

- Background
  - Estimated 8<sup>th</sup> century BC
  - Began ministry shortly after Amos
    - Amos was a hellfire and brimstone preacher who warned of Israel's destruction
  - The only of the written prophets to come from Israel
    - After the death of Solomon, Israelites split into 2 kingdoms: Judah and Israel
  - Uses symbol of his unfaithful wife as Israel
    - Interesting, since marriage is supposed to represent Christ and the church (Ephesians 5: 22-33)
  - Theme: Discipline
  - Whoredom is a broad term
- Hosea 1
  - Hosea was literally called by God to take a whore as his wife (Hosea 1: 2-9)
    - God is being extremely blunt, not beating around the bush
    - He has warned Israel for the entirety of its life to repent and seek him
      - Even before God's dwelling place was built, his anger was kindled against Israel when they built a golden calf (Exodus 32: 10)
      - Not everyone will react to a slap on the wrist, sometimes to truly change someone you must reach deep, even if it involves discipline
        - Discipline isn't a bad thing (Hebrews 12: 11)
        - Sufferings produce hope (Romans 5: 3-4)
    - God very blatantly rejects Israel, declaring he will destroy it (Hosea 1: 4, 6, 9)
      - "Not my people": Are they really his children?
  - But God is still God, and God is good (Hosea 1: 10-11)
    - God will not completely turn his back on his people (Hosea 1: 10)
      - Remember, discipline is not bad (Hebrews 12: 11)
      - God's timing is perfect (Ecclesiastes 3: 1)
      - God will always forgive if you are willing to repent
    - We know today that God went on to fulfill Judaism, to create what is now Christianity (Hosea 10: 11)
      - The image depicted here is seen in the Christian church, unity even despite differences
        - This can mimic the image of Jew and Gentile (Romans 10: 12)
      - We must realize that the Old Testament is not irrelevant, but instead a foundation for the teachings of Jesus to rest on
        - Jesus came to fulfill the law, not abolish it (Matthew 5: 17)
        - A great multitude of every nation (Revelation 7: 9)
- Hosea 2
  - The Lord is a jealous God and disobedience will lead to punishment (Hosea 2: 1-13)
    - We so very often get confused and pursue sin instead of God (Hosea 2: 7)
      - We pursue an alternative, thinking that is what we need in life, maybe even thinking that these passions are what fuel us (Hosea 2: 5)
      - Little do we know, all good comes from God (Hosea 2: 8)

- But similarly, we misuse our blessings to often, even giving them to our own gods
      - Ultimately, the earthly possessions are God's to take back, why bother taking them and run (and fail), when we can be in communion with him (Hosea 2: 9)
    - There is an end to our blissful sin, we will be held accountable one day (Hosea 2: 13, Revelation 20: 13-15)
  - The Lord is a merciful God and sin can always be repented (Hosea 2: 14-23)
    - Above all, God is a loving God (Hosea 2: 14)
      - The Old Testament God and the New Testament God are the same
      - He wants us to love him, but as said before, sometimes that requires discipline
      - God wants us *betrothed* to him (Hosea 2: 16-20)
        - "Forever"
        - His desire for us is so strong, he wants us to commit to him, and he wants us to be exclusive
    - We see that by turning to God, obeying his commandments, we can be forgiven (Hosea 2: 21-23)
      - God's mercy is so abounding that even though we are unworthy, we are deemed worthy; even though we have no reason to be accepted by God, he accepts us (Hosea 2: 23)
- Hosea 3
  - Redemption isn't always easy, but is always attainable (Hosea 3: 1-5)
    - Hosea was called to buy the prostitute, offering a new chance at life (Hosea 3: 2)
      - Today as Christians, Jesus has both bought us by his sacrifice (1 Corinthians 6: 19-20)
      - It's not a one-way thing though, we must work once bought (Hosea 3: 3)
        - Israel has to push through the trials until the savior comes (Hosea 3: 4)
        - We see the prostitute had to work to show devotion, which in turn strengthened herself
        - Similarly, by serving God, we grow for our own benefit (John 15: 4-5)
          - Like our education, not just getting a degree, but growing
        - As a result, in spiritual growth, we can draw nearer to God (Hosea 3: 5)
- Hosea 4
  - God requires better (Hosea 4: 1-19)
    - We see currently; the people are void of God (Hosea 4: 1b)
      - Although this is probably a hyperbole (or maybe not), there is truth in this statement
      - How can a God of love dwell among a people that have no love themselves?

