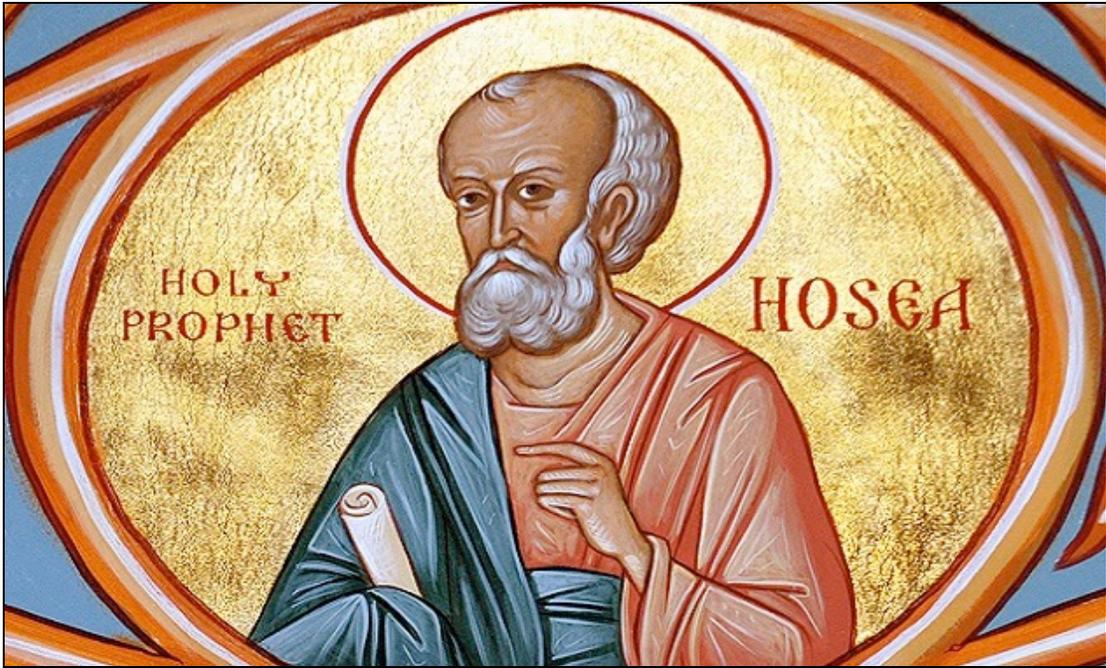


HOSEA: CHRIST IN HOSEA



T. M. MOORE

A Scriptorium Study from The Fellowship of Ailbe

The Fellowship of Ailbe

Hosea: Christ in Hosea
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Hosea: Christ in Hosea

Jesus taught that, as we search the Scriptures – *all* the Scriptures – we should expect them to yield insights to Himself, since He is the focus of all the revelation of God (Jn. 5.39). In many ways, the presence of Jesus in the Old Testament is clear; in other ways, we need to look carefully in order to discern how, in every part of the Old Testament, God was pointing forward to the coming of His Son.

The book of Hosea is certainly no exception. Hosea's preaching weaves a tapestry of Christ throughout, even though not even the prophet could discern how all the threads of his teaching would weave together to portray the coming Son of God.

We have the advantage of retrospection – the ability to look back *through* Christ, to the message of Hosea, where we can discover a consistent message, woven of various themes, pointing forward to the redemptive work of God in Jesus. In this final study in our series on Hosea, we'll take a look at several of those themes.

We are happy to provide *Scriptorium* studies in PDF format at no charge. We hope you will find them helpful and encouraging as you press on in your journey toward spiritual maturity with the Lord.

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We hope you find this study of Hosea instructive and helpful to equip you for your walk with and work for the Lord. Thank you for joining us.

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1 God's Sovereignty

Week 9, Monday: God's great plan revealed in His sovereignty

God reminded Israel that He is sovereign over all things – crops, weather, nations, everything. His rule of all things points us beyond the mundane events and activities of life, summoning us to worship and serve the God Who rules and blesses according to His good pleasure. Jesus showed, again and again, that He was this sovereign God to Whom Hosea and all the prophets bore witness.

