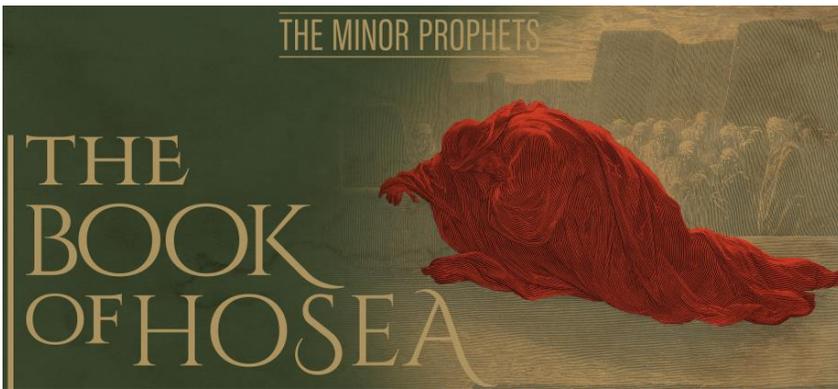


HOSEA

Faithful Love for the Unfaithful Lover

A St. Paul's Lutheran Bible Study



In the opening portions of Hosea Chapter 5, we see the 3 Estates: the priests, the house of Israel, and the king. Indeed, there are 3 Estates in every society, and it was no different in the land of Israel. In the case of Israel, though, all 3 Estates were guilty of whoredom. While the people of Israel were not innocent, they still were sandwiched between unfaithful priests and an unfaithful state.

And so, everyone was being put on notice! Judgment was against them. But why were they put on notice? Verse 1 indicates the reason by saying that they were snared and caught in a net. But again, what is meant by this? Verse 4 expounds on this, even more, saying that “the spirit of whoredom is within them.” But again, what is meant by a “spirit of whoredom?” This phrase refers to ‘demonic power.’ In the words of two Lutheran theologians,

“Their works do not allow them to return to their God because their works are merely an emanation of the character and state of the heart, and in their hearts, the demon of whoredom has its seat, and the knowledge of the Lord is wanting; that is to say, the demoniacal power of idolatry has taken complete possession of the heart, and stifled the knowledge of the true God.” (K&D)

HOSEA 5:1-15

Author:

Hosea the Prophet

Date:

740-715 BC

Place:

Israel

Purpose:

Israel was like an unfaithful wife. She was attracted away from her husband (the Lord) to other lovers (idols). In the book of Hosea, the Lord calls Israel back to Himself. It is a call for Israel to forsake her unfaithfulness and be restored in the Lord’s faithfulness.

Other:

Hosea is the most quoted book of the Minor Prophets in the New Testament.

It is often difficult to find the line where the old Adam ends and the devil begins. You see, often, the old Adam, the world, and the devil work side by side. Often it is a combination of the old Adam being coached by the devil, the ideologies of the world being cheered on by the old Adam, or any combination of the three. The point is that ideologies in this world can be classified as *'demonic.'* And people in this world? Many times, people are so ensnared and trapped in darkness that they cannot see and cannot hear – they have been overcome by the spirit of the age. They are enslaved to sin, the world, and the devil – they are truly powerless.

But here is the problem: those ensnared by demonic power will not believe or confess that they are entangled. They will assert their freedom and individualism – without seeing their slavery. This is how the devil and demonic ideologies work – they advocate for pride. For example, we see in verse 5 that Israel has pride. However, we must take special note of how pride works, especially considering the devil and demonic ideologies.

An old New England Pastor once examined *'undetected pride.'* To summarize his thoughts:

- 1) Pride causes us to filter out the evil we see in ourselves while also filtering out God's goodness at work in others.
- 2) Pride causes us to speak of other people's sins with contempt and frustration rather than seeing other people as fellow-worms that need the same repentance and forgiveness of Christ.
- 3) Pride is far more concerned with perception than the true condition of our hearts and God's righteousness.
- 4) Pride leads to a very defensive spirit, whereas true humility invites correction and rebuke when needed.
- 5) Pride is hungry for attention, respect, and worship in all its forms.
- 6) Finally, pride is faithless because it goes the way of self-reliance. Pride goes the way of arrogant and pomp swelling of one's own majesty. Pride does not need a Savior because pride makes a person into their own savior.

Alas, beware of ideologies that go the way of pride and not the way of humility, for they are not godly but demonic. In summary, pride snares a person into self-reliance and self-deception – right where the devil wants a person to be. In the next chapter, we will hear how the only way for people to be delivered from darkness and pride is to be torn down and struck down. We must be torn down before the Lord can heal us. We must be struck down so that the Lord can bind us up.

