

Holidays with the Prophets: Hosea

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Holidays with the Prophets / Hosea 6:1-3

Holidays with the Prophets

1. What do we do when it feels like we've been invited to spend the holidays with an Old Testament prophet?
 - a. This month we've explored passages that speak to us during the hardest, darkest, and most frustrating times.
 - b. What do we do when:
 - i. Our spouse leaves.
 - ii. A kid goes astray.
 - iii. We bury family.
 - iv. Or the darkness won't lift.
 - v. What do we do in seasons where it seems that God has forsaken us, we are alone, and hope is losing ground?

2. The holidays are supposed to be times for peace, joy, and hope.

a. So what do we do when we get to the holidays and we don't feel like celebrating?

i. Jeremiah discovered that he needed a healing that only God could bring.

ii. Habakkuk declared that regardless of what he had or didn't have, he would worship the Lord.

iii. Isaiah proclaimed the giving of a mighty counselor, almighty God, everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace.

b. Today, we turn to the small book of Hosea.

3. Hosea is a book about adultery and idolatry.

a. Hosea the prophet is told to marry a prostitute named Gomer.

b. Their relationship becomes an enacted prophecy that portrays the relationship of God, the Husband, and his unfaithful wife, Israel.

c. The book demonstrates God's overwhelming love for his unfaithful people.

d. Even though God has to discipline his bride and hard times come in the form of judgment because of their sin, God doesn't give up on her.

4. Tucked in the middle of the book is today's passage:

Hosea 6:1-3 CSB

Come, let's return to the LORD. For he has torn us, and he will heal us; he has wounded us, and he will bind up our wounds.

He will revive us after two days, and on the third day he will raise us up so we can live in his presence.

Let's strive to know the LORD. His appearance is as sure as the dawn. He will come to us like the rain, like the spring showers that water the land.

› This morning, I want to approach this passage through the lens: What would it look like celebrating the holidays with a prophet like Hosea?

1. We would Recognize a Distance.

1. Hosea confronts the distance between Israel and God.

a. Adultery and Idolatry creates distance between us and God and our spouse.

b. Adultery and Idolatry are the results of misplaced worship.

c. Both adultery and idolatry are the giving of something to someone that belongs to another.

i. Israel was not worshipping the Lord, and instead was worshipping a god named Baal.

ii. By worshipping Baal, they were forsaking their vows to God.

iii. And intimacy cannot thrive where there is no fidelity.

2. God's people had created distance between themselves and God.

a. God was distant, but only because the people had become distant.

b. God doesn't desire space, he desires intimacy.

i. This is why He became flesh, Immanuel, God with us.

ii. This is why the first sacrifice was God sacrificing an animal to cover Adam and Eve's shame.

c. Distance in our relationship with God is easy; closeness and intimacy require effort and intentionality.

3. Come, let us return to the Lord.

a. The need to return signals to us there is space in-between us.

b. Intimacy is found in proximity, not distance.

c. God's desire to be close to Israel was graphically portrayed in Hosea.

i. Hosea was told to seek out the prostitute.

1. Hosea is not the prostitute type.

2. Yet, he obeys and marries her.

ii. Hosea had children by her.

iii. When she left, he went after her and bought her back from the brothel.

4. We serve a God that closes the gap, who enters the space we have created by sin and by our decisions.

a. This is great news.

b. No one can come to the Father unless the Spirit draws them.

i. If you have every felt conviction, this is evidence of God drawing you to Him.

ii. This is telling us that God has already made the first move.

c. “You wouldn’t want more of God if the Holy Spirit wasn’t first seeking you.” Adele Calhoun, “Spiritual Disciplines Handbook”

4. But we have to return.

a. We have to take notice that we are not as close as we should be.

| It’s like the old story of one couple.

i. They had an old truck with the bench seat.

ii. Early in their dating years, she would sit in the middle and they would sit close.

iii. After several years, she looked over and, from the passenger seat, asked, “why don’t we sit close anymore?”

iv. And his response, “I wasn’t the one who moved.”

a. She saw and recognized the distance but she blamed the space on him.

i. I think if we had to spend a holiday with a prophet like Hosea, we would be challenged.

ii. Challenged to explore the space we too often create between us and God.

iii. Challenged as to why we allow other priorities to slip in and drive wedges between us and God.

b. Undoubtedly, the old prophet would challenge us to draw closer to the Lord.

i. That is what prophets do.

ii. They share God’s word,

1. expose the space we’ve let creep in,

2. and then call us to repent and draw near.

- › First , we would recognize the distance
- › What else would we experience?

2. We would feel the pain of love.

Hosea 6:1 CSB

Come, let's return to the LORD. For he has torn us, and he will heal us; he has wounded us, and he will bind up our wounds.

1. This sounds painful.
 - a. Hosea, on behalf of God's people, declares:
 - i. God has torn us.
 - ii. God has wounded us.
 - b. In Hosea 5, we are told that God wounds his people.
 - i. But instead of going to God for healing, they turn to other nations.

ii. Adultery and idolatry will cause us to look for answers outside of God and His ordained relationships.

c. Hosea shows us a different side of God, a side we don't know what to do with.

i. God would tear us?

ii. God has wounded us?

iii. In the case of Israel, the answer is "absolutely."

2. Relationships involve pain.

a. But pain can be redemptive.

i. We expect the pain a surgeon inflicts to bring healing.

ii. We expect the pain a therapist exposes to help us recover and heal.

b. The greatest metaphor of the Christian's walk with God is "pick up your cross."

i. There are moments in our Christian walk where growth hurts.

ii. There are times of discipline, and discipline hurts.

iii. If we take the words of the prophets seriously, then we must admit that there are times when God either allows pain or even causes pain.