- Knowledge of God of course obviously talks about knowing the existence of God, but there is more to this
    - All wisdom comes from God (Proverbs 2: 6-8)
    - By not seeking God, Israel is not only void of love, but also void of wisdom
  - Wisdom from God is priceless (Hosea 4: 6)
    - The lack of Godly wisdom leaves Israel hopelessly lost
    - Israel has instead chosen the wisdom of the world (Hosea 4: 7-14)
      - Wisdom of God and of the world are opposites, you can't accept one without completely rejecting the other (1 Corinthians 2: 13-16)
      - Since these people have rejected God's wisdom, he rejects them
  - Don't play the whore (Hosea 4: 7-14)
    - God's people are to chose him alone; we are betrothed to God (Hosea 2: 19)
    - Example of spiritual adultery
    - We see terrible examples of sin, but these very things still happen today
      - Adultery and Idolatry (Hosea 4: 13-14)
        - You may think not, but yes
        - We make the small things into our idols, choosing them over God (Romans 1: 24-25)
        - We commit adultery in our heart (Matthew 5: 27-28)
      - We aren't better than Israel, but we have a chance to learn from their mistakes
        - God doesn't expect perfection, but we aren't perfect, so should always be getting better
        - What a terrible life it would be if God couldn't dwell with us
  - God wants the pure to stay pure (Hosea 4: 15)
    - Judah was doing good, he wants them to stay good
- Hosea 5
  - Ephraim
    - Joseph's wife
    - Often the whole tribe of Israel was called Ephraim
  - We don't deserve God (Hosea 5: 1-15)
    - We see Israel had sinned so much that they shouldn't be allowed to return to God (Hosea 5: 4)
      - Ultimately, however, we know that they do
        - The reason they opened this book with the prostitute
      - None of us deserve to return to God, we're all messed up af, but he wants us to dwell with him
    - In the first place, we can only find God because he allows us (Hosea 5: 6)
      - Here we see that God withdraws

- This isn't out of hatred, but out of discipline (Hosea 5: 2)
      - The act of withdrawing itself isn't easy itself (imagine abandoning your children for their good)
    - This means that when he isn't withdrawn, God makes an active effort to be present
  - Sometimes, we get to a point where we must be the ones to engage God, not the other way around (Hosea 5: 15)
    - No one likes being the one that always must ask to hang out, that feels very one-sided
    - Sometimes you like to be invited, not the inviter
- Hosea 6
  - You're never too far gone (Hosea 6: 1-11)
    - Even though Israel has hit rock bottom, they can still go back to God (Hosea 6: 1)
      - Though dead in sin, we are not forgotten; God will revive us (Hosea 6: 2)
        - God will raise us to his level
        - Reference to Jesus
          - Setting the path for Jesus to come (Luke 24: 27)
        - But they must go back
          - The dew disappears after morning, likewise so does Israel's faith (Hosea 6: 4)
    - God wants our love, not our rituals (Hosea 6: 6)
      - This is huge
      - Remember one of the biggest issues Jesus ran into were pharisees preaching the law as supreme
      - Here we see the truth, love matters more than religion
- Hosea 7
  - God wants us to choose him (Hosea 7: 1-16)
    - Baking metaphors (Hosea 7: 4, 6, 8)
    - God knows our sin (Hosea 7: 2)
      - There's literally no reason to hide it from him
      - He wants us to turn back to him
      - God grieves that we choose to live in this sin (Hosea 7: 13)
        - Our sin doesn't surprise him
        - He wants better for us, he knows sin leads to death (James 1: 15)
    - Israel (and us) say we know God, but we choose to not turn to him (Hosea 7: 10)
      - This is worse than being an unbeliever: this is the lukewarmness that we always hear about
        - By the way, God hates lukewarm (Revelation 3: 20)
        - We must choose to walk in God, not in darkness (1 John 1: 5-10)
      - God wants us to be saved
        - Remember, being saved is more than just the end goal: it's about getting better
        - We should want to be better and God wants that for us

