

Hosea 4:1-19



The text – Hosea 4: 1-19

1. Read Hosea 4:1-19. In this portion of Hosea, the sins of the priests and people of Israel are listed, along with God's judgements against those sins. On first reading, how does this chapter of Scripture impact you? What questions does it raise for you?
2. In Hosea 4:1-3 God's charge against Israel is summarised. Discuss the words "faithfulness", "love", and "acknowledgement". How are they related to the covenant God made with Israel?
3. The word "acknowledgement" is used in Hosea 4:1 and again in Hosea 4:6. This word can also be simply translated "know". What does it mean to "know" God? In your discussion also think about the words of Hosea 4:17 in which we are told that Ephraim or Israel is "joined" to idols.
4. Hosea 4 is addressed to the people "who live in the land", that is, the land God promised and gave to the nation of Israel. Discuss how Israel's sin impacts that land with reference to Hosea 4:3.
5. What was the task of the priests among the people of Israel? Why are priests the focus of attention in Hosea 4:4-10?
6. What is idolatry? Discuss the descriptions of idolatry in Hosea 4:12-14.
7. Discuss God's words of judgement in Hosea 4:19. When was the Northern Kingdom of Israel taken into exile by the Assyrians?

The Scriptures – Hosea 4: 1-19 as a portion of the Scriptures

8. What does it mean to "hear" or "listen" to God's word? Notice this command at other key moments in the Scriptures, for example, Deuteronomy 6:4 ff., Isaiah 1:10, and Matthew 7:24-28.
9. Isaiah also writes about the weeping of the earth due to sin. Read and discuss Isaiah 24:1-5. Can you think of other portions of Scripture that speak about the earth suffering and groaning because of human sin?
10. Read Hosea 6:1-3. These are wonderful words of hope in the context of judgement. Discuss them in the light of Hosea 4, and particularly your understanding of acknowledging or knowing God.
11. Read and discuss Philippians 3:7-14 in which Paul writes about pressing on to know Jesus Christ. Compare and contrast his words with those of Hosea about knowing (acknowledging) the LORD.

Our lives – walking the way of Jesus in response to Hosea 4: 1-19 as a portion of the Scriptures

12. What does Hosea 4 teach us about sin? How do Hosea's words help you?
13. How can you know and love God more fully? What will you do?
14. How can we pray for you and support you as a result of this study?