

Unfaithfulness Confrontation

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Hosea is found in what one person described as “the clean pages of your Bible.” This is a part of the Bible we do not open very often, maybe never. Hosea begins a part of the Bible called “the minor prophets” and there are twelve minor prophets in the Old Testament.

Let me begin with a brief history and context of Israel to help us to understand where Hosea is and why he is giving this message. God comes to Abram, in Genesis 12, and tells him, “I am going to make you a great Nation,” and He does. That Nation enters into Egypt, into bondage, and God calls out Moses.¹ The theme God is going to bring to the people, as they are coming out of Egypt, is, “you are My people and I am your God. Walk in holiness. Worship. Serve. Obey.”

God allows them to enter into a land through Joshua. The period of Judges is a time when they are rejecting God and they go through cycles of rebellion. God judges them and they call out for mercy. God delivers them and after a time of prosperity they rebel again and this cycle continues. Finally, they ask for a king, in King Saul.²

King Saul fails and along comes King David, a “man after God’s own heart.”³ He unites the kingdom and there is a time when the kingdom is focused upon the Lord and His worship.

Solomon follows David⁴ and Solomon’s heart is mixed. He marries many women from many pagan lands and they bring their gods. He worships YEHWEH, but he also worships these other gods with his wives.

Following Solomon is a king named Rehoboam,⁵ Solomon’s son, and he takes the throne. Rehoboam is really foolish and the kingdom then splits in two. The northern kingdom and it will be called Israel. There is a southern kingdom and it will be called Judah. Ten Tribes go to the north⁶ and two Tribes remain in the south.⁷

The northern kingdom is the kingdom that separates from the Davidic line, the line which God says will be over the Nation of Israel. In separating from the Davidic line they also separate from Jerusalem in the worship of God in the Temple and they begin with false worship. Every king in the northern kingdom is wicked.

Hosea is from the northern kingdom and he is speaking to the northern kingdom. He is the only minor prophet from the northern kingdom who does so. The southern kingdom will have some righteous kings, but most of them will also be wicked.

When Hosea comes on the scene, there is a king in Israel by the name of Jeroboam who is a great political king. As far as secular power, rule, and prosperity Jeroboam is amazing, but he is a very evil man spiritually. He gives himself and the Nation over to false worship, yet it is a time of incredible prosperity. This is where Hosea begins his ministry.

The Nation of Israel is powerful and there are no enemies who are threatening them. It is prosperous. Everyone in Israel is thinking, “We must be doing everything great because everything is going fantastic for us.” This is where Hosea comes and he brings a message of confrontation. It is a message from God saying, “All is going well, but it is not going to be going well. I am calling you to return now before My judgment comes.”

¹ Exodus 4

² 1 Samuel 8

³ 1 Samuel 13:14

⁴ 1 Samuel 16

⁵ 1 Kings 14:21-31

⁶ Reuben, Issachar, Zebulun, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Ephraim, Manasseh, and a remnant of the Tribe of Levi

⁷ Judah, Benjamin, and a remnant of the Tribe of Levi

¹The word of the LORD that came to Hosea, the son of Beerī, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel.

Hosea's Wife and Children

²When the LORD first spoke through Hosea, the LORD said to Hosea, “Go, take to yourself a wife of whoredom and have children of whoredom, for the land commits great whoredom by forsaking the LORD.”

³So he went and took Gomer, the daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bore him a son.

⁴And the LORD said to him, “Call his name Jezreel, for in just a little while I will punish the house of Jehu for the blood of Jezreel, and I will put an end to the kingdom of the house of Israel. ⁵And on that day I will break the bow of Israel in the Valley of Jezreel.”

⁶She conceived again and bore a daughter. And the LORD said to him, “Call her name No Mercy, for I will no more have mercy on the house of Israel, to forgive them at all. ⁷But I will have mercy on the house of Judah, and I will save them by the LORD their God. I will not save them by bow or by sword or by war or by horses or by horsemen.”

⁸When she had weaned No Mercy, she conceived and bore a son. ⁹And the LORD said, “Call his name Not My People, for you are not my people, and I am not your God.”

¹⁰Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be like the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or numbered. And in the place where it was said to them, “You are not my people,” it shall be said to them, “Children of the living God.” ¹¹And the children of Judah and the children of Israel shall be gathered together, and they shall appoint for themselves one head. And they shall go up from the land, for great shall be the day of Jezreel.

