

Hosea — Part One

Introduction To Hosea

Have you ever wondered how God reacts to you during times of utter failure and sin in your life? In our minds all we may conceive of is an angry God responding harshly in judgment and disappointment while removing Himself far from us. God truly does respond in judgment to sin and to the old man that brings forth that fruit. But the MANNER in which God responds in that judgment is what we truly must see in order to really know Him and be healed. The only place we can thoroughly look into this matter is in the Word of God, and that is the theme of this series of articles based on scriptures found in Hosea.

The Condition of God's People

“The beginning of the word of the Lord by Hosea, And the Lord said to Hosea, Go, take unto thee a wife of harlotry and children of harlotry for the land hath committed great harlotry, departing from the Lord” (Hosea1:2).

“In The Beginning”... of the Word.

Where did this “WORD OF THE LORD” come from? Where did it originate? Where did it begin? John 1:1 can give us a clue; “IN the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” This word that came to Hosea and by Hosea originated in God. To understand “what it is saying” we must from whence it came. It came from the beginning which is God Himself, God in His self-giving nature of love. If we do not begin there, in God Himself, the word will be misunderstood and misappropriated.

“by Hosea”

This Word was imparted into Hosea, the Word that was in the beginning in God. Christ Crucified Himself. Hosea was going to be more than a messenger with a prophesy; He was going to be a type, a demonstration of Christ crucified to His church, His wife (Eph. 5:23).

“Go, take unto thee a wife of harlotry”

Therefore, this “Word of the Lord” in action began with this step, ***“Go, take unto thee a wife.”*** Each word of this sentence bears within it enormous symbols of God’s tremendous love. ***“GO”***... foreshadows God the Father sending His own Son down to us. “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son” (John 3:16a). ***“Take unto thee” continues*** to define the intimacy of love in which he comes to us, taking us into his very heart. This shows us that God’s word to us is not a doctrinal statement sent from a faraway Sovereign. God’s Word comes to us wrapped in flesh and blood and filled with a love that gathers us into union with Himself. And the final words of this sentence state, ***“a wife of harlotry”***. This activity of God’s love being manifest through a person comes to a woman completely undeserving of it. “But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8). “For He hath made Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him (II Corinthians 5:21). “They say, If a man put away his wife, and she go from him, and become another man’s, shall he return unto again? Shall not that land be greatly polluted? But thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return again to me, saith the Lord” (Jeremiah 3:1).

The Lord describes the people of Israel to Hosea as a land that is ruined by its great harlotry. This picture of Israel that we are confronted with in Hosea is that of a land that has been sown with bad seed based on a heart that continually departs from the Lord. Yet even before the Word of the Lord states the condition of Israel it commands Hosea to take a wife from among them. The fact that “the beginning of the word of the Lord” started with Hosea taking a wife rather than describing the problem is a clue in understanding the way God deals with us.

God Himself initiated this action of love towards Israel in the person of Hosea.

God’s Response

“So he went and took Gomer, the daughter of Diblaim, who conceived, and bore him a son” (Hosea1:3).

It is important to notice that God's only instruction to His prophet was to make a union with a harlot from among the people. God's first instruction did not tell Hosea to speak or do any other action besides entering into union. Without any further deeds or discussion, Hosea immediately makes a union with Gomer. And then immediately Gomer conceives seed and brings forth a son. The Word of God does not mention anything else regarding Hosea's action at this time other than these two points. The eternal significance behind these actions is what is all important. In these two actions, union and conception, we find God's response to us in our defiled state. Here we see the activity of God in His reaction to unfaithful, defiled, and corrupt man. God does not speak words of correction, instruct with terms of reform, or try to teach love and faithfulness to a defiled land. Rather He immediately enters into union with it.

Union

God's response is union... to bring us into union with His Son. God involves Himself in the crisis. God gives Himself for us in the most intimate way. We find God responding this same way all throughout the scriptures, *"For he hath made Him, who knew no sin, to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him"* (II Cor. 5:21). The very basis of the Cross and how it functions is that God sows Himself into death, being made one with us in our hopeless state. Through union God redeemed us. When we were dead in sin, God became sin by joining to us. **We may be aware of this principle of union into Christ in relation to our salvation, but are we aware that this same principle of union is the only way we can mature in the Lord, be sanctified as His Body, and find hope when we are totally messed up and off in sin?** If God's love was commended towards us in this way when we were yet dead in sin, how much more will He continue with us now until His own Body brings forth of His fruit (Romans 5:8-9)? **If we feel rejected, condemned and forsaken by God when in a wretched condition, it is only because we do not know Him yet.**

Conception

At this time in the history of Israel, the people were actively giving themselves to foreign gods. They were not crying out to God or seeking Him. At such a time

as this God Himself initiated this action of love towards Israel in the person of Hosea. Israel's land was overridden with idolatry and defiled. Although they bore the name of God's people, their lives bore the fruit of foreign seed. The ground of their heart was hard, fallow and full of rocks. **In response to their desperate condition, God commanded Hosea to enter into a union with Gomer, a picture that oneness with Christ Crucified could eventually bring them out from their own uncleanness into fruitfulness.** God's heart was moved to save His people from the fruit of their own selfish nature and ways. God Himself moved in love towards them even when they were blatantly rejecting Him.

Hosea joining with Gomer was a sign to the people of Israel. This "union" sign was meant to awaken them to the God they did not know. It was a sign meant to reveal the method through which God works. Although the people of Israel had heard the words of God given through Moses and some prophets, His Word had no impact in them. This can still be the case for God's people today. **God wants to awaken us to our union with Christ in a way that will cause His Word to have conception in us. God is not just sowing words of teachings into our ears, but He is sowing His Crucified Self into our hearts to impact our hard and fallow ground and bring conception.** We may believe in the Cross and all the teachings of Christ, but if our lives are filled with selfishness and sin, there is proof that we have not yet conceived of that which has been taught. If we are still trying to clean up our land, we have not yet awakened to this great union God has already brought us into that can purge us in ways beyond all human effort.

Hosea — Lesson One Questions

Please answer questions in paragraph form.

You will be graded on the thoughtfulness put into your answers.

1. Where did this “WORD OF THE LORD” come from according to Hosea 1:2?
2. Explain the significance behind the words of this verse: **“Go, take unto thee a wife of harlotry”**
3. **How does the principle of our union into Christ Crucified pertain to our sanctification and fruitfulness in the Lord?**
4. Comment on this sentence: **“If we feel rejected, condemned and forsaken by God when in a wretched condition, it is only because we do not know Him yet.”**
5. What is Hosea a sign of the people of Israel? **(Remember to answer in paragraph form).**
6. Comment on this sentence: **“God wants to awaken us to our union with Christ in a way that will cause His Word to have conception in us.”**
7. What is God’s desired harvest in Gomer?