

11-2017

Article 28: Hosea at a Glance

Harold Willmington

Liberty University, hwillmington@liberty.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/owners_manual



Part of the [Biblical Studies Commons](#), [Christianity Commons](#), [Practical Theology Commons](#), and the [Religious Thought, Theology and Philosophy of Religion Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Willmington, Harold, "Article 28: Hosea at a Glance" (2017). *The Owner's Manual File*. 18.
https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/owners_manual/18

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Theological Studies at Scholars Crossing. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Owner's Manual File by an authorized administrator of Scholars Crossing. For more information, please contact scholarlycommunications@liberty.edu.

HOSEA AT A GLANCE

This book records the travail of a heartbroken husband, Hosea the prophet caused by the continued unfaithfulness of Gomer, his wife, which tragic event is used to describe God's great sorrow over His immoral "wife," the nation Israel. The second of these troubled marriages however will someday have a happy ending, for the repentant wife is to be divinely cleansed and restored, as hopefully was the case of Hosea and Gomer.

BOTTOM LINE INTRODUCTION

IS IT REALLY TRUE? DID GOD ACTUALLY COMMAND A PROPHET TO MARRY A PROSTITUTE?

Hosea's name means "salvation." He was a prophet to the Northern Kingdom, and wept over their sins, as Jeremiah later wept over Judah's sins.

Hosea is perhaps the strangest book in all the Bible, for God instructed his prophet to "take unto thee a wife of whoredoms." There are several reasons why God did this.

- A. The experimental reason: By marrying an unfaithful wife, Hosea could, as perhaps no other single prophet, understand somewhat the anguish in God's own heart over the Northern Kingdom, whose people were constantly committing spiritual fornication and adultery against Jehovah. God had often compared his relationship to Israel to that of a marriage (See Isa. 62:5; Hosea 2:19; Jer. 3:14).
- B. The illustrative reason: His own marriage would become a walking and visible example of his message to Israel.
- C. The prophetic reason: God would command him to name his children by those titles which would describe the future punishment and eventual restoration of all Israel. He may have ministered longer than any other prophet.

FACTS REGARDING THE AUTHOR OF THE BOOK

1. Who? **Hosea.** He was the broken hearted husband of an unfaithful wife. The sin of his wife Gomer (Hos. 1:2; 2:1), and the very names of his three children, Jezreel (meaning "scattered," Hos. 1:4), Lo-ruha-mah ("unpitied," Hos. 1:6), and Lo-ammi ("not my people," Hos. 1:9) serve to illustrate two tragic facts:
 - a. The perversion of the nation Israel
 - b. The punishment of the nation Israel
2. What? The **Book of Hosea.**
3. When and where? 758 B.C., from northern Israel.
4. Why? To compare the immorality of his own wife Gomer with that of God's wife, Israel.
5. To whom? The northern kingdom of Israel.

KEY EVENTS

1. Hosea's troubled marriage
2. Prediction of Israel's long and difficult days before her repentance and restoration
3. Blessings resulting from Israel's repentance and restoration

KEY INDIVIDUALS

1. **Hosea:** prophet of Israel whose heart was broken over the immorality displayed by his wife and gross idolatry practiced by his countrymen
2. **Gomer:** Hosea's unfaithful wife, a harlot prior to her marriage and an adulterous following it
3. **Jezeel:** Hosea's first child, a son, whose name means, "scattered"
4. **Lo-ruhamah:** Hosea's second child, a daughter, whose name means, "unpitied, no more mercy"
5. **Lo-ammi:** Hosea's third child, a son, whose name means, "not my people"

KEY PLACES

1. **Valley of Jezreel:** where wicked northern king Jehu's descendants would be punished and his dynasty terminated
2. **Gilgal, Bethel, and Samaria:** Israelite towns condemned for being centers of pagan worship

UNIQUE FEATURES

1. Hosea was the only prophet from the Northern Kingdom who recorded his prophecies (though Jonah was from the north, the book of Jonah is primarily a narrative about him, not by him).
2. He was the only prophet to minister to the Northern Kingdom right up to its fall. He has been called "the deathbed prophet of Israel."
3. His book is the second most lengthy of the twelve minor prophets. Only Zechariah is larger.
4. Hosea predicted the Assyrian invasion, and later lived to see these prophecies fulfilled in 721 B.C. In his book he refers constantly to the Northern Kingdom as Ephraim. Ephraim was the first of the 12 tribes of Israel to backslide.
5. Hosea is the only Old Testament prophet, apart from Moses, to have included in his life's writings the names of his father, wife, and children (1:3, 4, 6, 9).
6. His book includes some of the greatest Old Testament passages on the future and experiences of Israel from the destruction of the first Temple in 586 B.C. to the millennium (3:4, 5; 5:15; 6:1; 8:8; 9:17). This book contains one of the very few biblical verses which has a double reference. The verse is 11:1: "*When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.*" The historical reference is seen in Deut. 7:7-8; the prophetic is seen in Mt. 2:15.

7. Hosea contains seven key passages describing Israel's temporary rejection, eventual repentance and restoration by God. These are:
- "For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim: Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days"* (3:4, 5).
- "I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early"* (5:15).
- "Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight"* (6:1, 2).
- "Israel is swallowed up: now shall they be among the Gentiles as a vessel wherein is no pleasure"* (8:8).
- "My God will cast them away, because they did not hearken unto him: and they shall be wanderers among the nations"* (9:17).
- "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help. I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes"* (13:9, 14).
- "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him"* (14:4).

COMPARISON WITH OTHER BIBLE BOOKS

Isaiah:

- Both used the illustration of a husband and wife to portray God and Israel (2:19; Isa. 54:5).
- Both Hosea and Isaiah had children with symbolic names (1:4, 6, 9; Isa. 7:3; 8:3-4, 18).
- Both called God the "Holy One," a rare title for God outside of Isaiah (11:9, 12; about 30 times in Isaiah).

TITLES FOR AND TYPES OF JESUS

1. The Living God (1:10)
2. The Husband of Israel (2:16)
3. The Most High (7:16)
4. The Lord God of Hosts (12:5)
5. The King (13:10)
6. The God of Resurrection (13:14)
7. The Great Healer (14:4)