Read Hosea 1 and 2

Meditate on the following passages from Hosea

1. Hosea 2.9-13: How many ways does God point out His sovereignty? What was He expecting of His people because of this (vv. 12, 13)?
2. Hosea 7.11, 12: God speaks to His sovereignty over His people, even though they reject and flee from Him. Can we break free of our obligations to God, simply because we choose not to obey Him? Explain.
3. Hosea 9.10-17: God is sovereign over life itself. He is the Giver of life, and He withholds life as He chooses. The very fact of life – our lives and the lives of people and creatures we see each day – should direct our thoughts and worship to God. Is this what God saw in Israel? Is it what He sees in us?
4. Hosea 11.5-7: God uses the nations according to His plan for His people. How did He use Israel's enemies?
5. Jesus reveals the sovereign God (Heb. 1.3); all the prophets thus point to Him. In His earthly ministry, and in the book of Acts, Jesus tapped into Israel's knowledge of God's sovereignty to validate His claims of being the Son of God. In what ways can you see Jesus embodying the sovereignty of God:
 - over all creation?
 - over His people, even when they deny Him?
 - over life itself?
 - over the nations, even those who are enemies of His people?

Summary

Hosea and all the prophets taught that God is sovereign over all things. Jesus made a point to demonstrate, especially in His miracles, that He is the God of Whom the prophets spoke. He rules creation, His rebellious people, all of life, and all nations. He is King of kings and Lord of lords!

Closing Prayer

By the word of the LORD the heavens were made,
And all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.
He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap;
He lays up the deep in storehouses.
Let all the earth fear the LORD;
Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him.
For He spoke, and it was *done*;

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He commanded, and it stood fast.
The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nothing;
He makes the plans of the peoples of no effect.
The counsel of the LORD stands forever,
The plans of His heart to all generations.
Blessed *is* the nation whose God *is* the LORD,
The people He has chosen as His own inheritance.

Psalm 33.6-12

Observations, notes, questions:

2 God's Love

Week 9, Saturday: The God Who pursues and persists

God is sovereign, and has need of nothing beyond Himself. Yet God reached out to Israel in love. He sought them, called them, pursued and delivered them, bore with them in their rebellious ways, and loved them without fail. Yet for all this, Israel did not remain faithful.

Read Hosea 3 and 4

Meditate on the following passages from Hosea

1. Hosea 1.1-11: God intended to use Hosea's marriage as a sign and reminder to Israel of His love. How would you describe the love of God as revealed here?
2. Hosea 3.1-5: How hard must this have been for Hosea? How did God expect Israel to respond to His pursuing love for them?
3. Hosea 6.4-11: How did the ministry of the prophets demonstrate God's love for His people? What do we learn about love from the work of the prophets?
4. Hosea 11.1-12: Here Israel is regarded as the Lord's child, and we can feel the Lord's deep, unending love for His people. How can you see that this love of God was not conditioned on Israel and Judah loving Him?
5. God loves the world so much that He sent Jesus to embody and proclaim His love (Jn. 3.16). Jesus reached back to the love of God as revealed by prophets like Hosea to validate His ministry as the Messenger of God's love. How can you see that:
 - in Jesus' frequent use of the example of marriage?
 - in such parables as the lost sheep, the prodigal son, and the good Samaritan?
 - Jesus's words were not always easy, but they were always loving. Explain:
 - Jesus on the cross spoke of God's unconditional love for His people. Explain:

Summary

Love moved God to save Israel. Love moved Him to care for her and to bear with her rebellious ways. In His love God confronted His sinful people, reminded them of His faithful love for them, and called them to return to Him. In love God pursued His people, wooing and calling and reaching out to them, even as they turned their backs on Him. Jesus came *in* the love of God, *as* the love of God, and *with* the love of God, thus fulfilling all the words of Hosea and the prophet's concerning God and His love.

