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A CHRISTOCENTRIC INTERPRETATION OF HOSEA 1–3:
AN APPLICATION OF SIDNEY GREIDANUS’S
CONTEMPORARY HERMENEUTICAL
METHOD

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To those who have mentored me in Christ.

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PREFACE

The book of Hosea has been a balm to my soul over the years. I first preached the analogy of Hosea's love for Gomer and Christ's love for His Church years ago in a county jail in Dayton, Ohio, and I have continued to love sharing the beautiful prophetic message of the Messiah coming to save His people from their sin.

I want to thank my parents, who have faithfully supported me while I have been in seminary and have labored in prayer for me. I also want to thank my mentors over the years, who have shown me the love, kindness, and graciousness of Christ.

Third Avenue Baptist Church has played a significant role in my life since 2016. The preaching of God's Word, the saints' prayers, and the fellowship of Christ's Bride has helped to sustain and nourish my faith throughout my time in seminary. It has been a blessing to learn at Southern Seminary under a faculty who have faithfully taught me God's Word. The Old Testament department has shown me the treasures of how Christ is the fulfillment of the law, the prophets, and all of God's promises.

I want to especially thank Dr. T. J. Betts, my faculty advisor, who has been a mentor and friend throughout my years in seminary. His faithful encouragement, care, and wisdom has helped lead me to the finish line of the ThM degree. Thank you.

In all, the Lord of heaven and earth has been faithful to extend His salvific and persevering grace upon me. I'm thankful for His grace to finish this project.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Christians are those who have “the eyes of [their] hearts enlightened, that [they] may know what is the hope to which he has called [them], what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints” (Eph 1:18).¹ Because of this new sight, Christians interpret the Old Testament through the lens of the New Testament. The new eyes given to them by Christ, now govern their interpretation of the Old Testament, so they can clearly see the glories of God’s redemptive-historical plan. How are Christians now to interpret the laws, the prophecies, and the promises God gave to His people Israel, prior to the coming of Jesus Christ? How does Christ, whom “the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms” (Luke 24:44) speak about, affect how Christians interpret the Old Testament? If “the Old Testament is the foundation of the New Testament”² as Duane Garrett argues, then Christians must not abandon it in their hermeneutical methodology of Old or New Testament interpretation. The Old Testament must be interpreted through the redemptive-historical *fulfillment* of the New Testament, and the New Testament must be interpreted through the redemptive-historical *foundation* of the Old Testament. However, how are Christians to interpret Christ within the Old Testament? As Brevard Childs notes, “The relation of Old Testament theology to...the New Testament remains confusing and ill-defined,”³ and as R. W. L. Moberly warns

¹ Unless otherwise noted, all biblical passages referenced employ the English Standard Version.

² Duane A. Garrett, *The Problem of the Old Testament: Hermeneutical, Schematic, and Theological Approaches* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2020), 3.

³ Brevard S. Childs, *Old Testament Theology in a Canonical Context* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 5.

while speaking of Old Testament interpretation from a Christian perspective, “Will not Christian faith only hear what it wants to hear, and in the way it wants to hear it?”⁴ For these reasons, Christian hermeneutics must embrace the Old Testament in relation to the larger framework of God’s redemptive plan through Jesus Christ.⁵

A possible solution to interpreting the Old Testament in light of Christ is by way of Sidney Greidanus’s redemptive-historical Christocentric hermeneutic, which I will use in this study to analyze Hosea 1–3. For several reasons I have chosen to analyze Hosea 1–3 including my personal interest in exegetical studies in the book of Hosea, the book as a whole and specifically the first three chapters pose significant theological debate among scholars, and because the text of Hosea is one of the most problematic and most difficult texts to interpret in the Old Testament.⁶ There is no better way to determine if a hermeneutical method is effective than to sample it on one of the most difficult books to interpret grammatically and theologically in light of the New Testament. To be faithful to the text, it is required that one use a methodology that strives for objectivity not subjectivity, exegesis not eisegesis. As Thomas McComiskey notes, “Absolute objectivity in the interpretation of literature is, of course, beyond our reach, but we must nonetheless strive for it”⁷ which is why I will analyze Greidanus’s methodology that has set criteria and clearly defined hermeneutical terminology. I will argue that Greidanus’s hermeneutical method is helpful in interpreting Hosea 1–3 faithfully and that it should be used in our exegetical studies and preaching of the Old Testament.

⁴ R. W. L. Moberly, *Old Testament Theology: Reading the Hebrew Bible as Christian Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), 30.

⁵ Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament: A Contemporary Hermeneutical Method* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999), 47.

⁶ David Allan Hubbard, *Hosea: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1989), 30. See also Thomas Edward McComiskey, *The Minor Prophets: An Exegetical and Expository Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1992), 4, who notes various scriptural notations in the book of Hosea that have caused difficulty.

⁷ McComiskey, *The Minor Prophets*, 4.

Throughout this study, I will employ Greidanus's hermeneutical method and his seven ways of preaching Christ from the Old Testament, outlined in his *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, to advocate for a redemptive-historical Christocentric hermeneutic for interpreting Hosea 1:1–3:5, which could then be used for preaching the selected texts. First, I will present a brief overview of hermeneutical challenges to interpreting the Old Testament in light of Christ and the New Testament. I will then overview Greidanus's methodology used for analyzing the selected preaching texts in this study. The methodology consists of seven ways to interpret the Old Testament in light of Christ and the New Testament, including redemptive-historical progression, promise-fulfillment, typology, analogy, longitudinal themes, contrast, and New Testament references.⁸ I will proceed to apply these seven ways to the selected preaching texts throughout Hosea 1–3. Lastly, I will critically analyze Greidanus's hermeneutical methodology.

⁸ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 233.

CHAPTER 2

SURVEY OF SCHOLARSHIP

Before applying Greidanus’s redemptive-historical Christocentric hermeneutic to the interpretation of Hosea 1–3, it is necessary to conduct a brief overview of Christian scholarship on the hermeneutical methods used to interpret the Old Testament in light of the New Testament. The wide spectrum of methods used among scholars throughout church history will demonstrate the need for a hermeneutic with set criteria and clearly defined terminology, such as Greidanus’s methodology.

Allegorical and Typological Approaches

The first approach that has been prevalently used in Old Testament interpretation is the allegorical method, which was used in early church history by Clement of Alexandria and Origen,¹ and it has been more recently advocated by Henri de Lubac, Francis Martin, and Hans Boersma.² Origen preached Christ from the Old Testament and made Christ the key or tool to understanding the Old Testament.³ Generally, allegorical interpretation moves “beyond the literal, historical meaning of a passage to a supposed deeper sense”⁴ of the meaning that is not explicitly stated in the text. Calvin was staunchly opposed to the allegorical method and to excessive Christological interpretation of the text but he insisted on the author’s originally intended

¹ Duane A. Garrett, *The Problem of the Old Testament: Hermeneutical, Schematic, and Theological Approaches* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2020), 54–55.

² Garrett, *The Problem of the Old Testament*, 76–77.

³ Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament: A Contemporary Hermeneutical Method* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999), 83.

⁴ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 70.

meaning of the text in its own historical context.⁵ However, in Calvin’s interpretation of Hosea 1:2, he cannot imagine God commanding Hosea to marry “a wife of whoredom,” so he interprets Hosea’s marriage with Gomer as “a representation exhibited to the people,”⁶ as a vision or some kind of figurative language,⁷ which strays close to an allegorical interpretation of the text. Greidanus notes that an allegorical method is beneficial for interpreting actual allegories in the text, but it becomes a problem when the method is used on a genre that is not allegory, such as historical narrative.⁸

Typological interpretation is beneficial according to Greidanus, because unlike allegory it has its roots in the Old Testament and it strives to eliminate subjective interpretation.⁹ Unlike allegorical interpretation, typological interpretation requires redemptive history to be analyzed because the analogy present or the escalation taking place between the type or antitype stem out of redemptive history.¹⁰ James Hamilton defines typology as, “God-ordained, author-intended historical correspondence and escalation in significance between people, events, and institutions across the Bible’s redemptive-historical story (i.e., in covenantal context).”¹¹ Although Greidanus views typology as beneficial, he warns against typologizing the text, which is when one overextends the use of typology, making merely incidental and insufficient details in the text into typological examples.¹² Allegorical and typological interpretation have both

⁵ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 138.

⁶ John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Twelve Minor Prophets*, trans. by John Owen, Calvin’s Commentaries (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1950), 44.

⁷ Calvin, *Commentaries on the Twelve Minor Prophets*, 45.

⁸ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 88.

⁹ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 96.

¹⁰ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 91.

¹¹ James M. Hamilton, *Typology: Understanding the Bible’s Promise-Shaped Patterns: How Old Testament Expectations Are Fulfilled in Christ* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2022), 26.

¹² Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 97.

been abused within Christian preaching, but they both have been and can be used faithfully.

Metaphorical Approach

Another common approach to interpreting the Old Testament in light of the New Testament is by way of metaphor. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines metaphor as “a figure of speech in which a name or descriptive word or phrase is transferred to an object or action different from, but analogous to, that to which it is literally applicable.”¹³ Yehezkel Kaufmann, Israelite philosopher and Biblical scholar, argues that in Hosea 1–3 there is a metaphor occurring for Israel’s sin. Hosea’s kindness shown to Gomer, symbolizes God’s compassion to Israel, but it has nothing to do with Hosea’s actual marriage.¹⁴ Gomer is faithful to Hosea and does not commit adultery against him, and their children are simply named as a dramatic representation of Israel’s apostasy against YHWH. Gomer must play the role of harlot to symbolize Israel’s apostasy.¹⁵ In Yehezkel’s view, Israel was literally sinful against God, while Gomer was simply a symbol for Israel’s apostasy.

Interpolation Approach

Some scholars argue for interpolations and redactions pertaining to certain texts in the Old Testament. Francis North has a difficult time coming to terms with the reason why God would ordain Hosea to marry a woman that He would disapprove of morally, and North has an even more difficult time with the reason why God would call

¹³ OED Online, “Metaphor,” Oxford University Press, accessed December 11, 2022, <https://www-oed-com.ezproxy.sbts.edu/view/Entry/117328?redirectedFrom=metaphor>.

¹⁴ Duane A. Garrett, *Hosea, Joel*, The New American Commentary, vol. 19a. (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishing Group, 1997), 44.

¹⁵ Kaufmann Yehezkel. *The Religion of Israel: From Its Beginnings to the Babylonian Exile* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), 370.

Hosea to marry a second woman of immoral character.¹⁶ North concludes that the third chapter of Hosea appears to be an allusion to the exile of Israel, about two centuries after the days of the prophet Hosea.¹⁷ In opposition, Garrett argues that North's position, which argues for an interpolation of chapter three, should be rejected since there are no grounds for treating the chapter as an interpolation or addition, or from a later date than Hosea's days.¹⁸

Literal Approach

An approach that is opposite of the allegorical approach is the literal approach, which was used by the Antiochian School,¹⁹ Theodore of Mopsuestia,²⁰ and later Martin Luther.²¹ Luther desired to interpret the text by its historical context and the natural rules of grammar, but he also interpreted figures of speech figuratively.²² Luther stated that the literal sense "alone holds the ground in trouble and trial, conquers the gates of hell [Matt. 16:18] along with sin and death, and triumphs for the praise and glory of God. Allegory, however, is too often uncertain, unreliable, and by no means safe for supporting faith."²³ Pertaining to Hosea 1–3, Garrett would argue that God commanded Hosea to marry an immoral woman named Gomer. They had three children, but then Gomer left them all to go back to her immoral lifestyle. God commanded Hosea to go and buy back his wife out

¹⁶ Francis Sparling North, "Solution of Hosea's Marital Problems by Critical Analysis," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 16, no. 2 (1957): 128.

¹⁷ North, "Solution of Hosea's Marital Problems by Critical Analysis," 128–29.

¹⁸ Garrett, *Hosea, Joel*, 46.

¹⁹ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 91.

²⁰ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 92.

²¹ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 114.

²² Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 115.

