



UNIT 8 HOSEA

FOREWORD:

There are 10 Lessons in all. Each lesson contains 5 questions. These are to be answered in approximately half a page each.

On completion of Lessons One to Five please forward responses to the registrar for marking. These will be returned to you.

On completion of Lessons Six to Ten forward to the registrar for marking, and these will be returned to you with your certificate.

The questions are designed to push the student to study beyond the notes to the Bible itself and also to think of the application.

There is a 6th question included in each Lesson.

This is for discussion for anyone studying "Hosea" in a group. The answers to these questions are not to be sent in for marking.

These notes and a Bible (preferably NIV or NRSV) are all that is necessary to do this course.

However, wider reading of Bible commentaries and dictionaries will make the course more interesting.



THE MAN AND HIS AGE:

INTRODUCTION:

The people of Israel had become a nation. They had been redeemed from slavery in Egypt. They had been given the law. They were committed to a life of obedience to God, and a religion which constantly reminded them of their dependence on God's forgiveness and mercy. But they were constantly falling down on their calling and promises. With idol-worship, civil war, immorality, complacency, the nation needed to be recalled again and again to the whole point of their existence.

O.T. PROPHETS:

Prophets were men raised up by God to do just this, to call the people back to God and his way. The prophets were essentially the men God chose to bring close to himself. The prophet's calling was not hereditary, like the priest's and God chose his men from many different walks of life. Some, like Jeremiah and Jonah, were very reluctant recruits, especially when they learnt what God wanted them to do.

But out of their fellowship with God (see 1 Kings 17:1) the prophets came with God's message for their contemporaries and for us too (see Acts 7:38). Sometimes they emphasised their message by means of dramatic action, but mostly it was presented in carefully constructed discourses which show premeditation and preparation.

Three Hebrew words are translated "prophet". The origin of the most common one is not known but it is clear from usage that the basic idea is of 'one who passes on a message from God'. God called them to speak for him. God's call is not an invitation but an appointment. There are two other Hebrew words used of prophets and they are both translated "seer" meaning "one who sees". This points to the fact that by God's inspiration the prophets have a unique ability to "see": both into the affairs of men and into the mind of God.

Prophecy included prediction of future events, and the fulfilment of these gave the prophet greater authority. But more important still he had to deal with the present and the past and to instruct men in God's ways.