

THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY

HOSEA 3-6

When Hosea and his fiancée, Gomer, were dating they had a heart-to-heart conversation. Hosea opened up, "Honey, I need to confess. There's something you need to know about me before we get married. I have an obsession with golf. Whenever I drive past a golf course I drop what I'm doing, and tee it up. I've been known to miss work, and forget family functions, just to play a round of golf. And I'm worried my compulsion might cause some real problems in our marriage."

Gomer was so understanding. She told to her honey Hosea, "*Sweetheart, that's fine. No problem. But while we're making confessions, there is something you need to know about me... Hosea, I'm a hooker.*"

Without batting eye, Hosea says, "Is that all? No worries. Just bring your right hand over the top of the golf club, and it'll straighten that hook right out."

Well, **the real Hosea was not a golfer, but the real Gomer was a hooker!** Gomer was a prostitute, a Hebrew harlot. And God called a Hebrew prophet, Hosea, a man of God, to marry Gomer, and start a family. Gomer had three children - two boys and a girl.

Her firstborn was named "*Jezreel*" - the second born (a daughter) was named "*Lo-Ruhamah*" - and a third born, another son, was named "*Lo-Ammi*" - which in the singular means "**Not-my-child.**" The implication was that as the marriage wore on Gomer's faithfulness to her husband became suspect. She reverted back to her evil ways. It was

obvious to Hosea, her third child had been conceived by one of her illegitimate lovers.

Eventually, Gomer left the Prophet Hosea to profit from her ancient trade. She chose *a pimp over the prophet*. She chose *whoredom over a godly home*.

In 2:2 Hosea wrote Gomer a certificate of divorce.

He sent her word that he was no longer her husband and she was no longer his wife. He wanted to *jar her, wake her up, get her attention*, but she wasn't listening!

Despite her betrayal, and their divorce, Hosea never stopped loving Gomer. Even as she drifted further into her rebellious lifestyle his heart longed for her return.

We learn from Chapter 3 that she became a slave. She was bought by a brothel, and worked for a pimp...

Now husbands, imagine this happening to you...

What if your bride, the woman you love, left your happy home and your loving arms; for a dank, nasty hotel room and a succession of loveless lovers.

It would break your heart. It crushed Hosea.

Chapter 3 opens with the prophet wondering what to do. Should he wipe his hands of his wayward wife or should he pursue the woman he genuinely loved?

Verse 1, “Then the Lord said to me, “Go again, love a woman who is loved by a lover and is committing adultery, just like the love of the Lord for the children of Israel, who look to other gods and love the raisin cakes of the pagans.” God tells Hosea, “Go retrieve Gomer.”

The penalty for adultery under the Law of Moses was death by stoning. Hosea was well within his rights to have *her stoned*, but God wanted to see *her saved*.

God instructs Hosea not to give Gomer what she deserves, but to treat her with mercy - *love her, forgive her, restore her*. For this was God's heart for Israel.

If you looked at this story from a human standpoint you'd expect to find it in *The National Inquirer* - in some seedy tabloid - not the Bible. But God thickens the plot of this *on again, off again* relationship between Hosea and Gomer, by calling it a picture of His relationship with Israel. God had considered Israel His bride. He loved her, yet she had forsaken Yahweh for other gods.

Hosea mentions "*the raisin cakes*." This was finger food at a pagan pot-luck. It had idolatrous implications.

It was a culinary means of paying homage to a false god. Israel had committed spiritual harlotry, and broke God's heart. Hosea was not the only one hurting.

It seems God was also going with a Gomer!

It's interesting, both God and Hosea were willing to divorce their adulterous wives - but though *they let them go, they never gave up*. Both husbands showed tremendous patience toward their cheating spouses.

The book of Hosea stands as a monument to God's amazing forbearance and faithfulness. Israel, like Gomer, left loving arms for loveless lovers. She swapped a happy home for a dismal brothel called "*the world*." Yet on the cross God

sent His Son to fetch and forgive cheating hearts, just as Hosea retrieved Gomer.

And this book should spark hope in us. For who in this room hasn't flirted with sin and the temptations of this world. We've let the devil brush up against us, and touch us on the thigh, and stroke our hair. We've entertained propositions of sin. We've sent out innuendos that if the right offer came along we just might be interested. *Where's our loyalty to God?*

Do we take our vows to Christ seriously?