²³ Heinrich Bornkamm. *Luther and the Old Testament*, ed. Victor I. Gruhn, trans. Eric W. Gritsch and Ruth C. L. Gritsch (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969), 91.

of slavery and the family was eventually restored.²⁴ Although Luther was inconsistent in applying the literal sense of the text by incorporating an allegorical interpretation at times, his hermeneutical goal was influenced greatly by the literal sense.²⁵

Historical Approach

The historical approach seeks to interpret the text as intended by the author and in its original historical context, which was used by John Calvin. Calvin sought to protect himself from excessive Christological interpretation by using historical interpretation.²⁶ In his commentary on Hosea, he gives a considerable amount of space to introducing the historical context of Hosea, the time period, the place of his prophetic ministry, the current political climate, and the religious culture.²⁷ There are several various interpretations of Hosea 1–3 that would be considered historical, including Garrett’s view stated above, the view that chapters 1 and 3 “are variant accounts of the same event; no sequence is intended,”²⁸ and the view that chapter 3 is an interpolation from a later hand, which would still explain chapter 1 as a historical account.²⁹ Greidanus applauds Calvin’s approach to historical interpretation since it gives a rather balanced approach to interpreting the Old Testament.³⁰ Greidanus argues that a weakness of Calvin’s historical approach is that he was too focused on God-centered hermeneutics, which when interpreting the Old Testament, could have led into moralistic application, instead of

²⁴ Garrett, *Hosea, Joel*, 45.

²⁵ Bornkamm. *Luther and the Old Testament*, 92.

²⁶ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 138.

²⁷ Calvin, *Commentaries on the Twelve Minor Prophets*, 35–40.

²⁸ Garrett, *Hosea, Joel*, 45.

²⁹ Garrett, *Hosea, Joel*, 46.

³⁰ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 148–49.

Christ-centered application.³¹

Christological Approach

Two modern preachers from the past who emphasized preaching Christ from the Old Testament included Charles Haddon Spurgeon and Wilhelm Vischer.³² Spurgeon was an advocate of interpreting the Old Testament passage from the literal sense, but he also gave allowances for interpreting the text from a spiritual sense.³³ Spurgeon utilized many avenues to preach Christ from the Old Testament including the literal sense, promise-fulfillment, typology, and allegory. A weakness of Spurgeon was that he typologized at times.³⁴ Greidanus notes that Spurgeon's major weakness in Old Testament hermeneutics is that he would insert Christ back into the Old Testament text, where Christ was not intended to be located.³⁵

Vischer argued that Christianity was the confession that Jesus is the Christ as far as Christ is the Messiah defined in the Old Testament.³⁶ Vischer saw Christ as the eternal Logos in the Old Testament, he used typology in his methodology, and he used Old Testament texts as links to the New Testament.³⁷ Several critiques by Greidanus concerning Vischer's methodology include that he would playfully posit connections between the Old and New Testaments, but he could end up interpreting the text out of speculation,³⁸ instead of from a balanced redemptive-historical perspective. By doing so,

³¹ Calvin, *Commentaries on the Twelve Minor Prophets*, 149–50.

³² Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 151.

³³ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 152.

³⁴ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 156–58.

³⁵ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 160.

³⁶ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 164–65.

³⁷ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 169–71.

³⁸ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 173.

he could make his sole focus on witnessing about Christ in his preaching, leading to Christomonism, an exclusive concentration on Christ. There then could be an overemphasis on Christ when communicating the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit within the Trinity.³⁹

³⁹ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 176.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Greidanus's goal in *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament* has been to construct a redemptive-historical Christological approach that utilizes the most faithful and effective aspects of hermeneutical methods throughout church history. He does so by placing Christ-centered hermeneutics that produce Christ-centered preaching and application at the forefront of his methodology, while constructing guardrails within his set criteria, to protect himself from Christomonism.

Scriptural Foundation for Greidanus's Hermeneutical Method

There are several passages Greidanus uses to set the theological and textual foundation for the hermeneutical method within his book. Such passages include Hebrews 1:1–2; Romans 16:25–26; 2 Corinthians 3:15–16; and 1 Corinthians 5:3–4.

The author of Hebrews introduces his letter to fellow Christians by stating, “Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world” (Heb 1:1–2). God spoke throughout redemptive history in the past through His spokesmen, but now God speaks to Christians by Jesus Christ, the Creator of the world. Jesus is necessarily the link between the Old and New Testaments.¹ There is a redemptive progression occurring in these verses, from the Israelites in the Old Testament to Christians in the New Testament.

¹ Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament: A Contemporary Hermeneutical Method* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999), 49.

Greidanus notes Paul's closing message to the Romans when Paul encourages them to be strengthened in the "gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God" (Rom 16:25–26). Paul connects the "mystery" (16:25) revealed in the present to the "prophetic writings" (16:26) from the past that were preached to the nations. God's revelation progresses throughout redemptive history.² The Gospel is the mystery revealed in which the prophets spoke about in time's past.

Again, Paul is communicating to the church of Corinth concerning the Gospel, but more specifically about the effect of the Gospel on one who believes in Christ when he states, "Yes, to this day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their hearts. But when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed" (2 Cor 3:15–16). The veil that covers the eyes of those under the law of Moses has been removed from those who have trusted in Christ's fulfillment of the law. A salvific progression of acts takes place when one who is veiled from seeing the Gospel is transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit, turns to Christ in repentance and faith, the blinding of the eyes from the veil of the law is removed, and freedom from sin is revealed.

Greidanus also includes as support, Paul's heart-felt encouragement to the church of Corinth, "For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures" (1 Cor 15:3–4). As a Pharisee, Paul knew the Old Testament, but after he received salvation in Christ, he then communicated the need of a Savior by way of preaching the Old Testament. The Apostles followed Jesus by preaching Christ from the Old Testament.³

² Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 50.

³ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 58.

Seven Ways of Interpreting the Old Testament in Light of Christ

According to Greidanus, there are many roads or ways to interpret and preach Christ from the Old Testament. The following seven ways of interpretation entail some overlap when applied to the text, but the distinctions of each way should be made clear by the following overview.

Redemptive-Historical Progression

The way of “redemptive-historical progression links Christ to Old Testament redemptive events which find their climax in him”⁴ and is the foundational way of interpreting the Old Testament in light of Christ. Redemptive history supports all other ways that lead one from the Old Testament narrative to Christ in the New Testament. Redemptive history, also called the metanarrative,⁵ can be supported by the various genealogical lists present in the New Testament. In Matthew 1:1–17, Matthew uses the way of redemptive-historical progression to emphasize Christ as the successor of the lineage of Abraham, the faith father of the people of Israel, and the royal line of David who had received the law, the prophecies, and the promises connected to the coming Messiah, Jesus Christ. Luke on the other hand, in Luke 3:23–38 traces the genealogy of Christ back to Adam, the first man, who fell into sin and brought death to the world at large.⁶ In his letter to the Romans, Paul emphasizes the relationship between Adam and Christ by proclaiming that “because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ” (Rom 5:17). The redemptive-historical progression is interconnected from Adam to the better Adam, Christ, and through the progression of redemptive history Christ can be faithfully

⁴ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 203–4.

⁵ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 234.

⁶ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 204.

preached.

Several pivotal points in redemptive history throughout Scripture include the commonly known events of creation (Gen 1–2), the fall (Gen 3–Mal 4), redemption (Matt 1–Rev 20), and the new creation (Rev 21–22). Three characteristics of redemptive-historical progression that Greidanus emphasizes include first, that our preaching must be centered and founded in the history of redemption,⁷ God’s great plan of salvation to save sinners. The second characteristic is that redemptive history is God-centered since God is the One to initiate all acts of redemption. The third characteristic of redemptive history is that it is a unified history, meaning that although there are seeming setbacks, ends, and beginnings, it always progresses towards its ultimate goal,⁸ which is eternity with the Triune God. By way of redemptive-historical progression, Old Testament passages are brought to light to see God’s great plan of salvation through Christ.

An example of redemptive-historical progression in Greidanus’s *Preaching Christ from Genesis*, can be demonstrated in Genesis 17:1–27. To preach Christ from this narrative, one would begin by following the road from Genesis 17:1–27, God’s covenant with Abraham and Israel, and how God promises to be their God, to Jeremiah 31:31–33, where God promises to make a new covenant with Israel. The road would continue into the covenant’s fulfillment in Jesus, when He established the new covenant during the drinking of the cup and the eating of the bread the night before He died (Luke 22:20; Matt 26:27–28). The fulfillment of the new covenant is confirmed later in Hebrews 9:15.⁹

Promise-Fulfillment

The “way of promise-fulfillment is embedded in redemptive history, for God

⁷ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 235.

⁸ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 236.

⁹ Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from Genesis: Foundations for Expository Sermons* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007), 164.

gives his promises at one stage of redemptive history and brings them to fulfillment in subsequent stages.”¹⁰ Greidanus argues that there are two rules to interpreting the Old Testament promises that must be kept in mind. The first is that God usually progressively fulfills His promises, meaning that a promise can have multiple fulfillments. After a fulfillment of the prophecy, there might be another fulfillment still awaiting completion. The second rule to interpreting the Old Testament promises is that the promise in the Old Testament must move to the fulfillment in Christ in the New Testament, and then back again to the Old Testament text to receive the full impact of the promise-fulfillment occurring throughout redemptive history.¹¹ Greidanus argues that Christians should preach the messianic promises so that our theological vision of the Scriptures is enlarged and so that hope is strengthened in God for the promises yet to be fulfilled.¹²

An example of promise-fulfillment is demonstrated in Genesis 17:1–27 when God told Abram, “You shall be the father of a multitude of nations” (17:4). This promise from God was fulfilled in Christ when He commanded His disciples to go out into the world and “make disciples of all nations” (Matt 28:19).¹³ Examples of promise-fulfillment abound that pertain to the prophetic promises in the Old Testament, which are fulfilled in Christ in the New Testament. According to the Gospel writers, Jesus fulfilled the promises of all the prophets in the Old Testament.¹⁴

Typology

The way of typology varies from allegorical interpretation, since it “is limited to discovering specific analogies along the axis of God’s acts in redemptive history as

¹⁰ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 206.

¹¹ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 242.

¹² Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 248–49

¹³ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from Genesis*, 165.

¹⁴ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 209.

revealed in Scripture”¹⁵ and it is characterized by both analogy and escalation. The major presupposition that undergirds typological interpretation of the Old Testament is that God progressively works out His redemptive plan in history.¹⁶ Several characteristics and rules for using typology are important to note for this study. Typology is distinguished from typologizing by four factors. A genuine type is historical, theocentric, exhibits a significant analogy with its antitype, and the relation of the type to its antitype is marked by escalation.¹⁷ Several rules that should be taken into account when using typology include: the literary-historical interpretation should precede the typological interpretation; the type should be looked for in the central message of the text concerning God’s redemptive plan; there needs to be a symbolic meaning of the type in Old Testament times, whether the person, institution, or event; the points of contrast between the Old Testament type and the New Testament antitype should be noted; the meaning of the symbol that is a type of Christ should be carried forward as its meaning escalates; and a typological line to Christ from the Old Testament should simply be drawn, Christ should be preached.¹⁸

An example of typology is found in Genesis 6:9–9:17 by way of Noah as a type of Christ. “Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation [and he] walked with God” (Gen 6:9). Greidanus argues from Romans 5:14 that “Noah is the seed of the woman, a new Adam representing the human race,”¹⁹ but Christ is the greater and better Noah.²⁰ Even though Noah exercised righteousness before the Lord, he too sinned like every man when he got drunk and exposed himself as naked in the tent (Gen 9:21).

¹⁵ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 249.

¹⁶ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 213.

¹⁷ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 256.

¹⁸ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 257–59

¹⁹ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from Genesis*, 109.

²⁰ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from Genesis*, 109.

Unlike Noah, Jesus never sinned and lived a perfectly righteous life before His Father (1 Pet 2:21–22).

An example of typology in the New Testament is displayed when Paul proclaimed to the church of Rome, “Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come” (Rom 5:14). Paul uses “*typos*” to expose the analogy between Adam and Christ.²¹ While representing all of humanity, Adam brought sin into the world, and Christ defeated sin on the cross for all of humanity. There is an escalation in redemptive history in Romans 5 as readers are brought from the tragedy of sin brought on by Adam to the glory of salvation and the overcoming of sin through Christ.

Analogy

The way of analogy “finds its roots in the Old Testament, where the narrators frequently highlight the continuities in the history they relate by casting later events and persons more or less in the image of earlier events and persons.”²² Greidanus describes “the way of analogy for preaching Christ from the Old Testament as the move from what God was for Israel to what God through Christ is for the New Testament church.”²³ Greidanus gives several key ways interpreters should look for analogies in the Old Testament to preach Christ. First, they should look for the analogy between what God did for the people of Israel and what Christ has done in the past and what He presently does for His Church. Second, they should look for the similarity between what God teaches Israel and what Christ teaches His Church. Third, they should look for parallels between God’s demands in the Old Testament and Christ’s demands in the New Testament.²⁴

²¹ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 217.

²² Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 220.

²³ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 221.

²⁴ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 263.

A common example of analogy used by New Testament writers is the progression of God's people Israel to the church.²⁵ An example of Israel as analogous to the Church is displayed in Genesis 41:1–57. God encouraged the Israelites to entrust themselves to God's good and sovereign plan for them through Joseph's rise to power in Egypt, his storing up of grain for the famine, and the eventual provision of his family. Likewise, Jesus encouraged His followers to not worry about what they would eat, drink, and wear because the Father knew they needed all of those things (Matt 6:31–32). Jesus exhorted them to “seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you” (6:33). God's provision to His people Israel is analogous to Jesus's provision for His Church.²⁶

Longitudinal Themes

The way of longitudinal themes entails that “the Bible discloses the gradual development of themes because God progressively reveals more of himself and his will as he works out his redemptive plan in history.”²⁷ Longitudinal themes are more closely associated with the history of revelation, which is God's specific communication to His people throughout the various stages of redemptive history.²⁸ Themes can vary across the Old and New Testaments, but even by a single word in the New Testament an Old Testament theme can be alluded to.²⁹

An example of a longitudinal theme of God exalting the oppressed and the lowly can be traced from the Old Testament in Genesis 41:1–57 to the New Testament. God took Joseph, who was rejected by his brothers, sold to the Ishmaelites and sent to

²⁵ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 221.

²⁶ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from Genesis*, 400–401.

²⁷ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 222.

²⁸ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 266.

²⁹ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 224.

Egypt, and He redeemed Joseph's life, eventually making him prime minister of Egypt.³⁰ Joseph went from being rejected by his brothers to providing for his family in the midst of a famine. The theme of God exalting the oppressed and lowly is traced to the New Testament by way of God looking upon Mary, one who was humble and lowly (Luke 1:48), to the one who would give birth to the Son of God. God then took Jesus who was born as a baby in a feeding trough, who eventually died on a cross and was put in the grave, and seated Him at the right hand of God as "the King of kings and Lord of lords" (1 Tim 6:15).³¹

Contrast.

While "other ways focus on the continuity between the Old Testament and Christ, [the way of] contrast focusses on the discontinuity Christ brings."³² A stipulation concerning the way of contrast is that it must be centered in Christ, because Christ is the reason for any change between the Old Testament and the New Testament.³³

For example, there is a difference between the way Israel was expected to fulfill the old covenant versus the way Christians are expected to fulfill the requirements of the new covenant. The Sinai covenant required obedience to the law, works, and sacrifices for repentance, while the new covenant requires faith in the one and only, true and living sacrifice, Jesus Christ, where the law is written on the hearts of believers by the Spirit.³⁴ An example of contrast takes place in Genesis 39:1–23 when God was with Joseph and Israel in times of prosperity,³⁵ shown by that "The Lord was with Joseph, and

³⁰ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from Genesis*, 401.

³¹ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from Genesis*, 401.

³² Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 224.

³³ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 272.

³⁴ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 225.

³⁵ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from Genesis*, 386.

he became a successful man” (Gen 39:2) and “His master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord caused all that he did to succeed in his hands” (39:3). In contrast, when Jesus was at the pinnacle of His suffering on the cross, taking in upon Himself, He was momentarily forsaken by God (Mark 15:34), so that the Church might never be forsaken by the Father.³⁶

New Testament References

Although the analysis of each preaching text later analyzed in this study will not include a separate section for the way of New Testament references, New Testament references will be used throughout the other ways of interpretation for each selected preaching text. Greidanus encourages judiciousness in utilizing New Testament references and allusions when linking the Old Testament with a New Testament reference. He also states that New Testament references can be a good corrective of oversight for finding the various other ways of interpreting the Old Testament in light of Christ.³⁷

Examples of New Testament references and allusions pertaining to Genesis 22:1–19 include Hebrews 11:17–19, James 2:21–22, Matthew 3:17, John 3:16, and Romans 8:32. To illustrate that “faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen” (Heb 11:1), the author of Hebrews reminds his readers of the story of Abraham offering his son Isaac to God in faith (11:17–19). James 2:21–22 uses Abraham’s offering of Isaac on the altar to show that faith without works is dead, but neither Hebrews 11:17–19 and James 2:21–22 form a direct textual link to Christ. However, the allusion of God not withholding His own Son in Romans 8:32 does allude to the narrative in Genesis 22:1–19 by Abraham not withholding his own son Isaac on the

³⁶ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from Genesis*, 386.

³⁷ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 269.

altar.³⁸ Throughout the application of Hosea 1–3, New Testament references and allusions will be displayed through the other six ways of interpreting the Old Testament in light of Christ.

³⁸ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from Genesis*, 204.

CHAPTER 4
STRUCTURAL OUTLINE FOR HOSEA 1:1–3:5

The following structural outline has been redacted from David Hubbard's structural outline of the book of Hosea in his *Hosea: An Introduction and Commentary*.¹

1. Hosea's marriage with Gomer (1:1–3:5)
 - a. Title and Superscription (1:1)
 - b. Hosea marries Gomer and has three children (1:2–1:9)
 - i. The Lord's instructions to Hosea (1:2)
 - ii. The birth of Jezreel (1:3–5)
 - iii. The birth of Lo-Ruhamah (1:6–7)
 - iv. The birth of Lo-Ammi (1:8–9)
 - c. Promise of fruitfulness to Israel (1:10–1:11)
 - d. God's punishment on Israel (2:1–2:13)
 - e. God's pursuit and redemption of Israel (2:14–2:23)
 - f. Hosea redeems Gomer (3:1–3:5)
 - i. YHWH's command to Hosea to buy back Gomer (3:1–3:3)
 - ii. Israel's return to YHWH (3:4–3:5)

¹ David Allan Hubbard, *Hosea: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1989), 49.

CHAPTER 5

PREACHING TEXTS FOR HOSEA 1:1–3:5

The following preaching texts will be used for analyzing Greidanus's methodology. Scholars argue for various unit breaks of the following texts; however, I will argue for each selected preaching text below.

1. Hosea 1:1–11 (1:1–2:2 MT)¹
2. Hosea 2:1–13 (2:3–15 MT)
3. Hosea 2:14–23 (2:16–25 (MT)
4. Hosea 3:1–5

The first preaching text ends with Hosea 1:11 (2:2 MT), with the emphasis on Hosea's marriage with Gomer and the birth of their children. I have started the second preaching text at 2:1 (2:3 MT), which comes after a prophecy concerning the people of God and begins the Lord's specific remarks to the family.² The second preaching text from 2:1–13 (2:3–15 MT) covers Hosea's prophecy of judgment. I have ended the second preaching text at 2:13 (2:15 MT)³ and started the third preaching text at 2:14 (2:16 MT) because of the dichotomy of the units of text and their messages concerning Israel. The unit of 2:2–13 (2:4–15 MT) is an indictment of judgment upon Israel and 2:14–23 (2:16–

¹ The Masoretic Text will be abbreviated by "MT" throughout the work.

² See Thomas Edward McComiskey, *The Minor Prophets: An Exegetical and Expository Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1992), 18, who ends the section on Hosea's marriage with Gomer and the birth of their children at Hosea 1:11 (2:2 MT); David Allan Hubbard, *Hosea: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1989), 49, who includes Hosea 2:1 (2:3 MT) with 1:2–11 (1:2–2:1 MT); Michael B. Shepherd, *A Commentary on the Book of the Twelve: The Minor Prophets*, Kregel Exegetical Library (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2018), 43, who includes Hosea 2:1 (2:3 MT) with 1:10–2:1 (MT 2:1–2:3).

³ See Hubbard, *Hosea*, 49, and Shepherd, *A Commentary on the Book of the Twelve*, 43, who end the textual unit at Hosea 2:13 (2:15 MT).

25 MT) is a message of hope and mercy to Israel. Also, textually in 2:14 (2:16 MT) there is לכן “Therefore” which marks the beginning of a textual unit. This is the case in 2:6 (2:8 MT) and 2:9 (2:11 MT), but unlike these two examples, the inference drawn from 2:14 (2:16 MT) brings hope instead of judgment, which marks a thematic transition.⁴ The fourth preaching text consists of 3:1–5. Verse 2:23 (2:25 MT) ends God’s prophetic message to Hosea and picks up a continuing narrative of Hosea’s life in 3:1 when God issues personal instructions to him. The unit break between 2:23 (2:25 MT) and 3:1 can be marked by that Hosea becomes the narrator in the first person singular in 3:1, while previously Hosea was in the third person.⁵ The fourth preaching text consisting of 3:1–5, ends in 3:5 as there is a unit break indicated by the beginning of Hosea’s preaching to Israel and a call to attention in 4:1, “Hear the word of the Lord.” Literarily, the text transitions from prose in 3:5 to poetry in 4:1, further indicating a unit break after 3:5.⁶

⁴ Shepherd, *A Commentary on the Book of the Twelve*, 47.

⁵ Hubbard, *Hosea*, 91. See also Shepherd, *A Commentary on the Book of the Twelve*, 52, who states that Hosea becomes the narrator beginning in Hosea 3:1.

⁶ Hubbard, *Hosea*, 96.

CHAPTER 6

CONTEXT OF THE BOOK OF HOSEA

Before applying the ways of interpretation to each selected preaching text, I will overview the historical context of the text. Greidanus argues that it is the responsibility of the preacher, when seeking to interpret the message of the selected preaching text, to understand the text's historical context and meaning. The historical context and authorial intended meaning offer objectivity to the interpretation of the text, instead of subjectivity. To uncover the objective and authorial intended meaning of the text, one must look at the historical, the literary, and the theocentric meaning of the text.¹ The canonical and redemptive context will be highlighted within each selected preaching text under the way of redemptive historical progression. The majority of the material concerning the historical context and the canonical and redemptive context of the book of Hosea will be within the discussion on Hosea 1:1–11 (1:1–2:2 MT), since it includes the superscription of the book in 1:1. Likewise, within a preaching context, the introductory sermon of an expository preaching series would include the majority of the contextual and background material of the book.

¹ Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament: A Contemporary Hermeneutical Method* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999), 228–29.

CHAPTER 7

HOSEA 1:1–11

Historical Context

It should be noted at the beginning of this study that the book of Hosea will be treated as a literary unit, not as a compilation of sayings and messages by Hosea's disciples.¹ Although scholars have found textual difficulties throughout Hosea, arguments for redactions and interpolations of the text will not be considered when applying Greidanus's ways of interpretation to Hosea 1–3.

Historical Interpretation

When uncovering the historical meaning of the text, one must ask several questions including, Who wrote the text? To whom was the text written? When and where was the text written? And why was the text written? One must also ask, What message was the author communicating, in which the hearers needed to hear?²

The book of Hosea is written by Hosea, indicated by the superscription, "The word of the Lord that came to Hosea" (Hos 1:1). Although some scholars argue against Hosea as the author of the book, most scholars affirm that the majority of the content within the book came from Hosea himself. It is known from Jeremiah 36:4 that "Jeremiah called Baruch the son of Neriah" to write on behalf of him that God's prophets employed scribes to write for them. However, even if Hosea had a scribe write parts of the book, the text is best understood as a literary whole and will be treated as such throughout this

¹ Duane A. Garrett, *Hosea, Joel*, The New American Commentary, vol. 19a. (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishing Group, 1997), 25.

² Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament: A Contemporary Hermeneutical Method* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999), 229.

study.³ Not much is known about Hosea, other than his father who was named “Beerī” (Hos 1:1), his wife and children’s names indicated in 1:2–9, and further details about his marriage in 3:1–3.⁴ Hosea’s prophetic ministry was both to Israel in the north and Judah in the south, but his most urgent words are extended to Israel, while showing some optimism towards Judah⁵ as displayed by his words in Hosea 1:6–7, “For I will no more have mercy on the house of Israel, to forgive them at all. But I will have mercy on the house of Judah.” The time of Hosea’s prophetic ministry can be determined by the superscription in 1:1 when Hosea received God’s message, “In the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel.” It can be safely argued that Hosea began his prophetic ministry around 760 B.C., sometime before the end of Jeroboam II’s reign and he prophesied until around 710 B.C.,⁶ into the early years of Hezekiah of Judah’s reign.⁷

The message of Hosea can both be defined by stark rebuke of Israel and merciful hope for God’s people. The kings who reigned during Hosea’s prophetic ministry varied in devotion to the Lord. During the beginning of Hosea’s prophetic ministry, Jeroboam II’s reign was defined by some military success as “he restored Damascus and Hamath to Judah in Israel” (2 Kgs 14:28), but also by idolatry, as “he did what was evil in the sight of the Lord. He did not depart from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which he made Israel to sin” (14:24). Hosea rebukes Israel for abandoning the love of the Lord, as he states, “There is no faithfulness or steadfast love, and no knowledge of God in the land” (Hos 4:1). He then proceeds to list their sins:

³ Garrett, *Hosea, Joel*, 24.

