

Hosea: The Stubborn & Holy Love of God

LESSON 7: PROFANE PRIESTS, PART 1 (HOSEA 4)

Intro:

BIG IDEA: Profane _____ make for a profane _____.

The style _____. The personal life of Hosea and that metaphor is _____. Now God/Hosea speaks directly to Israel in a series of _____/_____. These cover the same time span as chapters 1-3, they don't follow them _____. This is a covenant _____ - this is a _____ setting.

Summons
Accusation
Evidence
Sentence

The 1st section introduces it in general form. 4-10 gets more specific, focusing on the priests. 11-14 attack the cult.

Hear the word of the LORD, O children of Israel,
for the LORD has a controversy with the inhabitants of the land.
There is no faithfulness or steadfast love,
and no knowledge of God in the land;
² there is swearing, lying, murder, stealing, and committing adultery;
they break all bounds, and bloodshed follows bloodshed.
³ Therefore the land mourns,
and all who dwell in it languish,
and also the beasts of the field
and the birds of the heavens,
and even the fish of the sea are taken away.

- The Lord speaks to the people of the Israel because He has a _____ (*rib*) with them.
- **Accusations:** He begins with what they _____ (sins of _____) before what they _____ (sins of _____).
- They lack _____, steadfast love & _____ of God; what He's looking for.
- "*Faithfulness*" is about _____ & honesty. Your word is your _____.
- "*Steadfast love*" (*hesed*) is covenant love or _____ to a _____.
- "*Knowledge*" is one of the key words in this chapter (used 3 times, see verse 6).

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- If there is no steadfast love & faithfulness, there is obviously no _____ of God.
- **Evidence:** commit sins of _____, violence & taking what isn't theirs. 6/10 (Ex. 20).
- "swearing" is not _____, but "denouncing or wishing evil against someone, or else sealing a private covenant by invoking YHWH's name."⁴¹
- They are _____ proper _____ and have hands covered in blood.
- **Sentence:** He points to the covenant _____ & the whole land _____ & _____.
- Our sin & its _____ are not limited to us (humanity) but all of _____.

"God makes a covenant with Noah and his descendants that can also be described as a covenant that God makes with the "earth". Thus there is also a close relationship between the flourishing of human community and that of the earth."⁴²

⁴ Yet let no one contend,
and let none accuse,
for with you is my contention, O priest.
⁵ You shall stumble by day;
the prophet also shall stumble with you by night;
and I will destroy your mother.
⁶ My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge;
because you have rejected knowledge,
I reject you from being a priest to me.
And since you have forgotten the law of your God,
I also will forget your children.

- **Accusation:** He aims His words for the _____ who were supposed to be _____ of faithfulness, love & knowledge.
- **Sentence:** They and the prophets were _____ by day and night (Deut. 32:35).
- These priests and the (official) prophets were _____ the people _____.
- He promises to destroy their _____, _____.
- The lack of knowledge is _____ because it leads to their _____.
- The lack of knowledge of produced by the priests _____ knowledge.
- They were supposed to teach the people, but they cursed the people by their sin.
- Because they rejected _____ they themselves will be rejected as _____.
- Because they forgot the _____ of God, their children will be _____ by God.

⁴¹ Stuart, pp. 76.

⁴² Dearman, pp. 154.

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“Unlike most religions, where priests were the close guardians of the cultic mysteries while the people’s part was more or less mechanical, the faith of the Old Testament was a revelation addressed to every mind and conscience, ‘making wise the simple’.”⁴³

“To forget something means to fail to bring something to conscious focus or ignore its significance, so that it no longer guides a person to the proper response.”⁴⁴

Application: They were to _____ from the profane priests as well as their own sin. They were to long for a _____ priest. This longing is met in _____, who was like us in all ways except He didn’t sin in temptation.