The good news is that even if we haven't loved God to the degree that we should, He hasn't stopped loving us. The Holy Spirit searches us out to bring us home.

This is what Hosea did. He hears Gomer is being auctioned off at the slave market. Used and abused, she's now being sold on the auction block. Hosea rushes in - pays the price - and then brings her home.

“So I bought her for myself for fifteen shekels of silver, and one and one-half homers of barley.”

The slave markets of the ancient world were awful, inhumane places. The slaves were stripped naked and put on display. Imagine, standing in a crowd of men, watching your naked wife examined like a head of cattle - having to out-bid other buyers to take her home. You would be both embarrassed and angry.

Hosea ended up purchasing *Gomer* for a *homer*. Actually 15 shekels and a homer-and-a-half of barley. A homer was a measurement equal to eleven bushels.

According to Exodus 21:32 the going rate for a slave was 30 shekels. That means Gomer was bought below market price. Sin had taken its toll on the ole gal. In the eyes of man, she was worth half of a normal slave.

What a scene this was to behold: Hosea, the highest bidder, *approaches the platform, puts his arm around Gomer, dries her tears, removes her chains, throws his robe over her shoulders, covering her nakedness.*

Hosea slowly shelters her through a jeering and sneering crowd, and carries her all the way home.

As we've already seen from Chapter 1, the meaning of names plays a huge role in this book. The names of Gomer's three children spoke of Israel fate and status.

But the Hebrew name "*Hosea*" also speaks volumes.

It's literal meaning is "*salvation.*" It's a form of the Hebrew, "*Joshua*" - which is translated into English as "*Jesus.*" In his story, Hosea is a type of Jesus Christ.

Jesus found us in enslaved to sin - stripped of our dignity - used and abused - naked and ashamed.

He found the people who no one else wanted.

But rather than pay rock bottom prices, He bought us with the most expensive price ever paid - *His blood.*

Imagine yourself on the auction block - the horrible feeling of being treated as less than human. When suddenly, our Hosea, Jesus, *shouts from the crowd a bid.* You aren't even

worth 15 shekels, and a homer-and-a-half, yet He willingly gives His very life for you.

What a scene... He puts His arm over you, clothes you in His righteousness, dries your tears, loosens your shackles - and then walks you through this hostile world, encouraging you and protecting you as you go.

Jesus forgives our *sin*, covers our *shame*, ends our *slavery*. His interest in us, gives us immediate value.

He takes us off the streets, and gives us a caring home where we can live in warm fellowship with Him.

Verse 3, **And I said to her, “You shall stay with me many days; you shall not play the harlot, nor shall you have a man - so, too, will I be toward you.”**

Hosea takes back his wife, but notice he doesn't try to turn back the clock and ignore what she's done - not immediately. *Hosea takes her home, but not to bed...*

She comes under his protection and provision, *but they sleep in separate beds*. Hosea takes her in, and provides her needs - *and they may've been legally married* - but he doesn't act like it immediately. Gomer was no longer a harlot, but Hosea wasn't a husband - not yet. As Hosea said, **“nor shall you have a man.”**

And anyone who's been the victim of infidelity understands this transition. Just because the adulterer comes home, marital trust isn't rebuilt overnight.

Showing repentance and rebuilding trust take time.

Hosea tells us it'll take **“many days”** - **an unspecific length of time.** It literally means, **“as long as it takes.”**

And this describes Israel's current status before God.

“For many days” now - in fact, for the last 2000 years the Jews haven't played the *harlot* - they're no longer an idolatrous people - but neither is God their *husband*.

Their captivity in Babylon cured the Jews of false gods, but the Jews haven't yet been convinced of faith in God's Son. Today, God supports and protects Israel as a husband does His bride, but they sleep in separate beds. **“For many days”** now Israel has lived in limbo - *God's people* are without *God's Savior*.

It's interesting, one commentator writes of Hosea 3, **“In five verses, 144 English words, just 81 Hebrew words, God sums up the entire history of the nation Israel, from Abraham all the way to Armageddon.”** Here is Israel's past, present, and future. She was married to God; then divorced from Him, soon she'll be remarried.