⁴ David Allan Hubbard, *Hosea: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1989), 26.

⁵ Thomas Edward McComiskey, *The Minor Prophets: An Exegetical and Expository Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1992), 3.

⁶ Garrett, *Hosea, Joel*, 22.

⁷ McComiskey, *The Minor Prophets*, 3.

swearing, lying, murder, stealing, adultery, and bloodshed (4:2). However, at the end of Hosea’s prophetic ministry, Hezekiah of Judah “did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, according to all that David his father had done” (18:3). There was hope for Israel through the line of David (Hos 3:5), and Hosea prophesied that Israel and Judah would be revived and raised up so that the people of Israel could live with God (6:2). The people of Israel were swept up in idolatry and “they kept sacrificing to the Baals” (11:2), but the message of hope for the coming Messiah was laced throughout the text by the faithful prophet of God, Hosea.

Literary Interpretation

When uncovering the literary meaning of the text, one must ask the genre of literature of the book, the subgenres of the book, the figures of speech utilized, and what the text meant in its original context to its original audience.⁸

Hosea utilizes several literary devices and forms throughout his writing including the genres of prophecy, narrative, and poetry; subgenres, including proverbs and autobiography; and various figures of speech. Hosea 1:1 consists of the title and superscription, as it introduces the biographical narrative, the main character in the narrative, Hosea, and the time period in which he prophesied.⁹ The narrative concerning Hosea’s marriage and the naming of his children continues from 1:2–9. This first unit of text, which contains both narrative and speech is the first out of two examples of prose utilized throughout Hosea.¹⁰ It has Hosea in the third person, which indicates it is a

⁸ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 229.

⁹ J. Andrew Dearman, *The Book of Hosea*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 2010), 77; Garrett, *Hosea, Joel*, 37; Hubbard, *Hosea*, 49; Mays, James Luther Mays, *Hosea: A Commentary*, The Old Testament Library (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1969), 20; McComiskey, *The Minor Prophets*, 4; Michael B. Shepherd, *A Commentary on the Book of the Twelve: The Minor Prophets*, Kregel Exegetical Library (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2018), 37; James Merrill Ward, *Hosea: A Theological Commentary* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1966), 3.

¹⁰ Hubbard, *Hosea*, 37.

biographical narrative, instead of an autobiographical narrative demonstrated later in 3:1–5. The text transitions into prophetic voice in 1:10–11 (2:1–2:2 MT) as the Lord tells Hosea of the future promises for Israel beginning with 1:10 (2:1 MT) “and the number of the children of Israel will be” (והיה מספר בני־ישראל).¹¹

Other literary devices that are worth mentioning that Hosea utilized throughout the text that will not be elaborated on later in this study include proverbs of conventional wisdom that expose Israel’s foolishness. Hosea 4:11 is an example of Hosea preaching conventional wisdom to the people of Israel when he says, “Whoredom, wine, and new wine, which take away the understanding.”¹² Also, as Duane Garrett argues, it is impossible to analyze Hosea without recognizing his allusions to the Torah and to Israelite history.¹³ One such example of Israelite history mentioned is in 9:9, “They have deeply corrupted themselves as in the days of Gibeah” which alludes to the story of Judges 19, when the Levite’s concubine from Bethlehem of Judah was raped and murdered at Gibeah and her body was sent to all of Israel.

Theocentric Interpretation

When uncovering the theocentric meaning of the text, one must ask the question, What does this passage reveal about God and His will?¹⁴

YHWH’s character is on display throughout the book of Hosea by exercising judgment and mercy. His covenant-keeping love for Israel, displayed through the covenant of marriage is front and center throughout the text. YHWH is the One communicating through His prophet Hosea and He will use Hosea’s life as a demonstration of His mercy in the way He desires, even by calling him to marry a

¹¹ This translation is my own, according to the versification of the Masoretic Text.

¹² Hubbard, *Hosea*, 35–36.

¹³ Garrett, *Hosea, Joel*, 27.

¹⁴ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 230.

sexually immoral woman, Gomer (1:2–3), so that Israel would be able to see an analogous example of what they were doing spiritually to YHWH. God’s mercy would not be mocked by continued disobedience and unrepentance, and thus He promised to exercise His hand of judgment upon “the house of Jehu” (1:4) and to remove His mercy from Israel (1:6). However, as displayed time and again throughout Israel’s history, YHWH would stretch out His hand of mercy towards them and promise them forgiveness, prosperity for their people, and fruitfulness. God would bring in those who were not called His people and they would become children of God (1:10).

Redemptive-Historical Progression

When applying the way of redemptive-historical progression to the text, it is important to note the *canonical interpretation* of the text, not just what the selected preaching text means within the context of the book it is placed within, but what the Old Testament text means in light of the entire Bible and redemptive history.¹⁵ From the superscription in Hosea 1:1 it can be estimated that Hosea’s prophetic ministry was roughly 760–710 B.C., well after David’s reign over Israel which began roughly 1020 B.C. and before the Babylonian captivity of Judah which took place in 586 B.C.¹⁶ Hosea is on the forefront of God’s prophets to the divided Israel and is speaking to a people worn down by trials, inward division within the people, outward pressure from antagonistic nations, ungodly kings, and most importantly their own sin and idolatry against YHWH. However, the Babylonian exile would eventually come after Hosea’s prophetic ministry and hundreds of years would pass before the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem as prophesied by the prophet Micah (Mic 5:2), who was a contemporary of Hosea.

¹⁵ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 231.

¹⁶ Andrew E. Hill and John H. Walton, *A Survey of the Old Testament*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009), 313.

The text's *redemptive-historical interpretation* is important to note when uncovering the interpretation of an Old Testament text in light of Christ. The question must be asked when interpreting the text, "How does the redemptive-historical context from creation to new creation inform the contemporary significance of this text?"¹⁷ By way of several direct quotations within the New Testament the redemptive-historical progression of Hosea's writing can further be uncovered.

YHWH told the prophet Hosea to call his third child "Not My People" (Hos 1:9) because God was declaring through Hosea that "the covenant between himself [God] and Israel to be null and void."¹⁸ However, God told Hosea to tell Israel, "I will have mercy on No Mercy, and I will say to Not My People, 'You are my people'; and he shall say, 'You are my God'" (2:23). Michael Shepherd argues that the phrase, "My people" (אֱמִנִי) is language of the covenant formula presented in Jeremiah 31:33, where God would write His law on His people's hearts, instilling in them that they were His own.¹⁹ In Peter's first letter to Christians who were scattered within primarily Gentile cities, he emphasizes the reversal of Hosea 1:9 and the fulfillment of 2:23, as he states, "Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy" (1 Pet 2:10).

Paul communicates covenant-keeping language in his letter to the church of Rome, as he quotes Hosea 1:9–10 in Romans 9:25–26, "As indeed he says in Hosea, "Those who were not my people I will call 'my people,' and her who was not beloved I will call 'beloved.' And in the very place where it was said to them, 'You are not my people,' there they will be called 'sons of the living God.'" The Israelites were given the law, the promises, and the covenants (Rom 9:4), but God would use the hardened hearts

¹⁷ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 232.

¹⁸ Garrett, *Hosea, Joel*, 69–70.

¹⁹ Shepherd, *A Commentary on the Book of the Twelve*, 42.

of the Jewish people to bring Gentiles into the family of God. Those who had never heard the law or had the promises given to them, would be granted salvation, and made sons of God. In Hosea 1:10, God promised that the number of the children of Israel would be so great that they would number the sand of the sea, in which no one can count, and His children would be called, “Children of the living God” (1:10). Looking back at God’s promises to His people in the Old Testament, the vast number of those brought into faith today brings the reminder of God’s promise to Abram, when He told Abram He would make him a great nation (Gen 12:1–3). In a similar way, looking forward into the New Testament, Paul emphasizes the reality for Christ’s Church by quoting Isaiah 10:22 when he declares, “Though the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them will be saved” (Rom 9:27). Christ’s Church will mercifully include both Jews and Gentiles.

Lastly, when applying the way of redemptive-historical progression to the text the *Christocentric interpretation* must be considered. Such questions must be asked, “What does this passage mean in the light of Jesus Christ? And what does this passage reveal about Jesus Christ?”²⁰ It can be concluded that God’s promises to the patriarchs and prophets of time’s past including Abraham, David, and the prophets, such as Hosea, are all fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Through Christ, God’s hand of mercy towards sinful man would be extended to all, both Jews and Gentiles (Rom 11:31–32). Through Christ, sinners are welcomed in as God’s people through reconciliation to God and are then called children of God (8:16–17). Through Christ the Church will grow not only in spiritual maturity, but also in physical number (Rev 7:9), “like the sand of the sea” (Hos 1:10), and in the end Christ will receive all the glory (2 Thess 1:10).

²⁰ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 232.

Promise-Fulfillment

This selected preaching text contains no direct messianic prophecy. However, YHWH promised to have mercy on the house of Judah and save them by way of Himself, the Lord God. He would not save them by military might in the trenches of war, by way of bow, sword, horses, or horsemen (Hos 1:7). God's salvific promises to the house of Judah and the line of David extend back to the Davidic covenant in 2 Samuel 7 when God told Nathan to tell King David, "And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever" (2 Sam 7:16). God promised David, who was from the house of Judah (1 Sam 17:12) that his throne and the line of his descendants would never end. The Messiah would be a descendant of David and would come through the house of Judah. Although Hosea 1:7 is not an explicit messianic promise, the fulfillment of this promise came through Jesus Christ. The Gospel of Matthew makes clear Christ's lineage, as the book begins with the preamble, "The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David" (Matt 1:1). Matthew was not simply trying to present a historical figure in Jesus of Nazareth, but he was trying to make it abundantly clear to his audience that the awaited Savior of God's people Israel had arrived.²¹ Likewise, the Gospel of Luke makes clear the lineage of Christ, as Gabriel is delivering the news to Mary, he states concerning Jesus, "The Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David" (Luke 1:32). The Apostle Paul likewise emphasized the lineage of Christ in his introduction to the church of Rome as he described the purpose of his letter and the Gospel, which concerned God's "Son, who was descended from David" (Rom 1:3).

It is also important to note that the way God would save the house of Judah was not by military means (Hos 1:7). God would fill up His promise by abandoning Israel to the Assyrians, but He would eventually fulfill His promise through salvation by His

²¹ R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2007), 25.

Spirit (Zech 4:6).²² After waiting hundreds of years for the Savior, “The children of Israel [would] return and seek the Lord their God, and David their king” (Hos 3:5) and the Spirit would be poured out upon those who would believe in Christ’s life, death, and resurrection. The covenant promise to David to continue his lineage came during his reign. God continued to fill up the promise through Hosea’s prophecy and the promise was ultimately fulfilled in Christ’s life, death, and resurrection, and the pouring out of the Holy Spirit to the Church.

God also promised to extend salvation to those who were called “Not My People” (1:9), those outside of ethnic Israel and He would rename them “Children of the living God” (1:10).²³ The filling up of the promise to extend salvation to both Jews and Gentiles extends back to when God promised to make Abram a great nation (Gen 12:1–3) and that Abram’s descendants would number the stars in the sky (15:5). Even the temple in which Solomon built was to be a light to the nations outside of Israel, so “that they may know that this house that I [Solomon] have built is called by your name” (1 Kgs 8:43). What was the purpose of Israel’s worship? It was so “that all the peoples of the earth may know that the Lord is God; there is no other” (8:60). Likewise, several times in the Psalms the psalmists make evident that the purpose for God’s blessing upon His people Israel was so all the nations of the earth would know that it is God who should receive praise (Ps 67:1–3).²⁴ Even Isaiah prophesied that Egypt and Assyria would worship YHWH, the only living God (Isa 19:22–23). God’s plan to extend blessing and salvation to the nations has extended from Abram to the line of David, spoken through the prophets, and is being filled up in Jesus Christ, “The son of Abraham” (Matt 1:1).