⁷ The more they increased,
the more they sinned against me;
I will change their glory into shame.
⁸ They feed on the sin of my people;
they are greedy for their iniquity.
⁹ And it shall be like people, like priest;
I will punish them for their ways
and repay them for their deeds.
¹⁰ They shall eat, but not be satisfied;
they shall play the whore, but not multiply,
because they have forsaken the LORD
to cherish ¹¹ whoredom, wine, and new wine,
which take away the understanding.
¹² My people inquire of a piece of wood,
and their walking staff gives them oracles.
For a spirit of whoredom has led them astray,
and they have left their God to play the whore.
¹³ They sacrifice on the tops of the mountains
and burn offerings on the hills,
under oak, poplar, and terebinth,
because their shade is good.
Therefore your daughters play the whore,
and your brides commit adultery.
¹⁴ I will not punish your daughters when they play the whore,
nor your brides when they commit adultery;
for the men themselves go aside with prostitutes
and sacrifice with cult prostitutes,
and a people without understanding shall come to ruin.

- The more they (the priests) grew in _____, the more their _____ against God grew.
- Their _____ as priests will be changed, by God, into _____.

⁴³ Kidner, pp. 49.

⁴⁴ Dearman, pp. 159.

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- “*shame*” is used to “describe the shame of lifting a skirt and exposing genitalia.”⁴⁵ (**Jer. 13:26; Nah. 3:5**)
- He judges by letting their glory _____, similar to when He let the _____ be captured.
- They _____, or got rich, on the _____ of the people, still called “*my people*”. Sin => sacrifice.
- Judgment will fall on the _____ & the _____. No one will be exempt (**Is. 24:1-3**).
- They will not be _____ by the _____ they feed upon.
- This is also seen in that they “*play the whore, but not multiply*”. No _____.
- Hunger & _____ are part of the Deuteronomic curse. This generation will die off.
- This introduces us to one of the key ideas in this vision: the _____ of Israel.
- Whore and whoredom are used _____ times, and prostitutes _____.
- Their lack of prosperity is tied into _____ the Lord.
- Sin takes away, robs us, of _____ & the _____ we do have.

“The apparently straightforward idea here is that when one begins to practice idolatry (and the associated rituals linked to it), then, as a penal consequence, the practitioner becomes more deceived and lacking in spiritual understanding.”⁴⁶

Background Material on Canaanite Worship

- These altar-shrines were _____: small altar in a _____, an idol & a stone _____.
- This was a _____ form of Canaanite religion.
- The stone pillar is believed to have been a _____ symbol.
- Men would bring their _____, offer them, _____, drink & have _____ w/a cult _____.
- It was a ritual believed to encourage _____ gods to fertilize land: _____ magic.

“The historical setting of Hosea’s ministry, then, was marked by a widespread lack of faith in Yahweh’s all-sufficiency for Israel’s real-life needs and by a consequent failure to observe the exclusive nature of their covenant with Yahweh. A ‘spirit of harlotry’ pervaded the mentality of the times.”⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Dearman, pp. 160.

⁴⁶ Beale, pp. 108.

⁴⁷ Ortlund, pp. 49.

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- They ‘*inquire of wood*’ - not sure if idols _____ of wood, or Asherah _____.
- They had “*a spirit of whoredom*” leading them to _____ other gods everywhere.
- Stressing the _____ of their whoring: _____, mountains, under every _____.
- “*their shade is good*” is like pursuing an _____ because the motel has a massage bed.
- Their _____ worship was unacceptable to YHWH & brings covenant _____.
- **Evidence or Sentence:** their _____ will be given over to whoredom or pursuing it.
- Question of whether this is their sin _____ God, or God _____ them _____ to sin.
- Lack of _____ will bring Israel to ruin. Mindless religion produces _____ sin.
- “*Cult prostitutes*” is literally “_____ women” as known in _____ religion.
- We see here the vast differences between _____ worship & the _____ worship.
- “Prostitution leads to ruin!”⁴⁸

“Biblical and pagan holiness do not inhibit the same world.”⁴⁹

Application: Our Great High Priest enables us to worship in _____ & _____.

Conclusion:

⁴⁸ Stuart, pp. 84.

⁴⁹ Kidner, pp. 54.