

**You want me to do what exactly?**

**7-May-2017**

**(Hosea 1:1-2:1, Romans 9:22-26 & 1 Peter 2:9-10)**

G'day church family!

It would be good to have your Bibles open and ready at Hosea chapter 1.

If you'd like to jot down some notes, there's an outline in your bulletin.

Hosea is a tricky book - so we'd better ask God for His wisdom and guidance before we begin. Let's pray...

### **History/Context (1:1)**

Before we begin our series on the book of Hosea, we need to have a quick history lesson to get the context of the time of Hosea.

#### **[Powerpoint 1 - History]**

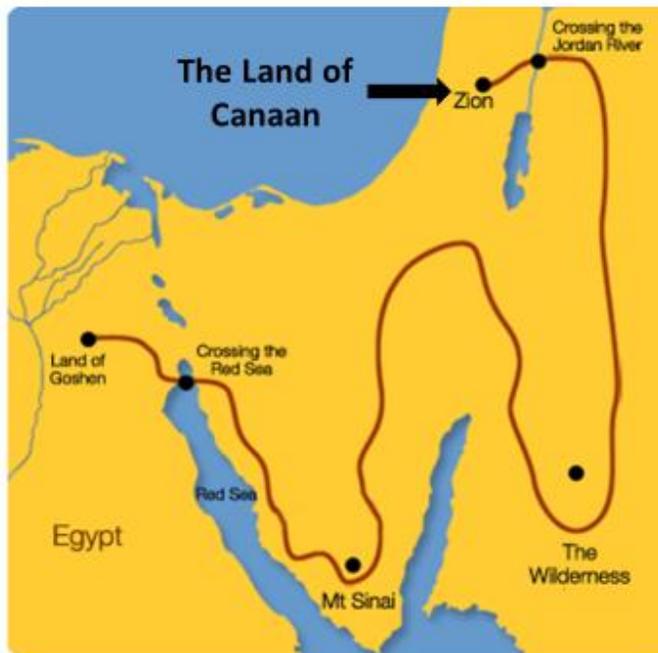
In approximately 1400BC the OT leader and Prophet, Joshua, led the 12 tribes of Israel into the Promised Land.

God had originally promised this land to the OT patriarch, Abraham about 2000BC - and God told Abraham that one day His descendants would occupy this Promised Land

[Explain the Map]

**1400 BC**  
Joshua leads the 12 tribes of Israel into The Promised Land

God had promised Abraham this land in 2000BC



So as Joshua led the 12 tribes of Israel into the Promised Land. There was a tiny problem - the Promised Land was the land of Canaan - and it was already occupied by the Canaanites.

[Powerpoint 2 - Canaanites]

These Canaanites worshipped many different gods, the main one being "Baal". Baal was supposed to be a god that gave fertility to the land and gave fertility to women to have children. So the Canaanite religion was based on worshipping gods to give fertility to the land, victory over their enemies and success in having children. The Canaanites also did not place a high value on morals. At the Canaanite temples, men were able to 'worship' Baal and stimulate Baal in to acts of fertility by having sexual intercourse with 'sacred' resident temple prostitutes.

So when God told Joshua to bring the 12 tribes of Israel into the occupied land of Canaan - God also commanded them to destroy all the Canaanites completely!

Why?

Because God didn't want the 12 tribes corrupted by the religious and sexual practices of the Canaanites - and He didn't want them inter-marrying them so that the 12 tribes would be influenced by the Canaanites they married.

When the 12 tribes entered the land - God allocated each tribe some land space in Canaan

As you can see from the map!

[Powerpoint 3 - Map of 12 tribes]

But when Joshua and the 12 tribes of Israel conquered the land of Canaan - they failed to destroy all the people already settled there. So the Canaanites and their descendants continued with the worship of other gods and the worship of Baal.

And they corrupted the 12 tribe's worship of the one true God!

Having occupied Canaan the land became known as Israel

Finally, the Israelites had their own land and they asked God for a King like the other nations around them - even though God was their King

And God let them have King Saul - who wasn't such a great King

He was replaced by King David [the writer of most of the Psalms] - and when King David died - His Son - Solomon became King.

The reigns of King David and Solomon were Israel's golden period. Israel was successful and prosperous.

### [Powerpoint 4-God to Divide Kingdom]

But during King Solomon's reign, one of his servants, Jeroboam, rebelled.