- Imagine seeing a child hopelessly lost in a maze, walking down a path that leads to fire
    - God wants to help us through the maze, not just because we rebel against him (Hosea 7: 14), he forgives and can look past that
      - What he can't look past is our death and destruction; that matters to him
- Hosea 8
  - Punishment comes with wrongdoings (Hosea 8: 1-14)
    - We should look to God in all that we do (Hosea 8: 4)
      - God knew that the establishment of kings would be a downfall and lead to worldliness (1 Samuel 8: 4-9)
      - Today, God has given us rulers over us (Romans 13: 1-2)
        - Notice, God has put these rulers over us
          - We are to follow them as long as it is good (i.e. does not contradict the word of God) (1 Peter 2: 13-14)
          - This is the will of God
    - Good comes from God, and the goods of the world will fade (Hosea 8: 6)
      - Calf: idol (Exodus)
    - Seek the world, destroyed by the world (as in invading armies) (Hosea 8: 7)
      - Losing a war is to be completely demolished
    - Sacrifices to God can not outweigh our wrong (Hosea 8: 11)
      - King Saul lost hope in a moment, making a sacrifice rashly, and was condemned for it (1 Samuel 13: 8-9, 13-14)
      - Therefore, God did away with our worldly sacrifices
        - Instead, we had one true sacrifice
        - Instead, God wants us to genuinely turn to him, not just try and buy out our sin
      - This still happens today
        - Prayer for forgiveness, then go right back
        - Alternatively, we should repent and affirm our faith
- Hosea 9
  - Judgement is coming (Hosea 9: 1-17)
    - Rejoice not (Hosea 9: 1)
    - Israel was once great, but chose evil over God (Hosea 9: 10)
      - They put detestable things in their heart, so they became detestable (James 3: 10-12)
      - God hates the fact we choose wickedness (Hosea 9: 10)
        - If we reject an almighty God, doesn't he have a right to reject us (Hosea 9: 17)
          - Luckily this isn't the end, so we have chances to return to God
          - Remember, this ends with God buying back the prostitute

- Must remember who's in control
  - Gilgal
    - Part of the promised land on the other side of the Jordan
    - Associated with sin and idolatry
  - Children to death (Hosea 9: 15-17)
    - Sexual immorality going on
    - Getting opposite of what they worshipped idols for (fertility)
      - Punished by taking children from them
      - Similarly, God refused their sacrifices, because they had given too many (Hosea 9: 4)
- Hosea 10
  - Seriously, if you live in sin, you will pay (Hosea 10: 1-15)
    - Too often, we think we don't need God (Hosea 10: 3)
    - Too often, we are quick to promise, making our word meaningless (Hosea 10: 4)
      - Have you ever promised God you were done sinning?
        - Yeah, that doesn't really work
        - Therefore, we *do* have a king, we need God to keep us on the path of righteousness, we can't alone
      - Let your yes be yes (Matthew 5: 37)
    - Too often, we seek brokenness over blessing (Hosea 10: 12-13)
      - We must sow righteousness so that we can reap love
        - Our faith is an investment
- Hosea 11
  - Our God is one of mercy (Hosea 11: 1-12: 1)
    - God raised us and made us who we are, whether we know it or not (Hosea 11: 3)
    - God isn't giving up Israel back to Egypt (Hosea 11: 5)
      - The image of putting them back where they came
        - Tempting, but God has more love than that
        - God will preserve his people
    - God is for us and will forgive us, but that doesn't mean there aren't consequences (Hosea 11: 6)
      - Again, God's discipline isn't out of hatred, but out of love
      - Israel falls to Assyria
        - If God did not give any consequence, would that fix anything?
        - God loves us, but it's important for us to remember who is in charge
    - God is capable of mercy in such a way that no man is (Hosea 11: 9)
      - Despite everything, God does not seek wrath
      - We must respect this incredible tolerance
        - God reprimands our sin, but doesn't hold it against us
        - We aren't even as good as God, so how can we tear a fellow sinner apart when we're just as bad?
    - We must fear God (Hosea 11: 11)