²² Garrett, *Hosea, Joel*, 62.

²³ See John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Twelve Minor Prophets*, trans. by John Owen, Calvin’s Commentaries (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1950), 64, who argues concerning Hosea 1:10 that “it is certain that this prophecy ought not to be restricted to seed according to the flesh.”

²⁴ See also Psalm 72:8–11, which demonstrates God’s authority over all the nations and the nations’ servanthood to God.

Christians await the fulfillment of the promise when those “from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages” (Rev 7:9) will worship God for His salvation as the universal Church.

Typology

Hosea is clearly a type of Christ. First, Hosea was a prophet of YHWH. God used Hosea as His spokesman to preach the message to the people of Israel. God’s word came to Hosea (Hos 1:1) and then Hosea called Israel to “hear the word of the Lord” (4:1). The prophetic role ordained by God is escalated through Christ, who in a greater and better sense, is also a prophet of God. The Father sent the Son to testify concerning a greater message than John the Baptist (John 5:36). Christ spoke of what was in the past: the law, the promises, and the covenants. He spoke of what was in the present when He was on earth, which was the Word of God. From the beginning, Jesus “was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (John 1:1) and “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (1:14). Jesus also spoke of what would come to pass in the future.

Hosea as a type of Christ is more fully realized when uncovering how Christ was the greater Moses. In earlier days Moses spoke God’s word to the people of Israel. In the book of Deuteronomy, as Moses is speaking to the people of Israel, he prophesied, “The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers” (Deut 18:15). Jesus Christ came out of the people of Israel, through the line of David, from of the house of Judah, not only as the expected Messiah, but also as the greater prophet. The author of Hebrews emphasizes how Christ was the greater high priest than Moses, when he states, “For Jesus has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses” (Heb 3:3), but it can also be said that Jesus is counted as the greater prophet than Moses. As Peter is speaking to the people in Jerusalem, he is calling them to repentance and faith by way of showing them how the prophets foretold what would

happen pertaining to Jesus Christ (Acts 3:21). Peter then reiterates Moses's words from Deuteronomy 18:15, "The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers" (Acts 3:22). Peter desired his listeners to know that Christ is the fulfillment of Moses's prophesy; Jesus is the greater prophet. Like Moses, Hosea was an imperfect ambassador for YHWH, who spoke to the people of Israel, calling them to repentance and faith in God and His promises for their future. Jesus Christ was the greater prophet, perfect in His obedience to God, who not only prophesied about future revelations, but was the fulfillment of past prophesies.

In an analogous way pertaining to the covenant of marriage, Hosea is also a type of Christ. God commanded Hosea, "Go, take to yourself a wife of whoredom and have children of whoredom" (Hos 1:2). Gomer was already living a sexually immoral lifestyle in fornication when Hosea was commanded to marry her as his wife.²⁵ They had children together and then Gomer went "after her lovers" (2:13 [2:15 MT]). God then commands Hosea, "Go again, love a woman who is loved by another man and is an adulteress, even as the Lord loves the children of Israel" (3:1). Hosea was to buy back his wife and love her again. Just as Israel turned "to other gods and [loved] cakes of raisins" (3:1), Gomer left her faithful husband for sin, the sin she was entrapped in before Hosea married her. Like how Hosea is commanded to rescue his bride, so does God promise to restore and rescue Israel by way of the Messiah. Christ loved His Church as Hosea was called to love Gomer. Paul demonstrates the analogy of marriage between a husband and wife, and Christ and the Church when he commands, "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her" (Eph 5:25). Christ gave Himself up for His sinful Bride, but by doing so, He saved her from her sin. Hosea, although

²⁵ See Calvin, *Commentaries on the Twelve Minor Prophets*, 47, who argues for a non-literal view of Hosea's marriage with Gomer, as he states "God ordered his Prophet to take a wife of whoredoms, but that this was not actually done." See also Garrett, *Hosea, Joel*, 49, who argues for a literal view of Hosea's marriage with Gomer in which God commanded Hosea to marry a sexually immoral woman and he took Gomer as his wife.

imperfect, exercised faithfulness in the call to love his unfaithful wife, Gomer. Christ is the perfect bridegroom, who poured out His love for His Bride on the cross, so that she might be forgiven of her sin and redeemed.

The reunification of the nation of Israel, under one leader is also a type of God’s plan for the Church to have one Head, in Jesus Christ. Garrett, when commenting on Hosea 1:11 and the division of Israel and Judah, argues, “The reunification of the nation under one leader, specifically the Davidic messiah, was to become a major element of the prophetic hope.”²⁶ Hosea realized the devastation of Israel and Judah being separated from each other and that the twelve tribes of Israel were divided. This reality is fundamentally perverse to Hosea, since they should be one nation.²⁷ As Hosea is prophesying, he expected and hoped that Israel and Judah would once again be gathered together as one nation, and that they would “appoint for themselves one head” (1:11 [2:2 MT]). The hope of Hosea that all of God’s people would be together under one head, culminates by God giving Christians Christ as their “head over all things to the church” (Eph 1:22). Christ will gather into His Church all of those who are His, as He promised to build His Church (Matt 16:18). All the gathered saints of Christ “will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God” (Rev 21:3).

Analogy

Analogy can also be used to make a bridge between the book of Hosea and preaching Christ. For example, Hosea married Gomer, who had been practicing sexual immorality before their marriage, but eventually Hosea divorced Gomer²⁸ after she abandoned him. As God is telling Hosea His message to the people of Israel, God proclaims, “She is not my wife, and I am not her husband—that she put away her

²⁶ Garrett, *Hosea, Joel*, 72.

²⁷ Garrett, *Hosea, Joel*, 72.

²⁸ Garrett, *Hosea, Joel*, 49.

whoring from her face” (Hos 2:2). At some point after Hosea and Gomer had children together, they separated and it is clear from 3:3–4 that God commanded Hosea to go love Gomer again by finding her, buying her back, and forgiving her of her sin against him. Just like how Gomer abandoned Hosea because of her sin, Israel committed idolatry and forsook the Lord. Gomer was led away by “another man” (3:1), while concerning Israel, “a spirit of whoredom has led them [Israel] astray, and they have left their God to play the whore” (4:12). Because of Gomer’s adultery, Hosea divorced her, and in like manner, YHWH promised to forget the children of Israel because they forgot God’s law (4:6). If God divorced Israel and forgot her, Israel would be excluded from God’s redemptive plan for His people. However, like how Hosea pursued Gomer again in love and bought her back to himself (3:2–3), Paul preached that “a remnant of them [Israel] will be saved” (Rom 9:27). God would not abandon His promises to Israel to bring in those He has sovereignly chosen to be saved, but they would have to wait because “a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in” (11:25). Just like how Hosea went and loved his once sinful bride and brought her back into his love, so has “Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her” (Eph 5:25). However, like how Gomer abandoned Hosea in adultery and how Israel abandoned YHWH in idolatry, those who proclaim Christ are warned about committing adultery against the Savior who they proclaim has saved them. In Revelation, John receives the vision concerning the church of Laodicea that they are neither hot or cold in the faith, and because of their lukewarmness God warns them that He will spit them out of His mouth (Rev 3:15–16). Grant Osborne argues that because the church of Laodicea was materially rich, they deceitfully assumed they were also spiritually rich in Christ.²⁹ God’s love for His people drew Him to warn them, so that they might be brought back to rightful thinking. Those

²⁹ Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 206.

who are in Christ can take comfort because Jesus proclaimed that those in the Church “will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand” (John 10:28). Christ gives eternal life, which is “an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading” (1 Pet 1:4).

Longitudinal Themes

The naming of Hosea and Gomer’s first child as Jezreel is related to the theme of judgement traced throughout Scripture. The Lord commanded Hosea to call his first child Jezreel because He would “punish the house of Jehu for the blood of Jezreel [and] put an end to the kingdom of the house of Israel” (Hos 1:4). The name Jezreel signified the town and valley between Galilee and Samaria, where there were many significant and violent events in Israel’s history.³⁰ To be associated with the Jezerites, was to be called a degenerate people with nothing different from King Ahab, and to be disassociated with the descendants of Jacob.³¹ This was a stark rebuke upon Israel for abandoning YHWH. The theme of judgment continues into the New Testament as John the Baptist calls the Pharisees and Sadducees a “brood of vipers” (Matt 3:7). Later, Jesus rebukes the scribes and Pharisees when He proclaims, “You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil?” (12:34). Jesus follows this rebuke by warning them of judgment when He states, “I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak” (12:36). Both the Old Testament prophets, John the Baptist, and Jesus utilized place names and culturally significant phrases to warn of judgment.

Another theme emphasized in Hosea and traced throughout redemptive history is that salvation comes by faith in God. Salvation for Israel would not come “by bow or by sword or by war or by horses or by horsemen” (Hos 1:7) but by YHWH alone. Israel

³⁰ Garrett, *Hosea, Joel*, 55. See also McComiskey, *The Minor Prophets*, 4, who argues that “The Valley of Jezreel was synonymous with bloodshed.”

³¹ Calvin, *Commentaries on the Twelve Minor Prophets*, 51.

insisted on fighting their outside enemies such as Assyria by bow and horse, and God rebukes them for a lack of faith in Him, while Judah had a more consistent trust in YHWH to protect them from outside enemies.³² There are several previous passages in redemptive history that can be highlighted to show how God desires to save His people. During Israel's exodus out of Egypt, the Lord tells Moses to lift up his staff to part the Red Sea (Exod 14:15–16) and then God tells Moses to stretch out his hand over the Red Sea, so that the water will go back on the Egyptians, their chariots, and their horsemen to defeat them and free the Israelites from slavery (14:26–27). Later in the book of Exodus, Israel defeats Amalek in battle because of faith in the Lord. When Moses held up the staff of God, Israel prevailed in battle (17:8–11), and eventually Joshua overwhelmed Amalek with the sword (17:13), but it was because of Israel's faith in the Lord that they won the battle. Israel did not always trust in the Lord and instead trusted in their own military capabilities. Joshua had confidence that between 2,000–3,000 men would be able to defeat Ai, who had less men, but Israel trusted in their numbers instead of trusting in the Lord and the result was that about thirty-six men of Israel were killed and they were run out by the men of Ai (Josh 7:1–5). Jesus likewise demonstrated that God's plan of salvation would not come by the sword when Jesus rebuked His follower for cutting off the ear of the high priest's servant (Matt 26:51–52). There were those who desired to kill Jesus who carried weapons themselves, but He was trying to show His followers that they should rely on the Lord and His grace and sovereignty to bring His perfect plan to completion. The way God desired to save sinners was by way of His Son being humbled, made low, mocked, beaten, and murdered. It is also evident in the Epistles that it was not the way of the Apostles to preach a salvation by the sword, coercion, or force. Paul reminds the church of Rome that "faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ" (Rom 10:17). To save some of those in Rome, Jesus brought salvation

³² Hubbard, *Hosea*, 64.

through the Gospel, not by military might to defeat the Roman Empire, but by humility and self-sacrifice.

The theme of God's bountiful mercy is evident in Hosea and throughout the New Testament. Although the Lord told Hosea to name his daughter "No Mercy" (Hos 1:6) and said that He would no longer have mercy on Israel (1:6), God's mercy continued to overflow as He promised to eventually be merciful to "No Mercy" (2:23 [MT 2:25]). Peter reminded the saints in his first letter of the promise God made to Israel in Hosea when he proclaims, "Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy" (1 Pet 2:10). Even through their sin God's mercy is never-ending for His people.

Contrast

There is a contrast between the judgments pronounced upon God's people Israel and God's wrath and judgment against Christians being satisfied by the blood of Christ. YHWH's judgment upon Israel is displayed by the names given to them by God. Hosea and Gomer's first child was named זרעאל "Jezreel" (Hos 1:4), signifying violence, bloodshed, and judgment. Their second child was named לא רחמה "No Mercy" (1:6), signifying how God would no longer have mercy on Israel. Their third child was named לא עמי "Not My People" (1:9), signifying that they did not belong to the blessed people of God and YHWH was not their God. There are glimpses of hope throughout the remainder of Hosea 1–3 and the rest of the book; however, Hosea prophesies a stark outlook for Israel's future for the majority of the remainder of the book. Israel will be unrepentant and reap a just reward for their disobedience and stubbornness. However, through faith in the Gospel, Christians "have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God" (Rom 5:9). Christians obtain new identities in Jesus Christ and new names that are engraved on their hearts. Through faith in Christ, one is called a son of God (Gal 3:26) and a daughter to the Father (2 Cor 6:18).