Jeroboam was on the king's errand when he met the prophet Ahijah, who told him that God was going to give him authority over ten of the twelve tribes of Israel. God's reason for dividing the Kingdom was: "Because He said they have forsaken me . . . and have not walked in my ways." (1 Kings 11:33)

However, God promised that David's family line would continue, in a smaller kingdom in the South containing just 2 tribes Judah and Benjamin. The reason for that is that God promised that David's descendants would have an everlasting Kingdom. When Solomon heard that 10 of the tribes were to be given to Jeroboam, he threatened to kill Jeroboam, who fled to Egypt for safety (1 Kings 11:26-40).

### [Powerpoint 5 - Divided Kingdom]

After Solomon's death, his son Rehoboam was set to become the next king. But Jeroboam returned from Egypt and led a group of people to confront Rehoboam with a demand for less taxes. When Rehoboam refused this demand, ten of the tribes rejected Rehoboam and Ahijah's prophecy was fulfilled. Only the tribes of Judah and Benjamin remained loyal to King Rehoboam. The northern tribes crowned Jeroboam as their king.

Approx. 930 BC

Northern Kingdom  
**ISRAEL**

(King Jeroboam)

10 tribes of...

Asher, Dan,  
Ephraim, Gad,  
Issachar, Manasseh,  
Naphtali, Reuben,  
Simeon, and Zebulun

Southern Kingdom:  
**JUDAH**

(King Rehoboam)

2 tribes of...

Judah and Benjamin



With the Kingdom of Israel now divided - around about 930BC

The Northern Kingdom became known as Israel or Ephraim (as the largest tribe)

And the Southern Kingdom became known as Judah (being a much larger tribe than Benjamin)

Both the Northern Kingdom and Southern Kingdom had many kings over the next few hundred years

All of the kings in the Northern Kingdom (Israel) were bad and didn't follow God's Word or God's way and their worship was corrupted by the worship of the Canaanite gods and in particular Baal

Some of the kings in the Southern Kingdom (Judah) were good and returned to God's Word and God's ways - but when they died - the next king returned to worship other gods

The religious practices of the Northern Kingdom can be summarized in the Prophet Elijah's words:

<sup>21</sup> Elijah went before the people and said, "How long will you waver between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him."  
(1 Kings 18:21)

So that's the environment that the prophet Hosea lived in - see verse 1 of Hosea - as God speaks to Hosea:

[Powerpoint 6-Hosea's ministry]

The word of the LORD that came to Hosea son of Beeri during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and during the reign of Jeroboam II son of Jehoash king of Israel

It's a period where the Northern Kingdom's worship of God - is corrupt and they are completely unfaithful to God!

Hosea's Ministry  
755-710 BC

Northern Kingdom  
King Jeroboam II (Bad)

Southern Kingdom:  
King Uzziah (Mostly Good)  
King Jotham (Good)  
King Ahaz (Bad)  
King Hezekiah (The Best)



Call (1:2-3)

And it's during the reigns of these kings

That God calls Hosea - to do something really really strange!

See verse 2

the LORD said to him, "Go, marry a promiscuous woman and have children with her, for like an adulterous wife this land is guilty of unfaithfulness to the LORD."

You can imagine Hosea saying?

You want me to do what exactly?

Go and marry a promiscuous woman (the Hebrew word for promiscuous here means: an adulterous, a fornicator, a prostitute or a whore)

Hosea is to marry such a woman!

Is God serious?

You bet He's serious!

It's unlikely that the woman was already promiscuous because of God's laws about only marrying a virgin and not marrying divorced women or harlots or prostitutes (see Lev 21:13-15 and Deut 22:13-21)?

But why would God ask Hosea to do that?

Well before we answer that?

We need to understand that sometimes a picture is better than lots of words

So let me show a few pictures and you tell me what the picture means:

[Powerpoint 7-Zebra] - Zebra crossing

[Powerpoint 8-Milk] - No use crying over split milk

This next one's a bit more serious

[Powerpoint 9-Too fat/too thin] - ???

And finally this one!

[Powerpoint 10-Unfaithful] - the woman is planning to be unfaithful

So - the reason God tells Hosea to go and marry a woman who will be unfaithful to Him - is because Hosea's marriage is going to be a picture of what God's marriage to His people is like

[Powerpoint 11 - A Picture of God's Marriage]

The idea is to give Hosea, through his difficult marriage to his wife, Gomer - a greater understanding of God's character and God's love

As Hosea continues in his marriage to Gomer who is going to be unfaithful to him.