We have all heard the phrase, “God loves you just the way you are.” Is that true or is that false? Well, it is true; God does love you just the way you are. Romans 5 tells us,

⁸but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

While we were still sinners, God loved us and He sent His Son Jesus to die for us. God does not wait for us to reform our life so that we might merit His love before He sets His grace upon us. He set His grace upon us while we were yet sinners. Our good works, our religious acts, or our humble obedience never earns God’s wonderful grace. God looks upon us with favor, mercy, and loving kindness in spite of our problems, our failings, our selfishness, or our sins. Our status with God is secure because of His faithfulness to us, not because of our faithfulness to Him. We do not clean our self up, first, in order to be welcomed by God. That is self-righteousness.

The hymn Billy Graham elected to close the end of his messages is wonderfully true.

Just as I am, without one plea,
but that thy blood was shed for me,
and that thou bidst me come to thee,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, and waiting not
to rid my soul of one dark blot,
to thee whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.⁸

⁸ “Just As I Am,” Charlotte Elliott, 1789-1871.

I wonder if any of us are doing just that. Are you waiting before you truly commit yourself to the Lord to rid yourself of some dark blots and then you will say, “Then I will come.” Friend, you are never outside the reach of God’s love. His love can reach you wherever you are. God loves you just the way you are.

Is that true or is that false? Well, it is false, of course. It is an abominable idea that God has no concern for practical holiness. God is holy and He has no fellowship with darkness. Without holiness no one can see the Lord. We cannot continue in sin and commune with God.

Jesus was the friend of sinners, but He did not sit passively with prostitutes and drunkards as they gave themselves over to sin and immorality. In every place, Jesus called sinners to repent. If the prostitute, tax collector, or Pharisee refused to repent they could not continue to be a friend of Jesus. God’s love is not an unholy thing. Indeed, He loves us when we are a dirty, filthy mess, but He receives us for the purpose of throwing us in His bath and washing our sinful soul so that it will be clean. God demands we repent of our sins, turn from sin, and turn toward Him so that we might receive His mercy and we might be men and women made new. God demands we repent. No sin is so great that we fall outside of God’s mercy if we repent, but if we refuse to repent we will remain outside of His love forever and ever. Indeed, God does love us in our, but He does not leave us in our sin.

God loves us just the way we are. That is true, but it is also false. Many today are confused about this very idea and the seriousness of sin, God’s holiness, God’s grace, and God’s loving kindness. The people of Hosea’s day were just as confused. The Prophet Hosea is given to us to clear up our confusion about God’s righteousness, God’s mercy, worship, and life. This message is simply entitled, “Unfaithfulness Confronted,”

¹The word of the LORD that came to Hosea, the son of Beeri, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel.

Verse 1 tells us Hosea ministered in the 8th Century BC, almost 3,000 years ago! He served God for a very long period of time. His ministry lasted up to and over forty years. Hosea serves God after Israel has experienced civil war that ripped the Nation in two. The northern kingdom is still named Israel and the southern kingdom is now named Judah. Hosea’s ministry begins underneath Jeroboam II. Times are very good under Jeroboam’s forty year reign.

If we read the newspapers of the day, they would have boasted of the Dow Jones average hitting new heights, tax revenues for the wealth of the Nation were booming, the military might of Israel is unchallenged, the people believe they must be experiencing God’s blessing. After all, God would not bless them materially and with military might if He were displeased with them. Right? In answering that question, God says, “Wrong!”

This is a Nation which has largely forgotten God. It has twisted worship so that they were still holding on to remnants of the worship of YEHWEH, the True God, but they were mixing this in with the worship of false God’s as well. They were steeped in Baal worship, other sins of sexual immorality, murder, and deceit. How could allow this country to do so well economically and materially if they were so terribly disobedient to Him?

God often allows sinful people to enjoy earthy prosperity. Do not believe the evidence of God’s favor rests in our good fortune. God’s patience is not to be confused with His pleasure. He often allows sin to go unjudged for long periods of time before settling accounts.

Jeroboam II is very ungodly, very idolatrous, and wicked. Yet, God allowed him to flourish on the throne for forty-one years. The Prophet Amos tells us he enjoyed parties during which perfumed guests lay on silk cushions, eating lamb and stall-fed beef, drinking wine from bowls, and singing songs of merriment together. He lived the high life, yet God was not pleased and in death he faced his God. So, God gives a word to Hosea, “The word of the Lord that came to Hosea...”