Verse 4, **For the children of Israel shall abide many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred pillar, without ephod or teraphim.** Except for a brief period between the testaments, for 2500 years Israel has had no king. Today the modern state is governed by a parliament and prime minister, not a monarch.

For the last 1950 years Israel has been without a **sacred pillar** or Temple - no **ephod** or priesthood - no **sacrifice**. Genealogies that supported the priesthood were destroyed when the Temple burned in 70 AD. And at the same time the animal sacrifices also ceased.

To compensate, Talmudic or rabbinical Judaism, substituted *the rabbi for the priest - the synagogue for the Temple - and penance or good works for the blood of the sacrifice*. Which means for the last two millennium the Jews have been shipwreck and trying to stay afloat without the primary rudders of their religion.

Of course, they were also without a *teraphim*. This was “a household idol or a good luck charm,” and the absence of a teraphim in Israel was a good thing.

Israel’s trials and scatterings cured them of their idolatry, but it also shook their faith. They went from *harlotry*, to just *husbandless*. That’s still the case today.

Verse 5, “Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the Lord their God and David their king. They shall fear the Lord and His goodness in the latter days.” This long absence of spiritual anchors will one day cause the Jewish nation to turn back to the Lord.

The estranged couple will be remarried! What a day it will be, when Jesus Christ woos the Jews.

In an ancient Jewish commentary on the OT, “The Targum of Jonathan,” the author notes this passage in Hosea is a reference to the Messiah. In the last days, during the Great Tribulation, through the ministry of the two and the 144,000 witnesses, Israel will come to Jesus and embrace Him as their King and David’s heir.

The story of Hosea can be summed up by remembering a phrase, “Love always flows downward!”

A parent's love for his child is greater than a child's love for his parent... Hosea's love for Gomer was obviously greater than Gomer's love for Hosea...

Likewise God's love for us is always greater than our love for Him... God never gives up on people. Trust in His faithfulness, and you'll learn to love Him more.

Chapter 4, “Hear the word of the Lord, you children of Israel, for the Lord brings a charge against the inhabitants of the land: Beginning in Chapter 4 we lay aside Hosea’s *marriage* and listen to his *message*.

His *private misery* prepared him for his *public ministry*. From Chapter 4 through the end of the book God brings formal charges against the people of Israel.

Naturally, a proud Jew would be offended when compared to a prostitute. He or she would immediately dismiss such a nasty notion. *Maybe that's our reaction*.

Perhaps you're not sure you should be labeled a harlot, or guilty of being unfaithful. Well, Hosea spends the rest of the book convincing the Jews, and us, that yes, we too have to guard against being a Gomer!

The remainder of the book teaches us how to *backslide-proof* our walk and relationship with God.

He continues, “There is no truth or mercy or knowledge of God in the land.” And this is the first step toward back-sliding from God - *neglecting His truth!*

When you ignore the Scriptures, and start to petter out on prayer, trouble will follow. Faith comes by the Word of God. Faithlessness rises from its absence.

“By swearing and lying, killing and stealing and committing adultery, they break all restraint, with bloodshed upon bloodshed.” Violent crime was rampant in Hosea’s day. Murders, burglary, adultery - as the prophet puts it “*bloodshed upon bloodshed.*”

And the reason, “*they break all restraint.*”

Notice the correlation, where there is *no knowledge of God in the land* people *break all restraint*. Take God out of the equation and there is no absolutes, or right or wrong, or transcendent values. Some folks feel emboldened to do as they please - *school shootings, gang violence, sexual confusion, exploiting children.*

Where there is no knowledge of God brace yourself for anarchy. *Yet why are we so blind to the correlation?*

We blame crime on poverty, or a lack of education, or not enough law enforcement, or the proliferation of handguns. Look up “[Crime in the United States](#)” on Wikipedia and it even suggests that one of the reasons for crime in our country is an over-exposure to lead.

How about listing the obvious - that over the last 50 years we’ve abandoned God’s Word and the basis for absolutes in our society. Institutionally our nation has opted for relativism. In short, we “*broke all restraint.*”

And it's because of the violence, verse 3, "Therefore the land will mourn; and everyone who dwells there will waste away with the beasts of the field and the birds of the air; even the fish of the sea will be taken away."

Apparently, a nation's sin and selfishness has an effect on the environment. Greedy agendas can wreck and ruin the natural environment for future generations.

