

Life-Study of Hosea Summary – Messages 1-5

Introduction – Minor Prophets

Burden:

- (1) From Bethlehem will com forth the Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from the days of eternity.
- (2) The Son of Man will be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights (implying resurrection) for the salvation of God to all the sinners.
- (3) Christ is the Desire of all nations and will come as the Sun of righteousness with healing in His wings.
- (4) Christ will dwell in the holy mountain of Zion, to be a shelter and a stronghold to Israel, and rule among them from Jerusalem.

In the books of the minor prophets we see many things concerning Christ: His **eternity**, His **incarnation in time**, His **death, burial, and resurrection** for the spreading of God's redemption and salvation to all the nations on earth, His coming as the **Desire of nations** and as the **Sun of righteousness**, and His being **the One dwelling on Mount Zion** to be a shelter and a stronghold to God's elect. As He rules among them, Christ will rule the whole earth from Jerusalem.

The Minor Prophets are composed of 12 books, from Hosea to Malachi. Although these books are minor, they complete the divine revelation concerning God's economy in His dealings with His elect—Israel—and the nations, which is covered in detail in the books of the Major Prophets. **The central point of all the prophets is not chastisement or judgment but Christ.**

Contents: God's economy in His loving chastisement of Israel, Christ as the centrality and universality of God's economy, and a number of crucial points. God's economy in His loving chastisement of Israel, in His governmental dealing with Israel, and in His judgment upon the nations issues in the manifestation of Christ as the centrality and universality in God's economy to bring in the restoration. When this manifestation takes place, all people will see that **Christ is the centrality and universality of God's economy to bring in the age of restoration**. The other crucial points in the Minor Prophets are being prepared to meet our God, God pardoning our iniquity and passing over our transgression, the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, the righteous one living by his faith, and God being light to us and bring us in to the light.

Central Thought: The central thought of the Minor Prophets are the same as the Major Prophets. The crucial emphasis of the revelation released by all the prophets from Isaiah to Malachi is that **God wants to have an organic union with His chosen people, like the union of Adam with Eve.**

Introduction – Hosea

In Hebrew Hosea, the original name of Joshua, means "salvation (of Jehovah)," denoting that **Jehovah is the salvation**. The object of Hosea's ministry was the adulterous and apostate kingdom of Israel. **Adulterous** refers to Israel's condition, and **apostate** refers to Israel's position. The **subject** of the book of Hosea is **Jehovah as the salvation to the adulterous and apostate Israel in receiving her back and restoring her**. The **central thought** of this book is that regardless of how adulterous Israel is as the wife to Jehovah and how apostate Israel is as the people to Him, He still desires that she would return to Him. If she would return to Him, He would still receive her, bring her back, and restore her.

The prophet Hosea took Gomer, a wife of harlotries. This symbolized **that God took Israel as His wife—one who gave herself to harlotries and who departed from Jehovah**. Hosea 1:10-2:1 is God's promise of restoration to the children of Israel. This promise is a matter of Grace. Grace follows sin. **Where sin abounds grace abounds even more**. We all need to learn a twofold lesson from Hosea 1. First, **God loves Israel with an everlasting love**. Second, although God is loving, He is also a **God of purity and righteousness**. He cannot tolerate any kind of uncleanness or unrighteousness.

The Symbol of a Wife of Harlotries

Hos. 2:14 – Therefore I am now luring her,/And I will bring her into the wilderness/And will speak to her heart.

Verses 14-23 shows Jehovah's restoration of the adulterous and apostate Israel. In verse 14, the **wilderness** signifies a wild place. Jehovah will give Israel her **vineyards** from the wilderness and the valley of Achor as a door of hope. In that day **Israel will call Jehovah her Husband** and will not call him Baali ("my Master"). For Jehovah will take away the names of the Baals from her mouth, and they will no longer be remembered by their name. Jehovah will make a **covenant** for Israel in that day with the beasts of the field, the birds of heaven, and the creeping things of the earth and Jehovah will **betroth Israel to Himself forever**.

Hosea 3 speaks of the **confirmation of God's faithful restoration of Israel**. Hosea was very obedient to God. He had married Gomer already, and she had borne him three children. Then she probably left him and committed adultery with her lovers. Later, as a symbol of His intention to love the children of Israel again, **Jehovah told Hosea to love Gomer again, and Hosea did so**. What Hosea did in obedience to God's command regarding Gomer was a confirmation of what God promised to do regarding Israel.

The Sins of the Apostate People, the Punishments of Jehovah, and the Return of the Apostate People

The sins of the apostate people and the punishments of Jehovah are seen in chapters 4-6. Concerning the people in general, there was **no** faithfulness, **no** kindness, and **no** knowledge of God. Instead, there was **false swearing, deceiving, murder, stealing, and adultery**. Because of this, the land mourned. The priests who would stumble in the day and in the night, would be destroyed because of the lack of the knowledge of God.

Hos. 5:15 – I will go away, I will return to My place,/Until they acknowledge their offense/And seek My face;/In their affliction they will seek Me earnestly.

Jehovah will go away and return to His place, until the apostate people acknowledge their offense and seek His face. Eventually, in their affliction they will seek Him earnestly. Thus, the **divine chastisement** of Israel will be effective. In 6:11 we see a harvest appointed for Judah, when Jehovah will turn the captivity of His people.

Chapters 7 and 8 cover the sins of Israel in forsaking Jehovah and Jehovah's punishments on Israel because of their forsaking of Him. The sins of Israel were in two categories: in their social life among the people, and the rulers and evils in their relationship with Jehovah. In their social life, there was falsehood, theft, raids, evils, lies, intoxication, scorn, and adultery. In their relationship with Jehovah, they wandered from Jehovah, not returning to Him and not seeking after Him. Ephraim was likened to an unturned cake (stubborn), a silly dove (lacking the proper knowledge of God in His economy), and a deceitful bow (rebellious).

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