The first nine words of this book are so very important and I want to take some time to discuss them before we look at what Hosea tells us. In 2 Peter 1, Peter says this about the prophets,

²¹ For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

We are not to get the idea that Hosea's is allowing his reading of the newspaper and watching the news of his day to rumble in his soul to become an angry man. That is not what happened. This message was not produced by the will of Hosea.

The pages set before us are not the meandering opinions of a man who lived 3,000 years ago. The words we study are God's very words. He uses Hosea's personality, talents, experiences, and gifts, but this is God's message. These words possess the perfection and power of God Himself. God gave these words so that Hosea would speak to his contemporaries, but He also gave these words so that Hosea could speak to us in the 21st Century, almost 3,000 years later. God purposed we also would read Hosea's words, that we would listen to God's voice, and that we would be moved to repentance, obedience, and faith.

It is concerning to me some people today say they are looking for, "a word from the Lord." That is concerning to me, for they do not open their Bibles to find it. But, here it is. In Hebrews 1, God says,

¹ Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.

Today God is not giving new words or visions to more prophets. God communicated in times past in various ways to the prophets. Today God has completed His message to us in His Son. Beloved, I urge you, do not believe in some man who stands in front of a television camera and claims a revelation from God. The revelation of God to us is complete in Jesus. And, certainly do not listen to some other man before you open your Bible and study diligently the Word of the Lord that came through Hosea.

The revelation of God to man is complete and sufficient. Furthermore, as we are on this topic, to remember the test of the prophet in Deuteronomy 18, in which God talks about how He is going to speak through prophets,

²⁰ But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in my name that I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that same prophet shall die.' ²¹ And if you say in your heart, 'How may we know the word that the LORD has not spoken?' — ²² when a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the word does not come to pass or come true, that is a word that the LORD has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously. You need not be afraid of him."

Do you catch that? The test is not that if a prophet speaks some amazing prediction and it comes to pass. A prophet may speak one hundred things which are amazing and which all come to pass, but that is not the test as to whether he is from God. The test is whether once, at any time throughout his entire ministry, if he speaks a word which does not come to pass and is not true, that person is not from God and we do not need to be listening to him. That is the issue and that is the test.

I had a friend in high school who so desperately wanted a fresh word from the Lord. He told me he raised his Bible to the sky one day, as he was searching for a word from the Lord, and he asked the Lord, "Lord, is this all you have for me?" Low and behold, he had some experiences where he heard fresh words from the Lord and to this day, he is still wandering away from biblical Christianity because he came to believe this Book is not sufficient, not living, not active, not enough, not exciting, and it does not connect him to the real and living God. I believe that is a satanic deception.

I urge you, beloved, let us study these clean pages of our Bible for this is the Word of the Lord Himself. These are not the meanderings, again, of a dusty prophet for the Word of God is living and it is active and it is sharper than any two-edged sword. It pierces the soul and spirit. It judges the thoughts and intentions of our own heart. It is powerful. God provides everything we need for life and godliness in Holy Scripture. We need not look for something more and we must not satisfy our self with anything less.

The message of Hosea is: God brings judgment and then restoration to an unfaithful people. God, first, confronts the problem of unfaithfulness to God through Hosea. This is a confrontation message. God will confront us, will He not, about habits, attitudes, and actions of our life which veer away from His righteousness and holiness. He challenges us directly about things in our life which need to be changed.

Very seldom do we desire change in our life toward righteousness, yet God says, “No, I will not be content with you as you are. I am going to move you away from the poison of sin and I am going to move you toward the preciousness of righteousness.” God confronts us with our sin because He loves us. Sin in the soul or in a community is an absolute poison and love will not allow poison to flow in the heart of a person or in a community of faith. God’s purpose for confrontation is not condemnation. It is always His open extension of returning to Him, repenting, and giving us His grace.

Confrontation over biblical holiness is not in vogue in our culture. I do not believe it is even in vogue in much of the evangelical church. Confrontation regarding the world’s upside down morals is very much in vogue. In other words, if we follow along with the world, we can confront all kinds of things, but if we stray from the pattern of this world then we must not stand up and be confrontation. We must back away from that because it is a hard word and we will scare people away.