"Now let no man contend, or rebuke another; for your people are like those who contend with the priest.

Therefore you shall stumble in the day; the prophet also shall stumble with you in the night; and I will destroy your mother." Hosea is depicting a society in disarray. People are arguing with the priests. Even the prophets are being led astray. Moms turning against their children, and God having to punish the mothers.

Then he says, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children." Hosea traces his society's moral breakdown back to the priests. They had abandoned God's truth. Again, this sounds eerily similar to our day.

The shift in our society from God and the Scriptures didn't begin in government, or in the media. It began in our seminaries. Conservative scholars yielded to liberal pressures and embraced philosophies that were popular in educational circles. The integrity of the Scripture was compromised for academic acceptance.

And as a result most of our mainline denominations no longer believe in the inerrancy of the Bible.

Even today, the blame still lies with the pastors.

Verse 7, “The more they increased, the more they sinned against Me; I will change their glory into shame.

They eat up the sin of My people; they set their heart on their iniquity. And it shall be: like people, like priest. So I will punish them for their ways, and reward them for their deeds.”

Israel pursued idols because no one had the courage to step forward and stop them.

They lacked spiritual leadership. The priests were as corrupt as the people. It was “*like people, like priest.*”

“For they shall eat, but not have enough; they shall commit harlotry, but not increase; because they have ceased obeying the Lord. “Harlotry, wine, and new wine enslave the heart.”

The problem with Israel was wine and women. Their priests were party boys.

Of course, wine and women have been the downfall of many a man! Italian playboy and slalom skier, Alberto Tomba, dominated snow skiing in the 1980s and 90s. Tomba once bragged, “The last one to bed is the first one down the slope.”
But which slope?

Tomba was referring to a sky slope... but don't be first down the moral and spiritual slope - *slavery to sin.*

I prefer a heart that's truly free! Joy comes with an inner life that's not dominated by an uncontrollable compulsion for porn, or sex, or alcohol, or drugs, or fame. A heart that's free

makes good decisions. Not choices that reinforce the slavery that caused them.

Verse 12, “My people ask counsel from their wooden idols, and their staff informs them. For the spirit of harlotry has caused them to stray, and they have played the harlot against their God. They offer sacrifices on the mountaintops...” The ancients believed the gods lived above us, so the higher you were in elevation, the closer you were to the gods.

This is why the God of Israel outlawed worship on “the high places.” You could only make sacrifice on the sanctioned altar - the alter in the Temple in Jerusalem.

They also “burn incense on the hills, under oaks, poplars, and terebinths, because their shade is good.

Therefore your daughters commit harlotry, and your brides commit adultery. “I will not punish your daughters when they commit harlotry, nor your brides when they commit adultery; for the men themselves go apart with harlots, and offer sacrifices with a ritual harlot. Therefore people who do not understand will be trampled.” God has blamed the priest for the nation casting off restraint, now he blames the men of Israel!

The man is the leader in the home and in the church. God places a heavy responsibility on his shoulders.

Here Hosea is blaming the Israeli men for leading their women into harlotry and immorality. Since the men valued eroticism over virtue, the women followed suit. It speaks poorly of both genders - guys and gals.

The "*ritual harlots*" Hosea mentions were the "*playboy bunnies*" of the ancient world. These priestesses promoted the idolizing and worship of sex.

Temple priestesses were actually prostitutes. They turned tricks to raise money for their pagan temples and religious cults. These cults were common in the ancient world, and lived out the "free sex" philosophy.

Here, Hosea blames the men for running off with the Temple harlots rather than romancing their own wives. This caused the wives to follow suit, and go whoring themselves. I mean the whole society was corrupt.

Verse 15, "*Though you, Israel, play the harlot, let not Judah offend. Do not come up to Gilgal, nor go up to Beth Aven, nor swear an oath, saying, 'As the Lord lives' - "For Israel is stubborn like a stubborn calf; now the Lord will let them forage like a lamb in open country."* Israel worshipped the golden calves King Jeroboam had erected in Bethel and Dan. And it's true that eventually you become like the god you worship.

Thus, the Northern Kingdom of Israel became stubborn - really *bull-headed!* She had hardened Israel's heart against God and Hosea warns the Southern Kingdom of Judah to stay away from Israel!

