stated, but it is implied throughout the passage in both Jeremiah and in Hosea. They saw no inconsistency in their actions and were not ashamed. Back to Hosea 2: In verse 3 we see the dryness that we talked about in Jeremiah 3. In verse 5 we see that they pursued their own interests thinking that that would satisfy. They thought that would bring happiness. Perhaps a good example of how we can pursue happiness in things is having the idea that having enough money will satisfy. But even when Rockefeller was once asked how much money was enough, do you know what his answer was? Baal was the Canaanite god who supposedly controlled storms and was responsible for both agricultural and human fertility. Gibson, Canaanite Myths and Legends. In the same way we can take something God has given us and use it to pursue whatever we think will bring us happiness. What is even worse is when we even recognize that God gave us something, like the gift of Pastor or money or whatever, and then not depend on God as we exercise our gift or use the money, etc. We actually use it to serve our own purposes. How does all this we have talked about apply to us? Israel was pretty bad. They totally forsook God. We see nothing wrong with depending on our own resources and depending on our bank account, our work, our wife, our kids, our ministry to fulfill us. We only use God as a Force or Genie to help us in our pursuits. Listen to your prayers. When you do that are you saying that you can do most of it Our natural tendency is to want to earn our salvation by being good. We think if we change our behavior we will be able to accomplish what we want. Whether it is overcoming depression or some bad habit. We are determined to pursue our own self-interests, so we redefine God. We have decided what it means to really enjoy life - for most of us that is having enough money so we can buy all the things we think will make us happy - so we expect God to bless us. For others it might be that perfect relationship with the opposite sex, because we think that person will be able to fill our deep longings, so we expect God to bring along the perfect mate. And when He does, and the marriage is not perfect like we had planned, What do we do? What do you do? Do you blame God? When we lived in Germany we had plenty of money, job security. We were pillars of the church: I was chairman of Deacons, an adult SS teacher. My wife was the Nursery coordinator. We had great friends who like us had also been separated from family and friends in the U. We had too many resources that we could depend on. But God decided to take away those resources and cause a little dryness in our lives: The doctor bills were phenomenal that year. Both my son and daughter had at least 12 ear infections that year. We never found any close friends. We had no money. What was my response to all this? Even in the midst of studying about God and filling my head with knowledge about God, when the problems and trials came, and there were a number

of them, I found myself thinking and saying things like I had grown up hearing stories from Mom and Dad and my missionary aunts and uncles of how God provided the things that they really needed miraculously. They got checks in the mail for the exact amount of their rent or whatever. I guess I was expecting that. At times I even thought it was unfair that I would give up a good Air Force career to serve God full time as though He owed it to me. Some guys I know are able to go to seminary without working at all because they are supported by some big church, or Campus Crusade or they are financially independent. God decided not to send us through seminary like that and I guess I thought He should have, after all, look what I was doing for Him I had redefined God. I was too proud to recognize that we live in a fallen world and people get hernias, babies have ear infections, cars break down, people have to work for a living and jobs are hard to find. Our best efforts could only earn us a place in hell. Somehow we get the idea that our trouble obligates God. We deserve all the bad things that come our way. God is completely justified in destroying all of us. It is a wonder that God sent his son to save us. The unashamed prostitute says, God ought to come through and change my husband, or get my kid off of drugs. He owes this to me. Instead we need to be ashamed at our actions, our unbelief and our lack of trust. What is the problem? Basically our problem is putting ourselves first. Like Jeroboam, Jehu and Gomer we seek after our own interests and ignore or distort God in the process. What are the symptoms? We experience a dryness in our soul because our own methods do not work. They do not satisfy. We expect God to bless us because we think we deserve it because we think we are good. We think He owes us. So, ask yourself if you are guilty of doing this. After describing their sin and bringing them to the wilderness, vss show that God is also merciful and now he is enticing them back to Him. God uses these wilderness experiences to bring us closer to Himself. In their book *The Language of Love*, Gary Smalley and John Trent say that one of the pillars of a good relationship is security - knowing that you are loved. He entices us with what we deeply want. He knows we thirst and He offers living water. He knows we feel ugly and want to be enjoyed and He offers perfect love.

Chapter 9 : Hosea Bible Study

The book of Hosea is a collection of prophetic messages delivered by the prophet Hosea and narrative descriptions of Hosea's marriage and the birth of his children (;). Most of Hosea's messages are announcements of God's anger with Israel (the northern of the two Israelite kingdoms) and God's impending judgment on this people.

God commands the prophet to marry a promiscuous woman. People in our culture are not upset by her sexual looseness, but that God commanded it. To help listeners grapple with the fact that God seems to commend what we think He should condemn. Hosea, the prophet, appeared on the scene when the landscape in northern Israel was both bright and bleak. The national landscape was bright: The nation was enjoying a time of stable government and economic prosperity. The national landscape was also bleak. There was a great and growing gulf between the wealthy and the poor. The people worshipped idols. The religion was shot through with the practices of the fertility gods of Baal. The law courts were corrupt. In that situation God called Hosea, his prophet, to marry a woman who was a harlot and to have children with that harlot. What does that actually mean? She was sexually immoral before and within the marriage. She may have been a cult prostitute who engaged in sexual relations with the priests and laity in the service of the heathen god Baal. What does that mean? This would please the god who would then make a woman fertile and enable her to bear children. Imagine the talk in Samaria when they saw what the prophet was doing. Why would God have the prophet enter into a marriage with a woman known to be sexually loose? Hosea is playing the part of God who was "married" to an adulterous people. She has run after other lovers, the Baal fertility gods. People who are shocked at this story question why God would allow this. We are uncomfortable that God commanded Hosea to marry Gomer. How could God who commanded the people, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," also command His prophet to take part in a scandal dealing with sexual looseness? Hosea did nothing wrong in taking Gomer to be his wife. God wanted His people to know how He felt when those whom He "married" behaved as they did.