CHAPTER 8

HOSEA 2:1–13

Historical Context

Little has changed concerning the historical context from Hosea 1:1–11 (1:1–2:2 MT) to Hosea 2:1–13 (2:3–15 MT), but there are a few important points to note. The Lord has just cast a message of hope to Hosea and the people of Israel that He will have mercy on Israel and He will cause Israel to be great in number. God will bring in those who were not His people, He will give them a new name “Children of the living God” (Hos 1:10), and He will appoint one leader over them (1:11). The positive message of hope and mercy continues into 2:1 (2:3 MT), but quickly turns to a warning of judgment in 2:2 (2:4 MT).

Historical Interpretation

The message God is communicating to Israel clearly transitions from hope for the future of Israel in 2:1 (2:3 MT) to a stark warning of judgment in 2:2 (2:4 MT), that will seemingly come upon Israel in the near future. Why did Hosea desire to communicate such a quick transition from hope to judgment? The reason is that there was a sense of desperation that needed to be communicated to Israel because of their present sin against YHWH. God had found Israel as a young infant, immature, and in need of nourishment, but soon after He found them, they gave themselves to the worship of Baal and consecrated themselves to idols (9:10). Just as Hosea married Gomer, had children with her, and then Gomer abandoned him and her children, so did God rescue Israel from Egypt and then Israel left YHWH for false gods. There was a sense of desperation from the Lord in His warning beginning in 2:2 (2:4 MT).

Literary Interpretation

The prophetic voice continues from the end of the first selected preaching text in 1:11 (2:2 MT) into 2:1 (2:3 MT) as the text takes on a double meaning. It is clear from the narrative about Hosea's family in chapter one that there will be mercy poured out upon His children (2:1 [2:3 MT]), but the message is also for Israel. The prophetic voice continues until the end of the preaching text in 2:13 (2:15 MT). As the message of hope and mercy transitions to a warning of judgment in 2:2 (2:4 MT), so does the genre transition from narrative to poetic verse. David Hubbard recognizes several poetic features that begin in 2:2 (2:4 MT) including emotional tenor; repetition through assonance and alliteration; parallelism found in standard couplets, and four-line and three-line entities; irregular word order; compactness of expression; and imagery.¹

Theocentric Interpretation

The Lord's desire for undivided devotion from His chosen people and for their holiness is on display in Hosea 2:1–13 (2:3–15 MT). This portion of Hosea's prophesy recalls God's message to Israel when He commands, "You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy.... Do not turn to idols or make for yourselves any gods of cast metal: I am the Lord your God" (Lev 19:2, 4). God's judgment will come upon Israel because they have turned to other gods and have broken God's commands.

Redemptive-Historical Progression

A point of emphasis concerning the *canonical interpretation* of Hosea 2:1–13 (2:3–15 MT) is that God is consistent in exercising His judgment because of sin throughout redemptive history. From the time Adam and Eve sinned in Genesis 3 up until the time when Israel became divided into two nations, God's judgment against sin has been consistent. In this preaching text, God's warning of judgment to come upon Israel

¹ David Allan Hubbard, *Hosea: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1989), 37.

for their sin is both righteous because God demands obedience, and God’s judgment is also merciful because His judgment would serve a divine purpose in bringing Israel to repentance. Likewise on the last day, Christ, the Son of Man will “execute judgment” (John 5:27), a judgment that is perfect and righteous.

The *redemptive-historical interpretation* of Hosea 2:1–13 (2:3–15 MT) can be summarized by acknowledging that even though God judges sin and even though sin brings His wrath upon the sinner, God does not waste His judgments, but uses judgement for His sovereign redemptive purposes. After the great flood, God made a covenant with Noah, so that humans could have a way to prosper on the earth God had created (Gen 8:20–9:17). Furthermore, God still promised to make Abraham “the father of a multitude of nations” (17:4–5), even after Sarai gave her servant Hagar to Abram as a wife (16:3). Nevertheless, Israel would once again “pursue her lovers” (Hos 2:7 [2:9 MT]) and again turn away from YHWH to other gods. Still yet God told them, “You are my people” (Hos 2:1 [2:3 MT]), as a promise of His love to them.

This selected preaching text is graphic with imagery of judgment, but one can see Christ’s love and kindness shine bright through the *Christocentric interpretation* of the text. Hosea prophesies against Israel to repent of her sin, otherwise God will “strip her naked” (2:3 [2:5 MT]), “hedge up her way with thorns” (2:6 [2:8 MT]), and “lay waste her vines and her fig trees” (2:12 [2:14 MT]). However, Christ desires to clothe His people, nurture them in fresh soil, and bring fruitfulness to their lives. Christ will judge the living and the dead, but He desires to lavish His love upon those who are His.

Promise-Fulfillment

This selected preaching text contains no direct messianic prophecy; however, God promises and foretells that He will change all three of the names of Hosea’s children, signifying future salvation for God’s people. Hosea’s third child named לֹא עַמִּי “Not My People” (1:9), would be changed to עַמִּי “You are my people” (2:1 [2:3 MT])

and לא רחמה “No Mercy” (1:6), would be changed to רחמה “You have received mercy” (2:1 [2:23 MT]). Both of these name changes also indicate the change of the third name זרעאל “Jezreel” (1:4), meaning that God was going to pour out His love upon Israel and take away His judgment against them. God is continuing to fill up this promise of salvation for God’s people in Jesus Christ. As the Apostle Peter writes to scattered Christians, he uses parallels drawn from the prophet Hosea to proclaim their new identity in Christ, as he states concerning the Church, “You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession” (1 Pet 2:9).² Once God’s people did not identify with Him, and once God did not love them and did not show mercy to them (2:10), but now God’s people identify with their Savior Jesus Christ and “proclaim the excellencies of him who called [them] out of darkness into his marvelous light” (2:9). The Church now proclaims Christ’s love and mercy poured out upon sinners. Just as the living creatures, the elders, and the angels will sing praises to the Lamb of God around the throne (Rev 5:9–10), so will the Church sing praises of God’s love and mercy for eternity.

Typology

Hosea 2:1–13 (2:3–15 MT) portrays Hosea as a type of Christ by being God’s spokesman, His prophet. God utilizes an imperative, אמרו “you say” for the reason of giving a command to Hosea. Through the imperative, God is telling Hosea to go and communicate the message to Israel on behalf of YHWH. God spoke prior to His people through the prophets (Heb 1:1), “but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son” (1:2), Jesus Christ, the greater prophet. There is no prophet including Moses, Elijah, or John the Baptist, who exceeds Jesus Christ because He not only is the fulfillment and

² J. Daryl Charles, *1 Peter*, in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, vol. 13, *Hebrews-Revelation*, ed. Tremper Longman III and David E. Garland, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), 318.

culmination of all the prophecies that came before Him, but He Himself is the Word of God, who mediates for Christians to the Father and speaks on behalf of God to the Church.

Analogy

The way of analogy can be used to show the act of repentance connected from Hosea to the New Testament. Just as Israel was drawn to repentance by the Lord's demonstration of mercy, so was Gomer drawn back to Hosea by his love. Likewise, the Church is drawn to repentance when sinners realize the grace and mercy of Jesus Christ. Both Israel and Gomer would repent and say, "I will go and return to my first husband, for it was better for me then than now" (Hos 2:7 [2:9]). This verse anticipates redemption,³ both for Israel and Gomer. Gomer would exercise repentance by dwelling with Hosea, by not committing sexual immorality against Hosea, and by identifying with Hosea (3:3). Concerning Israel, the Word proclaims that in God's timing and by His grace, He will draw a remnant of Jews back to Himself (Rom 11:5), who will repent of their sin before the Lord and confess Christ as their Savior. Likewise for the Church, God would show His great love and mercy towards His beloved, and they would demonstrate repentance by no longer exercising the passions of the flesh, like the rest of those following the ways of the world (Eph 2:3–5).

Longitudinal Themes

The theme of holiness is intertwined throughout all of redemptive history and God's call to holiness reverberates throughout the book of Hosea. In Hosea 2:2 (2:4 MT), Hosea is calling his children to holiness, by calling them to repudiate their mother's sin of adultery against him and her abandonment of her family. The children must separate

³ Duane A. Garrett, *Hosea, Joel*, The New American Commentary, vol. 19a. (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishing Group, 1997), 82.

themselves from their mother, Gomer, or they will become just like her.⁴ Likewise, God calls the people of Israel to holiness by renouncing the false religion and sinful culture that has overtaken Israel.⁵ God called Israel not only to be pure in heart, but to not intermarry and have sexual relations with those from nations surrounding Israel because when they did, their foreign gods would become the Israelites' gods, and then their sons would be turned away from following YHWH (Deut 7:3–4). However, even the great king Solomon gave away his heart to foreign gods because he loved foreign women (1 Kgs 11:1–4). Israel followed suit by giving their hearts away to pagan gods, including Baal. In a similar way in the New Testament, Paul called Christians to “not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness?” (2 Cor 6:14). Paul made a clear dichotomy between being in Christ as the temple of God and fellowshiping with Belial, or wickedness, and sharing in idolatry. The call to holiness by God’s prophets and the Apostles was alike; God’s people are called to “not be conformed to this world” (Rom 12:2).

Contrast

There is a contrast between Israel’s lack of faith for God to supply all their needs and Christ trusting in the Father’s sovereign care for Him. Gomer, who represents Israel, is repudiated for “playing the whore” (Hos 2:5 [2:7 MT]) and for relying on another man besides her husband, Hosea, to take care of her basic necessities. She thought this other man provided her with bread, water, wool, flax, oil, and drink (2:5 [2:7 MT]), but she was gravely mistaken. It was her faithful husband Hosea who lavished her with grain, wine, oil, silver, and gold (2:8 [2:10 MT]). YHWH provided all these necessities to Israel, but they left His provision and turned to idols, such as Baal. Garrett

⁴ Garrett, *Hosea, Joel*, 75.

⁵ Garrett, *Hosea, Joel*, 76.

argues that according to 2:5 (2:7 MT) there is a possibility Israel thought the alleged benefit of Baalism would provide them with fertility.⁶ God stated clearly through Moses that the curse of disobedience and apostasy was unfruitfulness in the womb and in the ground (Deut 28:15–18). Because of Israel’s sin during Hosea’s day, God promised to “take back my grain in its time, and my wine in its season, and I will take away my wool and my flax” (Hos 2:9 [2:11 MT]). To refute Baal’s reputation of providing fertility and to show Himself as the One who provides the harvest, He was going to take away from Israel what they had forgotten He provided to them.⁷ God desired for Israel to trust in Him as their provider of all things in this life, just as Jesus calls the Church to trust in God’s provision of clothing, food, and drink (Matt 6:30–33). Paul serves as an example to Christians as he trusted God “in any and every circumstance” (Phil 4:12) and encouraged the church of Philippi to trust God to “supply every need of [theirs] according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus” (4:19).

⁶ Garrett, *Hosea, Joel*, 80.

⁷ Garrett, *Hosea, Joel*, 83.

CHAPTER 9

HOSEA 2:14–23

Historical Context

The text transitions from a pronouncement of judgment upon Israel for her unfaithfulness and idolatry, to a message of hope and salvation by way of לִבְנֵי “Therefore” (2:14 [2:16 MT]). The use of לִבְנֵי is not included in the text by Hosea haphazardly, as its use helps to emphasize the following verses’ relationship to the previous verses. After Israel experiences a time of judgment, punishment, and discipline, Hosea prophesies that there will be a time of refreshment, plenty, and fruitfulness in Israel’s future.

Historical Interpretation

Hosea preached to Israel during a politically volatile time in their history, a time when kings transitioned rapidly,¹ and a time when the surrounding pagan cultures pressured the purity of Israel’s worship to YHWH. Hosea 2:1–13 (2:3–15 MT) mostly consisted of God’s judgment, punishment, and discipline toward Israel for their sin. Hosea transitions to 2:14–23 (2:16–25 (MT) by displaying a time when God would pour out His mercy and love to Israel, as a husband persuades his wife into a love relationship. God’s judgments, punishments, and disciplines will not go wasted on His beloved Bride, Israel. Hosea desires his hearers to know that God has not given up on Israel, His chosen people, and no matter their sin, He will be faithful to complete His salvific work in them.