Closing Prayer

When He slew them, then they sought Him;
And they returned and sought earnestly for God.
Then they remembered that God *was* their rock,
And the Most High God their Redeemer.
Nevertheless they flattered Him with their mouth,
And they lied to Him with their tongue;
For their heart was not steadfast with Him,
Nor were they faithful in His covenant.
But He, *being* full of compassion, forgave *their* iniquity,

And did not destroy *them*.
Yes, many a time He turned His anger away,
And did not stir up all His wrath;
For He remembered that they *were but* flesh,
A breath that passes away and does not come again.

Psalm 78.34-39

Observations, notes, questions:

3 God's Covenant

Week 9, Tuesday: The grace of God in His covenant

God bound Himself to Israel by an everlasting covenant of love. By that covenant He chose, redeemed, delivered, and saved Israel, so that, in His love and care, she might be a blessed people unto His glory and praise. But Israel scorned God's covenant, choosing their own ways rather than His, and thus inviting on themselves the sanctions of that covenant, which God had warned about from the beginning.

Read Hosea 5 and 6

Meditate on the following passages from Hosea

1. Hosea 6.4-7: God's covenant is an agreement between Him and His people, designed to allow them to flourish within the parameters of His grace and truth. The essence of God's covenant is to know, fear, love, and serve the Lord. How did Israel "transgress" this arrangement?
2. Hosea 8.1-3: God's Law was an integral part of His covenant with Israel. Can we truly know the Lord if we reject His Law? Explain.
3. Hosea 10.4 and 12.1: Israel transgressed God's covenant two ways. First, they falsely swore to keep covenant with the Lord. Second, they made a covenant with Assyria. Which did they really trust? To which did they look for their wellbeing, security, and prosperity? Do we ever do the same thing?
4. Hosea 2.14-23: God promised Israel a "new covenant" day in the future. How broad would the scope of that covenant be? How much would it entail? How can you see that true knowledge of God would be at the heart of this covenant?
5. Jesus is the Mediator of this new covenant (Heb. 8.1-13). How much of the Old Covenant continues in Jesus, and how does Jesus mediate this New Covenant so that it is better than the Old?

Summary

God's covenant with Israel has a prominent place throughout the literature of the Old Testament. It was replaced by the New Covenant, not as a total substitute, but as a further development, since the people of God broke the Old Covenant. In Christ, the New Covenant fulfills the Old and ushers in the precious and very great promises such as we read in Hosea 2.14-23 (2 Pet. 1.4). All the hopes and promises of the New Covenant are "Yes!" in Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 1.20).

Closing Prayer

Remember this, *that* the enemy has reproached, O LORD,
And *that* a foolish people has blasphemed Your name.
Oh, do not deliver the life of Your turtledove to the wild beast!
Do not forget the life of Your poor forever.
Have respect to the covenant;
For the dark places of the earth are full of the haunts of cruelty.
Oh, do not let the oppressed return ashamed!
Let the poor and needy praise Your name.
Arise, O God, plead Your own cause;
Remember how the foolish man reproaches You daily.
Do not forget the voice of Your enemies;
The tumult of those who rise up against You increases continually.

Psalm 74.18-23

Observations, notes, questions:

4 God's Law

Week 9, Wednesday: The holy God of life

God's covenant with Israel included obeying His Law. Through the Law was the knowledge of God and His will. The Law marked the pathway of life for everything from worship to family and community life to relations with foreign nations (Lev. 18.1-5). Reject the Law and you reject God and life as He intends it.

Read Hosea 7 and 8

Meditate on the following passages from Hosea

1. Hosea 4.1-6: How can you see that the knowledge of God is intimately bound up in keeping His Law?
2. Hosea 8.1: Here Hosea uses the word "rebel" rather than "forgot" (4.6) to describe Israel's relationship to the Law of God. How do these terms describe the same reality?
3. Hosea 8.12: What's the difference between regarding the Law as containing "great things" and regarding it as containing "strange things"?
4. Ezekiel 36.26, 27: What is the role of the Law of God in the New Covenant, promised in Hosea?
5. Meditate on Matthew 5.17-19: How did Jesus "fulfill" the Law of God? How does God's judgment against Israel portend the work of Christ in fulfilling the Law? What did Jesus intend the role of God's Law to be in His Kingdom?