- Fearing God doesn't mean we can't love him
  - Fear is necessary to hold him to his high position
  - Without fear, we put ourselves on God's level
- Hosea 12
  - Israel has good reason to repent (Hosea 12: 2-14)
    - Israel has always struggled with deceit (Hosea 12: 2-3)
      - Jacob fought for dominance over brother (holding onto him)
      - Jacob tricked his brother, Esau, into gaining the inheritance (Genesis 27)
    - Israel believes that they are responsible for their riches (Hosea 12: 8)
      - Moreover, they pridefully can't acknowledge their own sin
      - All good comes from God, we must not get caught up in ourselves
      - "Classic dad talk" (Hosea 12: 9)
    - We must repent and await forgiveness (Hosea 12: 6)
      - Asking for forgiveness shouldn't be a begrudging thing; we are beyond blessed to have a chance to redeem ourselves
- Hosea 13
  - We are held to a higher standard (Hosea 13: 1-16)
    - God is our God, we must choose him, and him alone (Hosea 13: 4)
      - When we had nothing, God was there (Hosea 13: 5)
      - We fill our hearts with so much crap that isn't from God that we don't leave room for him (Hosea 13: 6)
        - That isn't to say that we can't have friends, a significant other, do fun things, etc.
          - All good things come from God (James 1: 17)
          - We just must remember where the good comes from
    - We need God not an earthly Lord; we need Christianity, not conformity (Hosea 13: 10-11)
      - Remember, the establishment of a king over Israel wasn't God's will (1 Samuel 8: 4-9)
        - Because his people refused to listen, God gave into their wishes, that they could learn
          - Like a child, touching a hot stove
        - Now, a king can't take care of Israel, only God can
    - But there is a promise of hope (Hosea 13: 14)
      - Sound familiar? (1 Corinthians 15: 55-57)
      - Ransom the soul (Psalm 49: 15)
      - Hosea goes on to prophecy about trial and hardship
        - So why this interlude of hope?
          - Well, compassion is hidden from his eyes (Hosea 13: 14b)
            - But there is hope!
          - Because God brings hope into our lives
          - God will always allow for redemption, and redemption through God prevails against death

- Hosea 14
  - It's never too late (Hosea 14: 1-9)
    - A pure image of forgiveness (Hosea 14: 2)
    - We must choose the God over the world, as the world isn't good enough (Hosea 14: 3)
      - In this case, we see that the world is literally killing Israel
    - We prosper under God (Hosea 14: 7)
    - We are wise if we turn to the Lord (Hosea 14: 9)
      - This is all a precursor... God sends his son to bring us onto the path of righteousness
      - We would always fall short by the law (Romans 3: 23)
      - To love, we had to experience love (1 John 4: 19)
        - We owe it all to God
      - Christianity is different than Judaism, but sin still bears the same weight
        - We must not fall into the same trap Israel did
        - We should learn to walk like Christ
      - We see Jesus came to give us a clean slate, the same rules, but in a different light (Romans 13: 8-10)
        - Instead of the law, we are to love
      - By learning Jesus's teachings, we learn to walk in a manner pleasing to God
        - The entire new testament is made up of Jesus's teachings
          - However, all except for the gospels, Acts, and Revelation, are commentaries on these core teachings
          - This is why we will be going through the gospels in the order of occurrence, to learn to see things as Jesus did
- Big ideas
  - Sin
    - We are caught up in our own idols, whatever they may be
    - Nothing is better than God, so we should stop acting like it
    - Ultimately, we are punished for our sin
  - Discipline
    - Discipline isn't always bad, but it is necessary
    - God should be number one, and while he does love us, we aren't on his level
  - Repentance
    - God gives us a chance to fix our sin
      - Therefore, he ultimately sends Jesus to die for us
      - Though we are prostitutes ourselves, we are bought with the blood of Christ
      - Vain sacrifices aren't enough; God desires our hearts
    - We should strive to be constantly improving, not just for the end game, but for the process of getting better in and of itself