3. But He also heals and restores.

a. He has torn us, and He will heal us.

b. He has wounded us, and we will bind our wounds.

c. Not all pain is from God and not all pain is from Satan.

d. But all healing comes from the Lord.

4. Sometimes I don't know where my pain is coming from, but I know where to find healing.

a. Sometimes, the pain is caused because of others.

b. Sometimes, the pain is caused by my sin or the consequences of my decisions.

c. Sometimes, the pain we are experiencing is simply because of the fallenness of our world.

d. But sin never heals and is never redemptive.

› That's why, If we spent a holiday with Hosea,

Revival and Resurrection would be a regular topic.

1. Revival and resurrection are only needed for those that are dying or are already dead.

| Hosea 6:2 (CSB)

| He will revive us after two days,

| and on the third day he will raise us up

| so we can live in his presence.

a. God's people were dead in their trespasses and sins.

b. Just like the Apostle Paul tells us in Romans, we all are dead in sin.

c. Therefore, we all need to be brought to life.

1. Even Hosea points us to the ultimate life giver, Jesus

- a. If you heard this verse and thought, “that sounds like Jesus being resurrected on the third day!”, you are right.
- b. Even as far back as Hosea’s day, God was revealing pieces of His plan.
 - i. Even for Israel, their need for resurrection and revival was pointing toward to Jesus.
 - ii. Even then, their adultery and idolatry needed a terrible remedy:
 - 1. And that terrible remedy was Jesus dying upon a cross.
 - 2. They didn’t grasp it then, but God was pushing their sins forward to the Cross.
 - iii. There, God made peace with Him.
 - 1. That all who call upon the Name of the Lord will be saved.
 - 2. This will be a major theme in Romans 9-11
- 2. The need for revival reminds us that our natural tendencies push God away instead of drawing close to Him.

a. We all have times and seasons when we need refreshing.

b. The Church through its 2,000 year history has needed revivals and reformations.

3. The purpose of resurrection and revival is to live in God's presence.

a. I think many of us would agree that we need a move of God's Spirit.

b. Whether you want to call that a revival or a reformation, most of us would confess that we need a move of God.

c. Why are we not seeing one?

i. Could it be because we aren't ready to live in God's presence?

ii. Could it be because we are too happy with our earthly pursuits?

1. We are too comfortable and satisfied where we are?

2. Maybe we have become comfortable with the distance and silence and the idea of intimacy with God scares us?

3. Maybe we have a wrong idea of what serving God should look like.

4. I think that if we spent a holiday sitting around a table with a prophet like Hosea, he would challenge us with our need for revival and resurrection.

a. He would probably ask us if we are living our lives in a way that is worth living.

b. He would probably ask us, “are you really alive?”

c. “Is this really what God called you to?”

d. Are you really living in God’s full potential for your life?

› Hosea’s last question:

Are you striving for what’s important?

Hosea 6:3 “Let’s strive to know the Lord. His appearance is as sure as the dawn. He will come to us like the rain, like the spring showers that water the land.”

1. First, this command is plural.

a. Let us all strive to know the Lord.

b. Drawing close to God is a personal and corporate pursuit.

i. If we seek God only alone, we miss out.

ii. If we seek God only in a group, you miss out.

c. Plural also tells me this isn’t for a select few, but for the whole.

i. If you re doubting if God wants you to draw closer, then hear this.

ii. “Let US...”

2. We are to STRIVE.

a. This is a strong verb meaning to pursue or chase.

b. One of my dictionaries said it can mean, “to be hounded.” MOUNCE

c. If we were sitting with the prophet, I'm hearing him tell us to pursue God.

i. Chase after God.

ii. Hound Him.

iii. Like a kid at Christmas who won't keep their hands off the gifts, go hard after God.

3. Strive to know the Lord.

a. The word know is, YA-DA

b. It's a word that is used for knowing a person at the most intimate level.

i. If you ever read the KJV and came across, "Adam knew Eve".

ii. It's the same word, YADA.

c. God already knows us:

i. He formed us in our mother's wombs.

ii. He knows every hair on your head.

iii. He knows us.

d. How well do we know God?

i. We can't know God like He knows us.

ii. But couldn't we all know Him better?

4. His appearance is sure.

a. Repeatedly in Scripture, we are reminded:

b. If we will seek the Lord, we will find Him.

c. If we will ask, it will be given.

d. If we will pursue Him, He will let us catch Him.

5. If you knew that the King of the Universe would let you catch Him, why wouldn't you try?

a. Today' I'm challenged.

b. To return to the Lord, to live in His Presence, and to strive to Know Him.

The Greatest Opportunity.

1. Whatever season you find yourself in, make the most of this great opportunity you have.

- a. If you are far from God, you are being invited to Return to Him.
 - b. If you are wounded, you are invited to be healed by Him so you can live in His Presence.
 - c. If you are still breathing, the invitation to chase after God and know Him is for you.
2. I'm not a prophet or a son of a prophet.
 - a. But I am a pastor, and my heart's desire for us is to draw closer to God.
 - b. Closer to God today than we were yesterday.
3. As we pray, here are a few prayers to pray at your own risk:
 - a. Lord, where is there distance where you desire intimacy?
 - b. Lord, where am I seeking healing from the wrong places?
 - c. Lord, how do you want ME to strive and chase after you?