Gilgal and *Beth-Aven* (which appropriately means "*house of vanity*") were centers of idolatry in the Northern Kingdom, and Judah is warned to stay away!

It's one thing to spend time with unbelievers who are your friends and are open to the message of Christ.

Perhaps, by hanging-out with them God will provide an opportunity for you to share your faith. But its quite another issue to hang with someone who's hardened his heart and is hostile towards God. That's why Hosea warns Jews in the South not to hang-out with Israel.

God understands the power to influence works both ways. *We can be the influencer or the influenced!*

Verse 17, *"Ephraim is joined to idols, let him alone."*

Here's a bold pronouncement. "Ephraim" was the leading tribe in Israel. Thus, it became the nickname for the entire Northern Kingdom. Yet God says *"let him alone."* God washed His hands of His rebel people.

The word *"joined"* is the Hebrew word *"to bind,"* as in being bound under a spell. Ephraim's attraction to idols was an addiction, it was an out-of-control lust.

It was as if the nation had fallen under a supernatural spell, and God finally says that's it! Enough is enough!

"Their drink is rebellion, they commit harlotry continually. Her rulers dearly love dishonor. The wind has wrapped her up in its wings, and they shall be ashamed because of their sacrifices." The final the verdict on Israel was cast! And what an ominous declaration, *"Ephraim is joined to idols, let him alone."*

Understand, God was not *giving up* on Israel, but He was *giving her over to her sin!* If you keep painting your heart with a varnish of rebellion, eventually you'll apply one too many coats. If you keep saying NO to God, He'll turn you over to the natural consequences of the path you've chosen! He'll

remove the protective hedge around your life and leave you to your own devices.

Chapter 5, “Hear this, O priests! Take heed, O house of Israel! Give ear, O house of the king!” God had blamed the *priests*, the *men*, and now the *royalty*.

“For yours is the judgment, because you have been a snare to Mizpah and a net spread on Tabor.”

Mizpah was a major northern Israeli city, and Tabor was one of the mountains in the Valley of Megiddo.

“The revolters are deeply involved in slaughter, though I rebuke them all. I know Ephraim, and Israel is not hidden from Me; for now, O Ephraim, you commit harlotry; Israel is defiled. “They do not direct their deeds toward turning to their God, for the spirit of harlotry is in their midst, and they do not know the Lord.” Note, there is a “*spirit of harlotry*.” Satan assigns demons that use other attractions to lure us from God.

“The pride of Israel testifies to his face; therefore Israel and Ephraim stumble in their iniquity; Judah also stumbles with them.” *What is the source of their stumble?* As usual, it’s pride! Pride is at the root of all rebellion. It’s the most common rock on which we trip.

“With their flocks and herds they shall go to seek the Lord, but they will not find Him; He has withdrawn Himself from them.” Israel will come to God armed with sacrifices, but they’ll find that God withdrew from them.

“They have dealt treacherously with the Lord, for they have begotten pagan children. Now a New Moon shall devour them and their heritage.” The idea is that an enemy invasion will happen soon, within the month.

Verse 8, “Blow the ram’s horn in Gibeah, the trumpet in Ramah! Cry aloud at Beth Aven, ‘Look behind you, O Benjamin!’ Ephraim shall be desolate in the day of rebuke; among the tribes of Israel I make known what is sure.” It was the year 722 BC when the Assyrians laid siege to the city of Samaria and Israel toppled.

Her defeat was God's rebuke! And God calls for the horn of coming judgment to be blown in many of the major cities throughout the northern kingdom of Israel.

Verse 10, “The princes of Judah are like those who remove a landmark; I will pour out My wrath on them like water.” Remember Hosea prophesied mostly to the northern kingdom of Israel, but Judah in the South was not an innocent sister. She too was guilty of rebellion.

Like a dishonest neighbor who shifts the boundary stakes to steal a few feet of property, Judah had also acted deceitfully. She tried to alter God’s boundaries.

Recently, I ran across the story of an old baseball coach named [John Scolinos](#). He was speaking at a coach’s clinic with a home plate hung around his neck.

