

Hosea

Synthetic reading of HOSEA
161009

Chapters 1-3: God uses Hosea to indict the children of Israel on their unfaithful ways in responding to the love and faithfulness of God. God commands Hosea to marry a prostitute and have children by her to illustrate Israel's unfaithfulness. Even the children's names illustrate the people's reactions to an amazing & faithful God. God could cut off the covenant because of Israel's unfaithfulness, but God desired and decided to because of God's love and mercy to renew the covenant despite their adultery.

Chapters 4-10: The leaders had problems with spiritual matters. Prophets and priests not only led people astray but also robbed and took advantage of the people. They trafficked in idolatry and injustice, then they came to the temple to worship God like their behavior or lifestyle didn't matter. The people themselves had grown cold to God, so they came to God not out of the warmth of worship, but as one more emergency option in the pursuit of going after what they wanted. They cried out & called out to God only for what God could do and not for who God was. They didn't know (Hebrew: yada) or live with a genuine experience with God. Finally, they trusted in the military power of neighbor nations instead of the power and wisdom of God.

The people had fallen far from God but they still wanted relief when they encountered resistance. God declared that God would punish the children of Israel for their waywardness and wickedness; however, God would not forget them forever. Even when they had rejected God unfairly and inauspiciously, God declared that God would continue to love the people because of God's character and God's promise to exhibit unending love.

However, God did call out the people and called on the people to respond to their creator. God called on them to put away the false gods that they've carved and molded and melted and sculpted. God called on them to turn away from the

**Rev. White's reading notes
based on synthetic reading of the book**

wicked ways that take advantage of people and of one another. When they respond to what God is up to in their lives, God will bring about restoration and help them to experience God's love. Until they do, even when they encounter God or experience God, the hardness of their hearts makes it impossible to recognize God and respond to God! The challenge and the excitement is to love God more than anything and worship God with all of who we are because God is worthy! God desires to heal fallible people by giving us a heart that can receive and respond to God rightly. The book ends with a call to the wise and the upright understanding and walking in the ways of the Lord, the ways of love and mercy and justice.