Summary

We are fools to think we know better than God how we ought to live (Prov. 14.12). God's Law is a Law of liberty and life; all those who claim to be followers of Jesus Christ ought to walk as He did, in the commandments of God's Law (1 Jn. 2.1-6). But if we "forget" the Law, or ignore it, we are actually rebelling against the Lord and consigning ourselves to lives without love (Matt. 24.12). And without love, we are not disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ (Matt. 22.34-40; Jn. 13.1-15, 35).

Closing Prayer

Teach me, O LORD, the way of Your statutes,
And I shall keep it *to* the end.
Give me understanding, and I shall keep Your law;
Indeed, I shall observe it with *my* whole heart.
Make me walk in the path of Your commandments,
For I delight in it.
Incline my heart to Your testimonies,
And not to covetousness.
Turn away my eyes from looking at worthless things,
And revive me in Your way.
Establish Your word to Your servant,
Who *is devoted* to fearing You.

Psalm 119.33-38

Observations, notes, questions:

5 God's People

Week 9, Friday: A people for His glory

Israel was a hopeless, captive people before God “remembered” His covenant with their fathers and came to redeem them out of Egypt (Ex. 2.24, 25). His purpose in redeeming Israel was to establish a nation as a witness to the wisdom, greatness, and glory of God, to attract all nations to blessings of His covenant (Gen. 12.1-3; Deut. 4.4-8). Israel proved she was not such a people; thus she embraced the sanctions of God’s covenant, rather than the blessings.

Read Hosea 9 and 10

Meditate on the following passages from Hosea

1. Hosea 4.1-6: “Know” here is used in a context in which God is “married” to Israel. What kind of relationship is implied in this verse? What did God intend for His people?
2. Hosea 6.1-3: Hosea prescribes the words to use in returning to the Lord. Write these verses into a prayer that you might use for yourself and your Christian friends.
3. Hosea 7.1-10: How can you see that Israel’s affections (desires, longings, hopes, aspirations) had become completely corrupt? How can a prayer like you wrote for question 2 help to keep this from happening to us?
4. Hosea 10.1-14: It pleased God to bring His faithless people to judgment. Compare this with Isaiah 53.7-10. In what ways does the judgment of Israel look forward to the judgment of Christ?
5. Meditate on Hosea 11.1 and Matthew 2.13-15. How does Jesus “embody” the people of Israel?

Summary

As the Son of God, Jesus is all the people of God in Himself. All believers are “elect in Him” and called by Him and saved through Him. Their lives are hidden with Him in God. He bears our judgment and fulfills all the righteousness God requires. He is life, our Savior, and our King.

Closing Prayer

My praise *shall be* of You in the great assembly;
I will pay My vows before those who fear Him.
The poor shall eat and be satisfied;
Those who seek Him will praise the LORD.
Let your heart live forever!
All the ends of the world
Shall remember and turn to the LORD,
And all the families of the nations
Shall worship before You.
For the kingdom *is* the LORD’s,
And He rules over the nations.
All the prosperous of the earth
Shall eat and worship;
All those who go down to the dust
Shall bow before Him,
Even he who cannot keep himself alive.

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A posterity shall serve Him.
It will be recounted of the Lord to the *next* generation,
They will come and declare His righteousness to a people who will be born,
That He has done *this*.

Psalm 22.25-31

Observations, notes, questions:

6 God's Justice

Week 9, Thursday: God's holiness vindicated

God's covenant consists of promises (Gen. 12.1-3; Deut. 28.1-14), mandates (Lev. 18.1-5), and sanctions – warnings of judgment for disobedience. God made all this clear from the beginning. He is holy, and His Law is holy and righteous and good. In His holiness, and according to His Word, God cannot simply “wink” at transgression. Rebellion against His grace involves embracing His justice and the sanctions that justice demands.

Read Hosea 11 and 12

Meditate on the following passages from Hosea

1. Hosea 2.1-13: Here God summarizes His “charges” against Israel and what He must do as a result. But this is nothing new. God is simply reminding His people of His covenant. How should this Word to Israel speak to us today?
2. Hosea 4.7-19: When do the people of God deserve His justice? Do we ever *not* deserve justice from the Lord? Explain.
3. Hosea 5.1-15: Is it ever “too late” to avert the judgment of God? In a community that comes under God's judgment, are some more to blame than others? Explain.
4. Hosea 8.1-14: In God's covenant, you get what you choose. Explain.
5. From the cross Jesus cried, “It is finished!” What was finished? Meditate on Romans 8.1. Why is this so?