He asked the coaches, “[How wide is home plate in Little League?](#)” Someone replied “[17 inches.](#)”

He asked, “How wide was home plate in Babe Ruth’s day?” The answer was “*17 inches.*” But Scolinos kept asking, “How about in High School baseball?” The answer “*17 inches.*” “In College baseball?” “*17 inches.*” “In Professional baseball?” “*The answer is 17 inches.*”

That’s when he asked, “And what do they do if a Major League pitcher can’t throw the ball over home plate?” Someone shouted, “*They send him to the minors.*” Scolinos said, “You’re right. What they don’t do is say, ‘That’s okay Jimmy, we’ll make the plate 18 inches, or 19, or 24 inches. Home plate remains 17 inches. We expect Jimmy to change, not home plate.’”

Coach Scolinos went on to explain this is the reason for today’s decline in moral values. Rather than expect people to live up to healthy standards, we’ve widened home plate to accommodate irresponsibility and sin.

And this is the mistake being made by today’s Church. We’re changing the timeless principles taught in Scripture to accommodate the culture’s wildness.

Some evangelical churches are embracing same sex marriage - ordaining women - allowing for different ways to God other than Jesus. They’re following the culture’s inclusiveness, not the Bible’s timelessness.

They think widening home plate will make them liked by the world. The Church wants to be hip and cool. We don’t realize in the long run we’re hurting people and destroying Christianity. *Don’t widen home plate!*

Hosea continues in verse 11, “Ephraim is oppressed and broken in judgment, because he willingly walked by human precept.” Ephraim or Israel relied on human wisdom. Rather than trust God, they listened to men.

For centuries when a Christian had a problem they turned to the Bible and prayed to God for wisdom.

Today, we’ve created all kinds of short-cuts. But the answers haven’t changed. It’s God’s truth we need.

“Therefore I will be to Ephraim like a moth, and to the house of Judah like rottenness. “When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah saw his wound, then Ephraim went to Assyria and sent to King Jareb; yet he cannot cure you, nor heal you of your wound.” The word “*Jareb*” means “Defender.” Israel looked to the King of Assyria as a *defender*, but he ended up their *destroyer*.

Rather than turn to God, the kings in Israel relied on *human precept* and tried to forge an alliance with Assyria. It was poor judgment and led to their defeat.

“For I will be like a lion to Ephraim, and like a young lion to the house of Judah. I, even I, will tear them and go away; I will take them away, and no one shall rescue.” In these three verses both the moth and lion depict the judgments of God. The moth eats away from the inside out. You wake up one morning and their holes in your clothes. You weren’t aware it was happening. There’s a subtle yet steady inward erosion.

Whereas the lion attacks from the outside. He rips and roars and devours - and everyone shutters in fear at the obvious hand of God. Whether by lion or moth God judges sin. No one

escapes! The only way to avoid God's judgment is by turning to Jesus Christ!

Verse 15, "I will return again to My place till they acknowledge their offense. Then they will seek My face; in their affliction they will earnestly seek Me."

God will judge Israel and Judah - and then return to His place until all Israel seeks Him. This is where God is today. He's still waiting for the Jews to seek His face.

Chapter 6, "Come, and let us return to the Lord; for He has torn, but He will heal us; He has stricken, but He will bind us up." This verse carries a lovely thought!

God's *rod of discipline* is in one hand, but *bandages of love* are in the other. He *humbles us*, but He also *heals us*. The same hand that strikes will bind us up.

The He says, "After two days He will revive us; on the third day He will raise us up, that we may live in His sight. Let us know, let us pursue the knowledge of the Lord." The word "*pursue*" means "to chase, to run after." Hey, if the lack of God's knowledge is what leads to our downfall; then we need to pursue it at all costs.

I hope this is what you're running after. You and I need to be chasing after "*the knowledge of the Lord.*"

"His going forth is established as the morning; He will come to us like the rain, like the latter and former rain to the earth." In Israel the former rains are in the spring and the latter rains are in the fall. God will be like the rain, and pour from heaven blessings upon His people.

Let me re-read the encouragement of verse 2. It's important, "After two days He will revive us; on the third day He will raise us up..." I'd like to bring to your attention several applications that arise from this verse.

First, is this idea of Israel being resurrected on the third day. In 1 Corinthians 15:4 Paul speaks of the resurrection of Jesus, "He was buried, and He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." But the question arises, where does it say in the OT that Messiah would rise from the dead on the third day?

There are several possibilities, and one is Hosea 6:2.

