

The Prophecies of Hosea ~ Part 2

Hope for the Future

Remember **God's** call to clarity in your identity in a world filled with competing voices. **Hosea** challenges us to see ourselves through **God's** lens. Take time to create a personal mission statement that reflects your values as a follower of **Yeshua**, mainly how they apply in your work or community life. Revisit this statement regularly to ensure your daily actions and decisions align with **God's** purpose for you, allowing it to guide tough choices and lead you in integrity.

2^{1(1:10)} 1 *"Nevertheless, the people of Isra'el will number as many as the grains of sand by the sea, which cannot be measured or counted; so that the time will come when, instead of being told, 'You are not my people,' it will be said to them, 'You are the children of the living God.' ^{2(1:11)} Then the people of Y'hudah and the people of Isra'el will be gathered together; they will appoint for themselves one leader; and they will go up out of the land; for that will be a great day, [the day] of Yizre'el.*

Allusion to the **Avrahamic** covenant in phrases like the **sand by the sea** (cp. Genesis 22:17) indicates that **God's** "divorce" of **Isra'el** was not final but applied only to that generation - the nation or leadership of that time. Eternal promise is placed profoundly beside final judgment, reconcilable only because **the living God** could bring life out of death. This is affirmed by the name **Jezreel**, symbolizing judgment and life, since the name meant **"God plants"** (cp. Ezekiel 36:9–11). The division between **Isra'el** and **Yhudah** was temporary, a theme to be repeated later (Ezekiel 37:18–25; Hosea 3:5).

3(1) *"Say to your brothers, 'Ammi [My People]!' and to your sisters, 'Ruchamah [Pitied]!'"*

Those addressed are Israelites who, the prophet hopes, will respond to his promise. The verse begins with an imperative, **Say to your brothers**, as does the following verse. Both serve as an enticement for **Isra'el** to return to her **God**. **Isra'el** is expected to anticipate a change in names when unity is restored.

Anger Against Wife

4(2) *Rebuke your mother, rebuke her; for she isn't my wife, and I'm not her husband. She must remove her whoring from her face, and her adulteries from between her breasts.*

Here is the first command to repent in the book (4:15; 6:1; 10:12; 12:6; 14:1–2, 9), followed by alternating verses of judgment (2:3–4, 6–7, 9–11) and indictment (vv. 5, 8, 12–13). The children, representing the ordinary people of **Isra'el**, are urged to **rebuke** their mother, representing **Isra'el's** leadership. So, **Isra'el's** divorce is not the end of hope, and her punishment is not the last word (vv. 3, 19–20).

5(3) *Otherwise, I will strip her naked and place her as she was the day she was born, make her like a desert, place her like a dry land, and kill her with thirst.*

Public humiliation of an unfaithful wife was not exceptional during this time. Similar language was used to describe retributions for breaking treaties. Some commentators see this **"stripping"** as retrieving everything a husband had provided for his bride (Exodus 21:10–11; cf. Hosea 2:9).

6(4) *I will have no pity on her children, for they are children of whoring— ⁷⁽⁵⁾ their mother prostituted herself, she who conceived them behaved shamelessly; she said, 'I will pursue my lovers, who give me my food and water, wool, flax, olive oil and wine.'*

¹ Since I quote from the CJB, Stern always uses the Hebrew notations of chapter and verses.

The children of the sinful nation will also be unpitied because they are children of a harlot who went after false gods and gave these idols credit for supplying her with food, clothing, and luxuries.

⁸⁽⁶⁾ Therefore, I will block her way with thorns and put up a hedge so she can't find her paths. ⁹⁽⁷⁾ She will pursue her lovers but not catch them. She will seek them but won't find them. Then she will say, 'I will go and return to my first husband, because things were better for me then than they are now.'

God will put all kinds of roadblocks and obstructions in her way and cut her off from her idols until she decides to **return** to Him (and her **first husband**).

¹⁰⁽⁸⁾ For she doesn't know it was I who gave her the grain, the wine, and the oil; I who increased her silver and gold, which they used for Ba'al.

She doesn't credit **God** for supplying her with necessities and luxuries, including the gold and silver she used to make an idol of **Ba'al**.

¹¹⁽⁹⁾ So I will take back my grain at harvest-time and my wine in its season; I will snatch away my wool and flax, given to cover her naked body. ¹²⁽¹⁰⁾ Now I will uncover her shame, while her lovers watch, and no one will save her from me.

So, **God will** cut off her food and clothing and thoroughly **uncover her shame**.

¹³⁽¹¹⁾ I will end her happiness, her festivals, Rosh-Hodesh, and shabbats, and all her designated times. ¹⁴⁽¹²⁾ I will ravage her vines and fig trees, of which she says, 'These are my wages that my lovers have given me.' But I will turn them into a forest, and wild animals will eat them. ¹⁵⁽¹³⁾ I will punish her for offering incense on the feast days of the ba'alim, when she decked herself with her earrings and jewels, pursuing her lovers and forgetting me," says Adonai. ²

Despite Isra'el's idolatry, they had continued the hypocrisy of "worship" in Yahweh's name. Outward religious activity can outlive the death of true faith. Verse 12 echoes verse 5 in exposing the lie that Isra'el believed - that their blessings from God (v. 8) were just payment earned from their service to idols. The words of rebuke (vv. 1-13) conclude with the common prophetic refrain, **says Adonai. God's** promised eventual redemption and restoration in verses 14-23 follow, which we will examine in the next post.

Next, we will continue to explore Hosea.

² Hosea 2:4-15.