¹ Duane A. Garrett, *Hosea, Joel*, The New American Commentary, vol. 19a. (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishing Group, 1997), 24.

Literary Interpretation

Hosea continues to write in the prophetic voice into 2:14 (2:16 MT), as the warning of judgment ends, and the message of hope begins. The prophetic text concerning God's actions toward Israel continues into 2:23 (2:25 MT). According to Hubbard, the use of poetry also continues into the section of 2:14–2:23 (2:16–2:25 MT).²

Theocentric Interpretation

God is on display as a merciful and loving God in 2:14–23 (2:16–25 MT). His judgments against Israel would turn to mercy poured out upon those underserving of love and deserving of only wrath and condemnation. The text brings out God's never-ending love extended towards Israel as God would "sow her for myself in the land" (2:22 [2:24 MT]). God will bring a good harvest to Israel and heal the land. God also would "have mercy on No Mercy" (2:23 [2:25 MT]).³ God's love for His chosen people never ends and "his mercies never come to an end" (Lam 3:22). God's loving-kindness is on full display in this preaching text.

Redemptive-Historical Progression

Concerning the *canonical interpretation* of Hosea 2:14–23 (2:16–25 MT), God is shown as the covenant-maker and the covenant-keeper. After Hosea has prophesied God's judgment poured out upon Israel, God promises to Israel, "I will betroth you to me forever" (2:19 [2:21 MT]). God has continued to make covenants with His people throughout the canon of Scripture, including the Adamic covenant, the Noahic covenant, the Abrahamic covenant, the Mosaic covenant, the Davidic covenant, and Hosea prophesies of the new covenant, where God will marry His Bride forever. This marriage covenant and salvific gift would be given to the Church through Jesus Christ.

² David Allan Hubbard, *Hosea: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1989), 37.

³ Garrett, *Hosea, Joel*, 94.

The *redemptive-historical interpretation* of this text is interconnected with the *canonical interpretation*, as the text is a promise of redemption for God’s people and God highlights this eternal covenant He will make with them. God will redeem the earth and all things on the earth, He will end war and violence, He will give His people rest, and He will love them forever. From the beginning, God has desired to dwell with His creation (Gen 2:7–8), and one day He will dwell with them again in perfect unity for eternity.

The *Christocentric interpretation* of this text can be summarized by the reality that Christ’s life, death, and resurrection is the way by which God has chosen to unite sinners once again with a holy God for eternity. How will God betroth Israel to Himself forever? He will do it by sinners receiving and believing in the Gospel of Jesus Christ and living with their Savior. Christ was “delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God” (Acts 2:23). God’s plan from the beginning was to display His glory and love for His creation, human beings made in His image, by saving them from their sin through His Son Jesus Christ, so that the Creator and His creation could be betrothed together forever (Hos 2:19 [2:21 MT]).

Promise-Fulfillment

In this preaching text there are no direct messianic prophecies. However, Hosea alludes to the restoration of the garden of Eden, the place where God drove out Adam and Eve because of their sin (Gen 3:23–24). In Hosea 2:15 (2:17 MT), the Lord promised to “give her [Israel] her vineyards and make the Valley of Achor a door of hope.” The Valley of Achor referred to when Achan sinned and took plunder of Jericho and then God’s wrath temporarily came upon Israel. Joshua eventually found out about Achan’s sin, had him executed, and his burial place was called the valley of Achor, meaning “trouble,” as a place of remembrance (Josh 7:26).⁴ God promised to turn this

⁴ Garrett, *Hosea, Joel*, 91.

place of trouble into a place of restoration. God promised to give back her “vineyards” (2:15 [2:17 MT]), her fruitfulness, and give life to what was dead. One day God will completely restore the garden of Eden, when Christ welcomes all believers into the new heaven and new earth. He will restore the promised land with the “tree of life” (Rev 22:2), next to “the river of the water of life” (22:1) and His people will enjoy the fruit of His labor for eternity.

God also promised to make an everlasting marriage covenant with Israel. His people would no longer call Him “My Baal,” but they would call God “My Husband” (Hos 2:16 [2:18 MT]) and they would be mindful of their covenant with God.⁵ God’s people would forget the names of the Baals (2:17 [2:19 MT]) and they would know YHWH as their God (2:20 [2:22 MT]). God would make a covenant with Israel that would include the animals on the earth and there would be no more war as the Lord would allow them to dwell in safety (2:18 [2:20 MT]). This covenant would last forever, as He tells Israel, “I will betroth you to me forever” (2:19 [2:21 MT]). The promise God was making with Israel was analogous to Hosea’s marriage with Gomer, in how Hosea would buy back Gomer from the man who was having sexual relations with her, and Gomer would dwell with Hosea for many days, in faithfulness to Hosea (3:1–3). These verses anticipate the new covenant God would make with Israel, prophesied by Jeremiah (Jer 31:31–34).⁶ Ezekiel also speaks of this eternal covenant to Israel as he prophesies of the everlasting covenant God would make with His people (Ezek 16:59–60) and how

⁵ John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Twelve Minor Prophets*, trans. by John Owen, Calvin’s Commentaries (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1950), 106.

⁶ Garrett, *Hosea, Joel*, 94; McComiskey, *The Minor Prophets*, 45, who argues that Hosea 2:19–20 (2:21–22 MT) foresees the new covenant Jeremiah spoke of in Jeremiah 31:31–34; Michael B. Shepherd, *A Commentary on the Book of the Twelve: The Minor Prophets*, Kregel Exegetical Library (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2018), 49, who argues that Hosea 2:18 [2:20 MT] refers to the Lord making a new covenant with Israel, as referenced in Jeremiah 31:31–34; J. Daryl Charles, *I Peter*, in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, vol. 13, *Hebrews-Revelation*, ed. Tremper Longman III and David E. Garland, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), 240, who argue that Hosea 2:18–20 (2:20–22 MT) could indicate a reference to the new covenant but it is unlikely.

God would restore His people by the Spirit (36:26–28).⁷ The filling up of this eternal promise is demonstrated in John 3:28–29, as John the Baptist speaks of Jesus as the bridegroom of His bride, the Church. The author John later speaks about how Jesus gives His people eternal life and keeps them safe and secure (10:28). The prophets’ words of a new and everlasting covenant continued to be filled up in the early church, shown by Paul’s ministry to the church of Corinth in how Paul betrothed them to Christ (2 Cor 11:2). In Revelation, God presents readers with a glimpse of the fulfillment of the eternal marriage covenant God made with His people. One day, there will be a great multitude at the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev 19:6–9), Christ will present His bride with her new home (21:2), and the Church will drink from Christ’s never-ending spring of living water for eternity (22:17).

Typology

There is no type of Christ in Hosea 2:14–23 (2:16–25 MT).

Analogy

The way in which Hosea allures and woos Gomer back into a marriage covenant with him is analogous to how God intended to allure Israel back into His love, and Hosea’s wooing of Gomer is also analogous to how Christ woos the Church into a marriage covenant. God intended to bring Israel back into His love by alluring her and bringing her into the wilderness where He could love her and speak tenderly to her (Hos 2:14 [2:16 MT]). God would allure Israel by displaying His endless mercy and vast love for His people. Likewise, Hosea would woo Gomer by going out into the world, pursuing her in love, seeking her out with intentionality, buying her back from her present lover,

⁷ See Garrett, *Hosea, Joel*, 88, who compares Hosea’s language of him speaking tenderly to his beloved’s heart in Hosea 2:14–15 (2:16–17 MT) with Jeremiah’s prophecy that the new covenant would be written on the heart in Jeremiah 31:31–34 and Ezekiel’s promise that God would give His people a new heart in Ezekiel 36:26–27.

and bringing her into the safety of his loving arms. In a similar way, Christ showed His immeasurable love to His Church “by grace” (Eph 2:8), a grace that was shown by His sacrifice on the cross. Jesus told His disciples, “Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:13). Jesus demonstrated His love for His friends by dying for their sins, and He woos sinners through His loving sacrifice on the cross.

Longitudinal Themes

God’s way of drawing Israel back to Himself would be done by bringing them into the wilderness. The wilderness and its relationship with God’s redemption is a prevalent theme throughout the Old Testament and is traced into the New Testament when Jesus is tempted in the wilderness. Previously in God’s redemptive plan for Israel, He led them out of Egypt into the wilderness. God saved Israel from Pharaoh’s army by having them cross the Red Sea and destroying the Egyptians in the sea (Exod 13:17–14:31). God provided for Israel in the wilderness through many means including the use of the log to make the water sweet to drink (15:25), providing bread from heaven (16:4), quail (16:13), and water from the rock (17:6). During times when Israel was in sin against God, the prophets would use the wilderness narrative as a reminder of God’s faithfulness. Through the prophet Jeremiah, God rebuked Israel by reminding them of His faithfulness to them, “I remember the devotion of your youth, your love as a bride, how you followed me in the wilderness” (Jer 2:2). The wilderness was where God showed His immeasurable love and provision to Israel. God used the wilderness theme to communicate His love for Israel through Hosea when He states, “Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak tenderly to her” (Hos 2:14 [2:16 MT]). The wilderness has turned from a place where God will strip Israel and kill

her with thirst (2:3 [2:5 MT]) to a place where the Lord will speak to Israel's heart.⁸ God planned to use this memorable place in Israel's history as a place of redemption and renewal.⁹ The wilderness theme extends into the New Testament when Jesus was led into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil (Matt 4:1). Jesus was tempted three times and did not sin, but instead rebuked the devil and commanded him to worship the Lord (4:10). Unlike Jesus, Israel complained to the Lord, lacked faith in God's provision, and sinned while in the wilderness; however, through Christ's conquering over the temptations and trials brought upon Him in the wilderness, the people of Israel could be redeemed and renewed from their past sin.

Another theme that can be traced from the Old Testament into the New Testaments is the theme of God's never-ending mercy for His people. Time and again Israel "committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water" (Jer 2:13). Repeatedly, God lavished His grace and mercy upon them and saved them against their enemies. Once again, God would show mercy to Israel after they had turned to other pagan gods and abandoned the one and only living God. This time God promised to change their name and give them a new identity when He said, "And I will have mercy on No Mercy, and I will say to Not My People, 'You are my people'; and he shall say, 'You are my God'" (Hos 2:23 [2:25 MT]). God would shed His mercy upon both Jews and Gentiles and be known as the God of the nations. Peter knew this reality as he brings to remembrance Hosea's words, "Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy" (1 Pet 2:10). By God extending mercy to Israel, they have been given a new name and a new identity in the Lord, "Children of the living God" (Hos 1:10 [2:1 MT]).

⁸ Shepherd, *A Commentary on the Book of the Twelve*, 47.

⁹ Garrett, *Hosea, Joel*, 88.

Contrast

There is a contrast between Israel's obedience to God while they were in the wilderness and Christ's obedience to the Father while He was tempted in the wilderness. The wilderness narrative for Israel can be summarized by two points of emphasis: first, God's faithfulness and mercy to Israel, and second, Israel's grumbling and complaining over their forty-year journey. For example, the people of Israel "grumbled against Moses" (Exod 15:24) because of the bitter water at Marah. Again, "the whole congregation of the people of Israel grumbled" (16:2) because they were hungry. Israel continued to grumble and complain about their circumstances throughout their journey in the wilderness. Unlike Israel, Jesus did not grumble or complain as He fasted for forty days in the wilderness, but He resisted the temptations of the devil. Instead of complaining and grumbling, Jesus worshiped the Father through His obedience and commanded Satan to "worship the Lord your God" (Matt 4:10) as well.

CHAPTER 10

HOSEA 3:1–5

Historical Context

Hosea has just prophesied about the mercy God would pour out upon Israel in Hosea 2:14–23 (2:16–25 MT) when the text transitions to the Lord telling Hosea to go and “love a woman who is loved by another man and is an adulteress” (3:1). Pertaining to the historical context of Hosea 3:1–5, there is no change from the previous selected preaching text, but there is a shift in the literary style being used and the analogy in view.