At times in the OT the whole nation of Israel is seen as a type of her Messiah. Recall Matthew 2, an angel appears to Joseph, the stepfather of Jesus, and tells him to flee to Egypt until Herod's threats on the young child's life are over. In writing about it, Matthew says it's a fulfillment of Scripture. He quotes Hosea 11:1 which speaks of the nation coming out of Egypt, yet Matthew (2:15) applies Hosea 11 to Joseph's family specifically.

And this could be what's happening here. At times Israel as a whole is used as a type of the Messiah.

This is why some scholars interpret Hosea 6:2 as a prophecy predicting the bodily resurrection of Jesus.

A second application of this passage relates to the idea of former and latter rains. God will come upon His people like the rain. He'll pour out showers of blessing!

The first great outpouring of the Holy Spirit, *the former rain*, occurred at the feast of Pentecost.

But there's another outpouring of the Spirit, *the latter rain*, that's set for the last days, that will come with the same power and intensity that shook the early church.

I hope you're praying for some *latter rain* in our day.

Then a third prophetic application of Hosea 6:1-3 is proposed in a book entitled "[Footprints of the Messiah](#)" by Bible scholar, Arnold Fruchtenbaum. It proposes the theory that Hosea 6:1-3 constitutes a national call to repentance that will be issued by Jewish leaders to all the world's Jews at the close of the Great Tribulation.

At the middle of Daniel's 70th week, the last seven years before Jesus' return, the Antichrist will strike out at the Jews with a vengeance. As Jesus described in Matthew 24 the Jews will flee to the wilderness to hide out in Petra or Bozrah (according to Isaiah 14 and 61).

And in the wilderness of Bozrah, over a three day period the Jewish people will contemplate the claims of Jesus and embrace Him as their Messiah. During *the first two days* the Jews will be saved and on *the third day* Messiah will return and establish his Kingdom.

The fulfillment of Hosea 6:2 will be literal and exact.

And then a fourth and final application of Hosea 6:2 also relates to the end times. 2 Peter 3:8 tells us that a day with the Lord is as a thousand years. Thus, for the last 2000 years or two 1000-year days, the Jewish people have been torn and stricken. God has chastised His people for their violation of

His covenant and their rejection of His Messiah. Yet Hosea tells us, after two days God will revive! His mercies will return to Israel.

And on the third day God will raise up the nation Israel out of its ashes to a position of prominence!

We know from Revelation 20:6 that Christ is going to establish His Kingdom on the earth for a thousand years. Jesus' throne will be the throne of David and His kingdom the Kingdom of Israel. It's possible that the third day of 1000 years, or the third millennium AD, will be the Kingdom age promised by God in the Bible.

If that's the case, it means Jesus is coming soon!

Verse 4, "O Ephraim, what shall I do to you? O Judah, what shall I do to you? For your faithfulness is like a morning cloud, and like the early dew it goes away." In Israel the dew evaporates no later than 10 AM - such was the nation's short-lived devotion to God.

"Therefore I have hewn them by the prophets, I have slain them by the words of My mouth; and your judgments are like light that goes forth." Each of the prophets laid his ax to the tree. They cut or *hewn*.

Soon God will shout "*timber*" and bring it all down.

Verse 6, "For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings."

Sacrifices are meaningful to God only when they're offered from a sincere heart. To secure God's forgiveness it has always taken both *the blood of the lamb* and *the repentance of the person coming to God*.

Verse 7, “But like men they transgressed the covenant; there they dealt treacherously with Me.”

Note the odd wording, “*like men they transgressed.*”

It’s as if treachery and betrayal is what God has come to expect from men. Rebellion is a human trait.

Chapter 6 ends, “Gilead is a city of evildoers and defiled with blood. As bands of robbers lie in wait for a man, so the company of priests murder on the way to Shechem; surely they commit lewdness. I have seen a horrible thing in the house of Israel: there is the harlotry of Ephraim; Israel is defiled. Also, O Judah, a harvest is appointed for you, when I return the captives of My people.” Immediate judgment is coming upon Israel.

But Judah’s judgment will wait until the captives return from Babylon. This occurred later in 535 BC.

God gave Judah six centuries and Jesus to repent.

Finally, judgment came in 70 AD by the Romans. The dispersion that followed has lasted until today.