

Hosea, Chapter 4 Notes and Discussion Questions

From the biography of A. W. Pink:

“I assiduously followed a 3-fold course. **First**, I read through the *entire Bible* 3 times a year. (8 chapters from the Old Testament and 2 chapters from the New Testament for 10 years).”

Second, I studied a *portion* of the Bible each week, concentrating for 10 minutes or more each day on the same passage pondering, seeking, looking up the key phrases and themes.

Third, I meditated on 1 verse every day, writing it out on a sheet of paper in the morning, memorizing it, consulting it at odd moments through the day, pondering separately each word in it, asking God to open to me its spiritual meaning and to write it on my heart. The verse was my food for that day - *meditation standing to reading as mastication does to eating.*”

(In other words, as we must chew in order to benefit from eating, so we must meditate in order to benefit from our reading. Meditation is likened to the cow that chews the cud.)

Recall the definition of “**Inductive**” **Bible study**. As we enter Chapter 4 of Hosea he assumes, at the LORD’s direction, the office of “prosecuting attorney,” presenting the LORD’s case against Israel because of its spiritual adultery.

What are some specifics contained in the LORD’s indictment? What kind of ‘knowledge’ (v. 6) do you think the Prophet is referring to?

James Boice wrote: “The argument brought against Israel in Hosea 4 is precisely the argument that Paul brings against the race as a whole in his great doctrinal epistle, the letter to the Romans. *The similarity of ideas and even verbal echoes between the two chapters indicate that Paul probably had Hosea’s chapter in mind as he penned his own indictment of the gentile nations* (cf. Hosea 4:6 with Rom. 1:24, 26, 28; Hosea 4:7 with Rom. 1:23; Hosea 4:11 with Rom. 1:21-22).

How can you see these charges applied to: the evangelical church today; its Teaching Elders; the nation of the United States; its elected officials; you personally? “The ‘fear of the LORD’ is to depart from evil” (Psa. 34:11-14; 1 Peter 3:10-12) What evil do you need to depart from? (“We have no king but Caesar.”)

What form of punishment does the LORD threaten? (See also Amos 2:6-16; 4:1-13)

In verse 4 what class of people does the LORD specifically call out? Why would this be? (cf. 2 Chron. 15:3; 17:9-10; Malachi 2:1-9)

Israel at the time of Amos and Hosea was in a period of worldly prosperity. (Amos 6:4-8; Micah 2:11) But consider:

Why would God give to the Israelites such riches in the world when His anger rested upon their wickedness? J Burroughs (*Moses' Choice*, page 101): "God grants pleasure and prosperity in just judgment to them to ripen their sin, to harden them in it. The sunshine of prosperity ripens the sins of the wicked quickly. It makes them bless themselves in their way. They spend their days in wealth; therefore they say unto God, 'Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways. What is the Almighty that we should serve Him?'" Bernard: 'There is no truer misery than false joy.' Augustine, 'Many are miserable by loving hurtful things, but they are more miserable by having them.'"

On **Hosea 4:14** from Chapter 8, Jeremiah Burroughs, *Moses' Choice*, "Eleven Rules for Preparation to Suffer Afflictions" page 105

"I will not punish your daughters when they commit whoredom." "And he (Origen) has this pathetic expression upon it: 'God chastises every soul whom He loves; but would you hear the terrible voice of God's indignation, hear Him, by the prophet Hosea, when he had reckoned up many wicked things which the people had committed.' And he adds this: 'I will not punish your daughters when they commit whoredom.' This is terrible; this is in the height. And Bernard, speaking of the same thing says, 'at the hearing of this, I tremble. Then God is most angry when He shows no anger. God keep me from this mercy, this kind of mercy is worse than all anger.'"

Luther, "O unhappy and miserable men, whom God leaves to themselves, not resisting their lusts..." Jerome, "I account it a part of unhappiness not to know adversity. I judge you to be miserable because you have not been miserable." Or, "I judge him miserable who was never miserable."

"Ephraim is joined to idols, leave him alone (v. 17)."

Israel was a "Prodigal." But was the Father in Jesus' parable also a prodigal with his too risky, too generous, forgiving love? Is God a prodigal god in choosing a Gomer-like people? Where are the "consequences" in Luke 15? We see consequences in Hosea 4. In Luke 15 the Father does not plead with His son for repentance, yet it is obvious in the son's return. In Hosea the LORD is pleading with the prodigal nation.

How do you process the statements, "I am Gomer," with the truth, "I am the Bride of Christ Jesus?"

Which is more necessary to understand?