

Hosea

- From Israel preaching to Israel (750 to 722 ff)
 - o Begins in prosperity ends in disaster.
- tone of domination gives way to power with.
- Moves toward a harmonious relationship between God, humanity and all creation.
 - o Redemption of humanity will be connected to the restoration of the natural world.
- Portrays fierce love of God very compellingly.
- Divine anger: function of divine love. Heretical to say that God of NT is love; God of OT is anger. God's anger exists to change human behavior; anger is temporary, love is permanent.
- Rather full, complex portrait of God; unsettled internal life.
 - o Hosea goes inside that complex interior.

Historical Context:

1. preaching during period of prosperity to internal strike to defeat.
Religious conflict, intrigue, civil war.

Metaphors: both Hosea and Yahweh have an unfaithful spouse.

1. husband and an unfaithful wife; parent and an unruly child.
 - a. Some images of God violently using power; God – victim of a relationship gone sour, behaves like a hunter, warrior, and a lion going after Israel, even women and children.
 - b. Torah prescribes death for unfaithful wife.

Texts:

1. Hosea 1
 - a. Prostitute wife. Prophets do strange things. Isaiah walks naked and barefoot; Ezekiel eats dung. All strange symbolic acts.
2. Hosea 2:2-23
 - a. Yah is a wounded shamed lover.
 - b. Yah's commitment to Israel goes beyond formal obligation to the irrational emotional attachment of a lover.
 - c. NB restoration of covenant includes non-human creatures.
 - i. Justice for all creation.
 - ii. Implications for a new global ecology ethic.
3. Hosea 11:1-11
 - a. Poem: window into God's heart; captures sense of vacillation.
 - b. God is a spurned parent.

- c. Vv8-9: God engages in self reflection.
- d. *God is a recovering agent of violence.*
- 4. Hosea 14:4-9
 - a. God is sustainer, transformer, nurturer of life.
 - b. God desires reconciliation.

Summary

- 1. God is the sustainer of life.
- 2. Intricate link between redemption of humanity and restoration of the natural world.
- 3. Ultimately God is a God of compassion.
- 4. Prophetic message speaks of love God has for creation.
Transformative love.