

## A Study of the Minor Prophets

### Week 4 – Hosea

#### Chapters 4,5,6 & 7

1. Chapter 4 brings out three charges against Israel. No truth, no faithfulness, no knowledge of God.
2. Chapter 5 brings a charge against the Priests and royal house. Even the guilt of Judah is noticed with multiple references to their sharing of the apostasy of Israel. Verse 15 is the heart of this oracle when God declares that “I will depart.” As God departs, Israel searches in vain to find him. Only when the nation repents will the Lord be found.
3. Chapter 6 is a powerful present tense call from Hosea for Israel to repent. Hosea envisions the results of repentance, enhanced with escalating numerical parallelism: “He will revive us after two days, and on the third day He will raise us up” (6:2). Most scholars do not believe that this is a prophecy about the resurrection of Christ. Rather Hosea is building an expectation of promise and blessing. If Israel were to pursue the knowledge of God (6:3a), returning to the Lord (6:1a), she could expect that God would be faithful to respond.
4. Following a brief call to repentance, Hosea reverts to judgment speeches, reflecting on past and present events to sustain the case for judgment. In addition to historical reflection, the collection of speeches within this section of Hosea includes a rich and vast array of metaphors to describe Israel’s guilt and God’s wrath. The metaphors often carry throughout the book, using contrast and comparison to heighten the effect. God’s faithfulness is contrasted with the unfaithfulness of Ephraim (Israel). While Yahweh’s hesed (loyalty/faithfulness) is as certain as the dawn and should be expected like the seasonal rains (6:3), Israel’s hesed (“loyalty” hcsb) is as unreliable as the morning dew.
5. Hosea 7:3–7 pictures the corruption of Israel as an oven heated by a baker, consuming the rulers of Israel. Following the imagery of the baker, and even the political and religious syncretism of Ephraim is compared to a half-baked cake, one that the baker failed to turn.
6. The metaphors continue to flow in chapters 7 and 8. Israel is like graying hairs on your head or like a senseless dove. But God is the bird catcher or eagle. Or Israel is like a faulty bow always aiming but never hitting the mark.
7. Metaphors such as these, and many others, permeate the text of Hosea 6:4–10:15, providing rhetorical continuity throughout these judgment speeches. In summary, because Israel has “sown the wind” of folly, she will “reap the whirlwind” of judgment (8:7).