Confrontation regarding biblical holiness is absolutely essential if we are to listen to Scripture faithfully for this is what God does. The world’s idea of love today is that love affirms whatever choice “I make for my own life.” God’s idea of love is quite different. It is that love pursues whatever moves us toward a greater enjoyment of God in obedience to Him. We will be accused of being hate mongers for confronting specific sins, but we are really representing the love of God because we want to help others move toward a greater enjoyment of God and obedience to Him. That is what life is about.

Hosea begins to listen to the Lord in Verse 2. It is astonishing and almost unimaginable what God says to Hosea,

^{2b} “Go, take to yourself a wife of whoredom and have children of whoredom, for the land commits great whoredom by forsaking the LORD.”

Do you catch what God is calling Hosea to do? Can you imagine what God is calling Hosea to do? Hosea was a young man, just like all of the other young men growing up in the world, dreaming of a woman that in one day he would grow up and be able to marry and establish a family and live out the rest of his days. That is what young men and young women do. They dream of growing up, getting married, and having a family and living happily ever after. But, we need to observe the kind of counsel God gives to Hosea regarding the kind of woman he is to marry.

I have three sons and I have given them some counsel regarding the kind of women they should look for. One has done that and married an awesome and incredible young lady. Two more are yet to experience that joy but I want to give them counsel as to the kind of person they should look for, with certain qualities that would allow them to have the kind of life they hope to have. The most important thing is becoming the right man for that woman and focusing upon that.

One thing I did not say was, “Son, go look for a prostitute and marry her.” I do not know of any father who would ever give that counsel or that calling, yet this is what God does with Hosea. Why would God command this young man to marry a prostitute? Does He not know Hosea’s life will be miserable? The end of Verse 2 tells us,

^{2b} “And here’s why: This whole country has become a whorehouse, unfaithful to me, God.”⁹

God is telling Hosea to do this because the entire country had become a whorehouse, a place of prostitution. It is steeped in unfaithfulness and spiritual adultery. God designs Hosea’s life to be a message of confrontation of a Nation. Wherever Hosea would go, people were reminded of the message Hosea’s life, family, and children will convey to the world around them, “All is not well! Do you want to continue to believe all is well because the economy is fine and the military is protecting our borders? No, it is not! Let me introduce my wife, Gomer, to you. When you look at me quizzically and ask, ‘How in the world did you marry her?’, I will tell you the reason why I married her is because you are a prostitute before the Lord.”

This is a sermon not with words, but through a family and through a life. God sets apart His prophets and His servants to confront sin in His people. Because of this the work of the prophet is always unpleasant and very rarely

⁹ “The Message,” Copyright © 1993, NavPress Publishing Group., Colorado Springs, CO

popular. Most of the prophets were persecuted and killed as a result of their faithfulness to God's call upon their life. God asks His servants to do hard and painful things for the sake of His name.

If you are a believer in Christ, God has set you apart for Gospel ministry. He has set you apart to proclaim a message that not all of it will be well received by this world. Some of it will be hated. The Gospel is confrontational, it confronts sin, it confronts our need of Christ, and it proclaims Christ as the one and only Lord. Jesus tells us, in John 15,

^{20a} *"Remember the word that I said to you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you."*

Ministry unto the Lord is not promised as easy and agreeable. We must reject the lie which teaches us if we simply follow God in our life every present world circumstance will become rosy and we will be successful. If God is leading us, our life here on earth might not work out the way we want it to be. It is a lie that says, "If you simply follow God you will be healthy, your family will be happy, you will get good grades, you will get a great job." God teaches us the opposite might happen!

I do not believe God calls any one else to marry a prostitute. This is very unusual. We have the Word of God completed so God does not speak in that specific way to us today, but I believe there are many parallels in which God calls us to live a painful life and we must make choices, "Am I willing to suffer for the sake of Christ or am I going to run away from God's calling for me?" Servants realize our life's purpose is to simply communicate God's truth in whatever manner God designs. We might not like God's means nor agree with God's means, but we are men and women who are under orders.

What will you do if God calls you to endure pain for His glory? In some of that pain we must make a choice because we know we will have to stand up and when we do we will get whacked. Some of that pain may be the result of circumstances, but what will we do when God calls us to endure pain for the sake of His Kingdom? Do we submit to the Lord or do we kick against Him?