Summary

Jesus bore the judgment of God against us, so that the justice of God could be satisfied and His covenant fulfilled to all those He has chosen for Himself. Jesus satisfied the justice of God both by His holy and righteous life and by His sacrifice for sin on the cross. We deserve God's wrath, but Jesus has borne it for all who believe in Him.

Closing Prayer

O God, You know my foolishness;
And my sins are not hidden from You.
Let not those who wait for You, O Lord GOD of hosts, be ashamed because of me;
Let not those who seek You be confounded because of me, O God of Israel.
Because for Your sake I have borne reproach;
Shame has covered my face.
I have become a stranger to my brothers,
And an alien to my mother's children;
Because zeal for Your house has eaten me up,
And the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me.
When I wept *and chastened* my soul with fasting,
That became my reproach.
I also made sackcloth my garment;
I became a byword to them.
Those who sit in the gate speak against me,
And I *am* the song of the drunkards.

But as for me, my prayer *is* to You,
O LORD, *in* the acceptable time;
O God, in the multitude of Your mercy,
Hear me in the truth of Your salvation.

Psalm 69.5-13

Observations, notes, questions:

7 God's Redemption

Week 9, Sunday: God's last word is of hope

Hosea is a book of hope, as are all the words of God in Scripture (Rom. 15.4). It points forward to a glorious time of redemption and restoration, when the judgment of God will be a thing of the past and all will be restored to His original intentions and contentions. Oh, what a day that will be!

Read Hosea 13 and 14

Meditate on the following passages from Hosea

1. Hosea 2.14-23: Hosea's prophecy is "bookended" by hope. How would you describe the hope held out in these verses? In what does that hope culminate (v. 23)?
2. Hosea 13.14: What does this suggest about life here and now? In what ways did Jesus demonstrate that He had power over death?
3. Hosea 14.1-9: What does God promise to do for His people?
4. Hosea 14.1-9: What does God require of His people if they are to know His promised redemption?
5. Jesus *is* our redemption. Explain.

Summary

We are redeemed from our sins, and the judgment we deserve, by the life, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have redemption *in Him*. Redemption is not just knowing that we're going to heaven when we die. Redemption is Jesus, life in Jesus, hope in Jesus, and power to live forevermore in Jesus. He is our redemption, and He accomplishes our redemption.

Closing Prayer

Out of the depths I have cried to You, O LORD;
Lord, hear my voice!
Let Your ears be attentive
To the voice of my supplications.
If You, LORD, should mark iniquities,
O Lord, who could stand?
But *there is* forgiveness with You,
That You may be feared.
I wait for the LORD, my soul waits,
And in His word I do hope.
My soul *waits* for the Lord
More than those who watch for the morning—
Yes, more than those who watch for the morning.
O Israel, hope in the LORD;
For with the Lord *there is* mercy,
And with Him *is* abundant redemption.
And He shall redeem Israel
From all his iniquities.

Psalm 130

Observations, notes, questions:

Questions for discussion

1. What have you learned from Hosea about reading the Scriptures to see Jesus in them?
2. Why do we say that Hosea's message is one of hope? How should we as Christians appropriate that message?
3. Meditate on Luke 24.27. Do you feel as though you could do that with the book of Hosea? Explain.
4. How does the message of Hosea encourage you to hate the sin in your life?
5. How does the message of Hosea encourage you to seek the Kingdom of God and His righteousness with more focus and consistency?

Glory to Glory

As we look into the mirror of Scripture, we want to see God's glory and our own condition before Him. Then, yielding to the Spirit to teach, convict, and transform us, we can grow into the likeness of Jesus Christ.

What do you learn from Hosea about your need for Jesus?

What do you learn about God and His glory *in Jesus* from Hosea?

What new directions or "next steps" is the Spirit leading you to take?

Prayer:

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Thank you.