The people of Israel looking at Hosea's marriage will have a PICTURE of what the marriage relationship between God and his people is like. God is the loving and faithful husband and Israel is the adulterous, idolatrous, unfaithful wife, chasing after other gods like Gomer chases after other men!

The 2 marriages run in parallel!

You thought reality TV was a recent invention - but it's not!

It's like God is saying to Israel - watch a live video (live stream) of Hosea's marriage to Gomer - that's what my marriage to you is like - I, God, - am the faithful husband like Hosea - and you, Israel, - you are the unfaithful wife like Gomer!

### **Judgement (1:3-6, 8-9)**

So Hosea marries his wife, Gomer, knowing she will be unfaithful?

Why does he go ahead with the marriage?

Because God told him too - simple as that!

And through Hosea's unfaithful marriage to Gomer - God is going to show his judgment on the unfaithfulness of Israel

God shows His judgment by telling Hosea what name to give the children that Gomer gives birth to...

**[Powerpoint 12 - A Picture of God's Judgment]**

God uses the names of the children to show His judgment on Israel.

The first child is to be called **Jezreel** (in verse 4)

Jezreel is the name of a valley plain between Samaria and Galilee in the northern kingdom - and it's a prominent battle field -

In fact it was the scene of a dreadful massacre that God refers to in verse 4 - when one of Israel (Northern Kingdom's) king's - Jehu - went too far and massacred Ahab's family in the most despicable, over the top, way!

And now God's had a gut-full of Israel's disobedience, their unfaithfulness to him and their wickedness - and He's going to put an end to them

Because the word Jezreel - which by the way is a play on words - as in Hebrew "Yizreal" (Jezreel) sounds a lot like "Yisrael" (Israel) in Hebrew - and Jezreel means "God will scatter" -

And God will indeed scatter Israel -

This actually happens soon after in 722 BC when the Assyrian Empire invades the Northern Kingdom and takes the 10 tribes away into exile

You see - God hates sin

And sin must be judged

And sin must be punished

But there's still more judgment and punishment to come...

The second child - is a daughter - see verse 6 - and notice it doesn't say Gomer gave Hosea a daughter - it just says she give birth to a daughter - so the baby might not even be Hosea's

Nevertheless God tells Hosea to call the baby girl - **Lo-Ru-hamah** - which means "not loved or no mercy"

So the idea of naming the baby girl - Lo-Ru-hamah - meaning "not loved" - is to show that God has fallen out of love with Israel (the 10 tribes) - and won't have mercy on them anymore

Then Gomer has a third child - see verse 8 and 9 - she gives birth to another son - and God tells Hosea to call him - **Lo-Ammi** - which means "not my people"

The idea being that by naming the child - Lo-Ammi - meaning "not my people" - this is telling Israel (the 10 tribes) - they are not God's people anymore - He's run out of patience with their continual unfaithfulness to Him and He's had a gutful of their corrupt worship practices

So the children are a picture of God's judgment on the people of Israel

As the people look at Hosea's children [Imagine being one of those children with those names - it would be like calling a child today - Adolf]

As they look at the children of Hosea's marriage

They will see

Jezreel - God will scatter Israel

Lo-Ru-hamah - Israel not loved by God

Lo-Ammi - Israel not God's people anymore

Here - through Hosea's marriage and children - Israel have a picture of what God's verdict and judgment on their unfaithfulness to God - will be like

They are done for!

### **Mercy and Hope (1:7, 1:10-2:1)**

As we've said God hates sin

Sin must be judged and punished

But God is also a merciful God!

And there is hope in this passage too

Yes - the 10 tribes of the Northern Kingdom are done for

But look at verse 7

[Powerpoint 13-Mercy and Hope]

<sup>7</sup>Yet I will show love to Judah; and I will save them—not by bow, sword or battle, or by horses and horsemen, but I, the LORD their God, will save them.”

God will still show mercy and love to the remaining 2 tribes of the Southern Kingdom of Judah. And He will save them

And notice how He will save them

Not by any military effort - not by bow or sword or battle or horses

But the Lord their God will save them!