God says to Hosea, "I want you to confront Israel regarding her unfaithfulness to Me. I want you to confront this people through the choice of your wife. You, Hosea, will represent Me. Your bride will represent this Nation. You, Hosea, will be pure and loving and forgiving and faithful. Your wife will be impure and unfaithful and resentful and dishonoring. Everyday you live with her, you will communicate through your marriage that I God am angry at this people's sin and that I God continue to remain in faithful love to them, yearning for their reconciliation."

Many of us, when we read Hosea, struggle with God telling Hosea to marry a prostitute. I believe God intends for us to struggle with this. We fixate on Hosea's plight and think of this young man and how difficult his life must have been, but God intends for us to look at Hosea and think about God's grief over our sins. If we believe it must be outrageous for Hosea to love Gomer, how much more outrageous is it that God loves us. That is the issue. We look at Hosea and say, "It is outrageous that you would love this woman!" but God says, "Think. It is far more outrageous that God would love you."

In our elder's prayer this morning, the request was for God to help us to see our sin as He sees it. This is a great prayer. What would happen if God answered that prayer? I do not believe I could say another word and I would crumble here if I saw my sin the way God sees my sin. Here is Hosea to give us a picture to help us to see our sin the way God sees our sin.

Hosea's marriage reveals God loves us in the midst of our sin and that God Himself is forever faithful to us. It also reveals God hates our sin and He grieves over it. Our sin places us under God's righteous judgment, but that God offers us a way back through reconciliation.

We protest, "Could not have God communicated some other way. Indeed, God always uses the best means to fulfill the best ends. His thoughts are not our thoughts and His ways are not our ways."¹⁰ Will we listen to what God has to say, even when He picks up a megaphone and I believe this is a megaphone. The people's hearts has become so

¹⁰ Isaiah 55:8

hardened to God's voice, He had to pick up the megaphone of Hosea's life in order to break through the hardness of heart to communicate the message of grace.

One of the most life-giving skills we can acquire is the skill of listening to God through His Word. If we do not have that skill we are lost. We cannot commune with God. We cannot grow in sanctification. Some have said to me, "Pastor, when I read the Bible I do not get anything out of it. I do not understand what God is saying." It is important for us to be honest as to where we are and if that is where we are it is important to be honest. But, I want to encourage you, the problem is not with the Word of God. It is not as though God has been unclear or that God's Word is not powerful, transforming, or amazing. The problem is with our ears and with our eyes. We have ears that do not hear and we have eyes that do not see. That is not a condemnation of each of us. I have been there before. It is a description, a diagnosis. If that is where you are, that you do not get anything out of the Bible, please understand it is because your ears have become deaf to God's ways and your eyes have become dull. It is not because the Bible does not have anything to say, nor is it as if God is not there, but something is wrong in our heart and we have to do is seek the Lord and remove the obstacles, remove that hardness, and repent of sin. We must humbly call out and say, "Lord, I want to hear Your voice when You talk. I want to see what You would have me to see. I want to see You. I am willing to get rid of any sin in order for that to happen."

If that is your heart before the Lord you will begin to see and you will begin to love God's Word.

What did Hosea do?

³ So he went and took Gomer, the daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bore him a son.

Isn't that amazing. Hosea lived by faith and he trusted God. We find no complaints or arguments. There is no running away. There is just simple submission to God's commands. I do not know what God is calling you to endure today for His glory, but I know you can trust Him. Hosea trusted the Lord and he lived by faith. He believed God's plan was better than his own plan for his life. He chose to endure the sufferings of a life-long marriage to a prostitute. Why? Because he believed God was worthy of his obedience and God had a future, eternal joy for him. By faith, Hosea married Gomer the prostitute because he was looking to God's reward. By faith, Hosea rebuked his own people for their idolatry and immorality and he became and heir of righteousness which comes by faith.

First, the problem of unfaithfulness to God is confronted. What were the specific sins God was confronting through Hosea's life and ministry? We will look deeper into this in our next study, but basically the Israelites were taking the worship of YEHWEH, and they had not abandoned the worship of YEHWEH, and they mixed that worship with the worship of other gods and they polluted this worship so that God said it was altogether worthless. If we were to ask them if they still worshipped God, they would say, "Yes, we worship the Lord God YEHWEH."

In addition to this, they became liars and murderers and sexually immoral as a result of their walking away from the Living God.

Second, the punishment for unfaithfulness to God is communicated. God is going to call Hosea to name three children born to Gomer with specific names. The first is Jezreel. The second is Lo-Ruhamah. The third child is Lo-Ammi. What God is doing is declaring punishment upon this people and confronting their sin and He declares what is going to happen.

Jezreel is the place in which God confronted and disciplined the House of Abraham through Jehu with severe judgment. The Valley of Jezreel is read about in Revelation 16 as the place of the Battle of Armageddon. So, some of the judgment is past and has already taken place, but I believe some of the prophesy is yet to take place in the future when God finally deals with sin.

The daughter's name is Lo-Ruhamah, which means "no love" or "no mercy." Can you imagine someone asking you, "What is your daughter's name?" "No love." She was named that because God was getting tired of the unfaithfulness of the people. The more He loved them the more they were unfaithful and they continued to go and adulterate themselves. God's mercy was wearing thin.

The second son's name is Lo-Ammi, which means "not my people." From the time of Moses, God referred to the preciousness of the Israelites as "My people." He had been calling them His "people" and His "bride," yet they were not His people and He was not their God.

Imagine Hosea's family going to the neighborhood block party and they meet their neighbors, "Hi, my name is Hosea. This is my wife, Gomer. She is a prostitute." "What? Why would she still be a prostitute?" "Because you are a prostitute. You are unfaithful to God and that is why I am married to her."

"Here is my son, Jezreel." "Is Jezreel a family name?" "No." "Why is he Jezreel?" "Because God is going to bring judgment upon you and the rest of this Nation."

"Here is my daughter, Lo-Ruhamah, because God will not have any mercy upon you if you continue in your sins."

"Here is my son, Lo-Ammi, because God is telling you, 'You are not My people anymore.' That is God's message to you. You need to repent."

The punishment for unfaithfulness to God is clearly communicated through Hosea's family.

Third, the promise of faithfulness from God is communicated. This is an amazing twist and this is what happens. These prophets are so precious. Things happen that are so unexpected; that Hosea would be called to marry a prostitute, that he would have children who would have horrible names. But, we see a reversal,

^{9b} ...for you are not my people, and I am not your God."

¹⁰ Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be like the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or numbered. And in the place where it was said to them, "You are not my people," it shall be said to them, "Children of the living God." ¹¹ And the children of Judah and the children of Israel shall be gathered together, and they shall appoint for themselves one head. And they shall go up from the land, for great shall be the day of Jezreel.

The place of God's judgment will become the place of God's blessing and that is God's promise to His people. He rejects His people, but He restores His people.

In the middle of God's wrath against our sin, God opens His heart to love us. What contrasting themes we find throughout Hosea of God's righteous judgment and God's reaching grace. These themes of righteous judgment and reaching grace never contradict one another, yet they are never subsiding. Wrath and love and love and wrath, these are the notes which crash together in the Gospel. They find their ultimate expression in the cross of Jesus.

When Jesus endured the cross, He suffered under the wrath of the Father for our sin and in our place such that the mid-day sun was blotted out and all became dark. The Son of God, Himself, hanging upon the cross, cried out,

Matthew 27:46b *"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"*¹¹

In the midst of the darkness, the light of the Resurrection burst forth and God said, "Sin is finished. There is hope and there is life. I love you with an unfailing love."

Hosea is going to point to one person who will come after God punishes the people for their sin. Do you see that in the next verse?

¹¹ "And the children of Judah and the children of Israel shall be gathered together, and they shall appoint for themselves one head."

This one head, this leader, this ruler will be over the Nation and He will reunite them as in the days of David and they will experience a time of unprecedented joy. Of course, Hosea is pointing 800 years later to the birth of Jesus.

¹¹ "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" Aramaic.

At the first coming of Jesus the people were gathered together and they were made one spiritually. At The Second Coming of Jesus the people will be gathered together and will be made one physically. This is the picture of the great Gospel and it is the promise of the Gospel God offers to us.

I urge you, as we study Hosea, ask God to help us to hear His word of confrontation against our soul. Israel did not hear it. They had become complacent. They felt as though they were fine and did not need any big changes. Because they did not hear God's Word and they became complacent, they did not repent.

God is telling us there will be those in the midst of God's people who will suffer judgment and they will not be God's people, yet that does not mean God is through. There is still hope for anyone who would humble their self before the Lord and receive His grace. What a wonder the Gospel is. In the midst of our unfaithfulness to God, God's love is ever faithful to us. How precious that is.