It's God Himself who will save the people of Judah

This finds its fulfilment of course in our Lord Jesus

Whom God will send about 700 years after the time of Hosea

God's own Son Jesus - a descendant of King David - and from the tribe of Judah

[Powerpoint 14-Mercy and Hope]

But there's more hope in this passage

Because in verses 10 and 11 of chapter 1 and verse 1 of chapter 2

God says that there is a time coming when the Israelites can be a nation again - see v10 - with so many people - like the sand on the seashore - that they can't be counted [that should remind us of the promise God gave to Abraham]

Not only that but they will have one leader over them - in verse 11 - which will be King Jesus -

[Powerpoint 15-Picture of Hope]

And God gives a picture of future hope in 1:10-2:1 as He shows how His love and mercy will open up His kingdom to more people

The meaning of each of Hosea's children will be reversed

**Jezreel** = "God will scatter" becomes "God will sow" - as He sows a kingdom too big in numbers to be counted - like the sand on the seashore (1:10)

**And Lo-Ruhamah** = "not loved or no mercy" will become "my loved one" (2:1)

**And Lo-Ammi** = "not my people" will become "children of the living God" (1:10) and "my people" (2:1)

The Apostle Paul sees this promise of hope in Hosea - as a promise to us - as Christians - being part of the universal Christian church - in our NT reading from Romans 9:22-26, Paul quotes from Hosea - Paul says:

[Powerpoint 16-Hope of being God's people]

<sup>22</sup> What if God, although choosing to show his wrath and make his power known, bore with great patience the objects of his wrath—prepared for

destruction? <sup>23</sup> What if he did this to make the riches of his glory known to the objects of his mercy, whom he prepared in advance for glory— <sup>24</sup> even us, whom he also called, not only from the Jews but also from the Gentiles? <sup>25</sup> As he says in Hosea:

“I will call them ‘my people’ who are not my people;  
and I will call her ‘my loved one’ who is not my loved one,”  
<sup>26</sup> and, “In the very place where it was said to them,  
‘You are not my people,’  
there they will be called ‘children of the living God.’”

Basically, Paul is saying, God showed anger and judgment on those 10 tribes of Israel - so that people like us - Gentiles - non-Jews - could be brought into God's family and be His people - and so we could be children of the living God

The Apostle Peter says the same in our other NT reading from 1 Peter 2:9-10 - also quoting from Hosea - Peter says to us - as Christians:

[Powerpoint 17-Hope of being God's chosen people]

<sup>9</sup> But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. <sup>10</sup> Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Peter is saying - we are part of God's chosen people - we're God's special possession - to declare the name of Jesus!

So after all that history, and context and God's strange request for Hosea to marry an unfaithful wife - and after God's judgment on the Northern Kingdom How can we apply Hosea chapter 1 to our lives - as we leave here this morning?

[Powerpoint 18a-Application]

### Application

1. Are you being called by God like Hosea? Hosea responded in obedience. He didn't question it - He just did it! You might say - that's not fair - God actually spoke to Hosea so He knew what God was telling Him to do? How do we know what God is calling us to do?

Well - He calls us to do things in His Word - the Bible - doesn't He?

He calls us to obey His commands.

He calls us to love and serve Him and love and serve others!

He calls us to tell people about Jesus!

We don't even need to have a personal calling - of hearing God's voice - we're called to do all of these things in His Word

[Illustration of door-knocking]

You might say God can't use me - I'm weak, I'm old, I'm not smart enough...

Well - God used Moses - a stutterer and a murderer

He used Rahab - a prostitute and Ruth who was from Moab and not even from Israel - We can do all things through Him who strengthens us!

What is God calling you to do? And are you being obedient?

[Powerpoint 18b-Application]

2. God is just and merciful - sin must be punished but God's is merciful and God loves us - love never fails (1 Cor 13) - because God is love - we just fail to love! God is a faithful loving husband - a God of second chances - that 2<sup>nd</sup> chance is found in Jesus - which allows us to be God's people. The apostle Peter says we God's special possession, called to declare the praises of Jesus who brought us out of darkness and into the light. That's our number one job to share the love of Jesus - that He died on the cross for our sins to be forgiven. Are we doing that job?

[Powerpoint 18c-Application]

3. When the people looked at Hosea and his walk with God - they saw a faithful, obedient, loving man. When people look at our walk with God - do they see us as faithful, obedient and loving - or do they see us unfaithful and disobedient and inconsistent? What are we modelling to others? Maybe you could ask someone at morning tea, what you're modelling - if you're game?

Let's pray...