Historical Interpretation

This section of Hosea portrays a graphic and intense analogy of God’s love for Israel through Hosea loving Gomer after she had committed adultery against Hosea. There is some debate among scholars on whether the woman mentioned in 3:1 is Gomer from 1:2–3. This study will not exhaust this conversation, but it should be noticed that there is a difference of terminology used when God commands Hosea to go and take אִשָּׁת זְנוּנִים “a wife of whoredom” (1:2). It might better be translated “a woman of promiscuity” (1:2, Christian Standard Bible), so that the disparity between the Hebrew is more apparent when comparing 1:2 with when God tells Hosea to “love a woman who is loved by another man” (3:1), וּמְנַאֲפֶת “and is an adulterous” (3:1).¹ A promiscuous woman would imply that she is simply a sexually immoral woman, while an adulterous

¹ See Duane A. Garrett, *Hosea, Joel*, The New American Commentary, vol. 19a. (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishing Group, 1997), 99, who comments that the NIV translation likewise makes an unfortunate translation of Hosea 1:2 “an adulterous wife” and thus obscures the difference between the terminology concerning the woman Hosea is called to love in both sections.

woman would imply she is married, but is faithless to her husband.² Also, it should be noted that the analogy in view if Hosea married a sexually immoral woman and was then commanded by God to love his adulterous wife, brings out a more intense analogy of God's pursuing and never-ending love for Israel, than would Hosea being called to simply love another woman besides Gomer in 3:1.

Literary Interpretation

The text transitions from Hosea being addressed in the third person when God was telling him what to prophesy to Israel to Hosea being the narrator in the first person singular, who is being given a command by God.³ Hosea 3:1–5 consists of an autobiographical narrative,⁴ while remaining prophetic. This portion of text concerning Hosea's remarriage is written in prose and the verses surrounding it, both 2:14–23 (2:16–25 MT) prior to it and 4:1 and following, are written in poetic style.⁵

Theocentric Interpretation

God's covenant-keeping nature is on display in Hosea 3:1–5, as the Lord uses Hosea's personal life story as an example to Israel of how He will love them and the process by which He plans to conduct His divine redemptive rescue plan. This beautiful analogy of a husband loving his adulterous wife, is a picture of God's love for His chosen people, who committed adultery and turned "to other gods and [loved] cakes of raisins" (3:1). God would draw His people back to Himself through a time of waiting, but eventually they would come in repentance and faith to "David their king" (3:5) and love

² See Garrett, *Hosea, Joel*, 99, who gives Leviticus 20:10; Jeremiah 3:8-9, and Ezekiel 16:32 as support.

³ David Allan Hubbard, *Hosea: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1989), 91.

⁴ Hubbard, *Hosea*, 35.

⁵ Hubbard, *Hosea*, 37.

the Lord their God for all of their days.

Redemptive-Historical Progression

Two points concerning the *canonical interpretation* of Hosea 3:1–5 should be mentioned. First, the covenant-keeping God, displayed throughout the Old Testament, beginning in Genesis 1 is on display as He promises to the people of Israel that they will not be in exile forever. Also, David’s kingship would not end and Israel would once again worship YHWH.

The *redemptive-historical interpretation* of the selected preaching text of Hosea 3:1–5 not only provides a picture of God’s redemptive plan for Israel once again being under one head, and both Israel and Judah once again gathered together (1:11),⁶ but it also brings out God’s redemptive plan through the awaited Messiah. The Davidic king whom Israel would seek (3:5), would be the one who would revive them in two days and raise them up in three, so that they could live with their God (6:2). Hosea is not simply speaking of a future earthly king from David’s line, but he is speaking of a Davidic king who would build the temple and reign over his everlasting kingdom.⁷

Hosea 3:1–5, along with 6:1–3, provide for the audience the clearest *Christocentric interpretation* of the book, since the Davidic king that Israel would one day seek after (3:5) was clearly messianic. The last king of Israel before the Messiah, was Hoshea, as referenced in 2 Kings 17:6. During Hoshea’s reign, the Israelites were led away into captivity by Assyria. Centuries later, Christ would come to earth as “the son of David” (Matt 1:1) to rescue His people from their sins, so that they would fear the Lord and be in awe of His goodness and mercy in the days to come (Hos 3:5).

⁶ Hubbard, *Hosea*, 94.

⁷ Michael B. Shepherd, *A Commentary on the Book of the Twelve: The Minor Prophets*, Kregel Exegetical Library (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2018), 53. See also Garrett, *Hosea, Joel*, 104, who argues that when Hosea 3:5 says that Israel would seek David their king, that it is a messianic prophecy.

Promise-Fulfillment

God promises that after a time of waiting and discipline, where Israel will be “without king or prince, without sacrifice or pillar, without ephod or household gods” (3:4), they will return to God, seek His face, and the Davidic king, and they will once again worship God (3:5). During Hosea’s day, King David is already dead at this point in Israel’s history and the text itself does not simply speak of a king from the house of David, or it would say such.⁸ However, the king to come would be the Messiah. This promise was fulfilled in Jesus Christ, as referenced by several New Testament authors. Matthew emphasizes Christ’s Davidic kingship, as he begins his book by labeling Christ as “the son of David” (Matt 1:1) and includes in his writing that the crowds shouted “Hosanna to the Son of David!” (21:9)⁹ as He entered Jerusalem. Paul proclaimed Christ as God’s Son “who was descended from David” (Rom 1:3), and John knew Christ as “the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David” (Rev 5:5).¹⁰ The Apostles knew Jesus Christ as the Davidic king prophesied by Hosea.

Typology

Hosea is a type of Christ in Hosea 3:1–5 by buying Gomer back from her present lover, forgiving her of her adultery, and bringing her into his safety as her husband. The type is escalated in Christ when He came to a sinful earth, lived among sinners, and died for His Church, paying their debt of sin, and buying them back as His own. Christ lavishes His love upon sinners, so they might be forgiven and redeemed. Gomer, who is compared to Israel for her sexual immorality (Hos 1:2), is under judgment and shame for her harlotry and then the prophet Hosea marries her. After bearing children with Hosea and likely raising them for a time, Gomer abandons Hosea and her children.

⁸ Garrett, *Hosea, Joel*, 104.

⁹ See also Matthew 12:23; 15:22.

¹⁰ See also Paul’s reference of Christ from “the offspring of David” in 2 Timothy 2:8.

Just as Israel forgot YHWH's loving-kindness and forsook the Lord (1:2), Gomer forgot and neglected her covenant of marriage with Hosea and forsook her commitment to her family (2:5). Hosea is then commanded to action for the purpose of bringing reconciliation and redemption to the broken relationship. He would do this by buying his wife back from adultery. Christ was commanded by the Father to come to earth to save the world (1 John 4:14), and in a similar manner Hosea was sent by God to redeem Gomer, so that all of Israel could see a radical analogy of how God intended to love Israel even in the midst of her sin. Hosea and Christ of course differ significantly, as Hosea is simply a prophet of the Lord, sent to preach judgment against Israel, while Christ is the fulfilment of Hosea's prophetic analogy and the Savior of Israel. Also, Christ came to earth His first coming not to judge the world but to save it (John 12:47); however, He will come again one day to judge the world (John 5:26–29).

King David is also a type of Christ in this selected preaching text, as he was known as a shepherd-king, who not only ruled over his people but watched over them as a shepherd would his sheep, just like Christ shepherds His sheep and rules over His Church. The ideal king was not expected within the Davidic dynasty during the present historical period of King David. However, in time the expectation of an ideal Davidic king developed.¹¹ It is unlikely the Israelites knew David was a type of Christ centuries before Christ would arrive on earth, but only after the prophets began to prophesy of a coming shepherd-king was David then labeled as a type of Christ.¹² David came on the scene as a young man who conquered the Philistines and eventually took reign of Israel. David was imperfect, as is proven by his adultery with Bathsheba (2 Sam 11), but David led his people, strived to follow the Lord, and won military victories. God promised

¹¹ John Bright, *The Authority of the Old Testament*, Lectures on the James A. Gray Fund of the Divinity School of Duke University, Durham, North Carolina (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1967), 223.

¹² Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament: A Contemporary Hermeneutical Method* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999), 251.

David that He would make an everlasting covenant with his lineage and that his throne would never end (2 Sam 7:13). Christ not only fulfilled these promises, but He represents the greater David, the ideal Davidic King, who would perfectly rule over His people with righteousness. Christ never sinned and was the perfect sacrifice on behalf of sinners (1 Pet 2:21–22).

Analogy

Similar to how Gomer committed adultery against Hosea and abandoned him, Israel turned “to other gods and [loved] cakes of raisins” (Hos 3:1). Israel committed spiritual adultery against YHWH by not holding Him as the one and only true God in their devotion and worship, and they turned to the finite things of the world for satisfaction and comfort. Likewise, all human beings have sinned against the Creator God and have forsaken His commandments (Rom 3:23). However, as Hosea once again loved his wife Gomer by buying her back and redeeming her from her sinful lifestyle, Christ brings “redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses” (Eph 1:7) to sinners. Hosea radically loved Gomer, as Christ radically loves sinners and brings them into His Church.

Longitudinal Themes

Atonement and pardon through payment is a prevalent theme throughout Israel’s sacrificial system in the Old Testament and it extends as a theme into the New Testament, since Christ’s atoning work on the cross through His substitutionary atonement is the core of the Gospel by which Christians are saved. The details of the transaction Hosea made to Gomer’s lover consisted of him paying “fifteen shekels of silver and a homer and a lethech of barley” (Hos 3:2) for her. It is ultimately unclear the exact situation Gomer was in that Hosea had to buy her out of, but the reality is that he had to buy back his wife and it might have been difficult for Hosea to come up with enough compensation to pay for her, considering he paid both in currency and in

resources.¹³ Regardless, Hosea redeemed Gomer through payment. Likewise, Israel's sacrificial system was set up for one to make atonement for sin through sacrifice. Burnt offerings were made by bringing a male without blemish from the herd as atonement (Lev 1:3–4). On behalf of priests who sinned, sin offerings could be paid for by way of a bull without blemish from the herd as atonement (4:3). If a common person sinned unintentionally against the Lord, a female goat without blemish could be offered as atonement (4:27–28). The religious system in Israel was shaped around atonement, so the radical illustration of Hosea buying back Gomer would have been recognized by the people of Israel. The concept of atonement extends into the way Christ forgives sinners. Paul proclaims that “the wages of sin is death” (Rom 6:23), thus sin has a cost and a price attached to it (1 Cor 6:20, 7:23). The payment for sin was Christ's atoning sacrifice on the cross, His blood, comparable to a lamb without blemish (1 Pet 1:18–19).

Contrast

There is a contrast between how Hosea prophesied that Israel would “dwell many days without king or prince” (Hos 3:4) in exile and how Christ is “the King of kings” (1 Tim 6:15) and the “Prince of Peace” (Isa 9:6). Hosea's prophecy to Israel in 3:4 speaks of exile, where eventually the northern kingdom of Israel would be taken into captivity by Assyria and the southern kingdom of Judah would be taken into captivity by Babylon.¹⁴ There would shortly come a time for Israel where they would no longer be led by a king or prince, but by a foreign nation. They would be without a civil government, like a body without a head.¹⁵ Unlike Israel, the Church will never go without a king or prince, since Jesus Christ is “the King of kings” (1 Tim 6:15). He is the King of His

¹³ Garrett, *Hosea, Joel*, 101.

¹⁴ Shepherd, *A Commentary on the Book of the Twelve*, 53.

¹⁵ John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Twelve Minor Prophets*, trans. by John Owen, Calvin's Commentaries (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1950), 130.

people, the Church, and He will reign over them forever. Christ is also the “Prince of Peace” (Isa 9:6), who brings peace to His people and this peace will extend into eternity as He comforts His people in this life and in the next. God’s people will no longer dwell without a leader, a prince, a king, or a lord, because Christ “is the head of the body, the church” (Col 1:18).

CHAPTER 11
CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF GREIDANUS'S
METHODOLOGY

Greidanus's redemptive-historical Christocentric hermeneutic has proven to be a faithful way of interpreting Hosea 1–3 and has helped to draw out a considerable amount of application from the text that could be used for preaching to the body of Christ. Strengths of the hermeneutical method include that it maintains set criteria for each way of interpreting the Old Testament in light of Christ, besides set criteria for biblical allusion, which falls under New Testament references; the terminology used within the hermeneutic is clearly defined, besides biblical allusion; the hermeneutic incorporates longitudinal themes as one of the seven ways of interpretation; and the methodology is not overly technical, but simple for the sake of the preacher. A major weakness I have noticed throughout *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, which then displays itself in *Preaching Christ from Genesis*, is the lack of clarity concerning biblical allusions. A critical analysis of Greidanus's methodology will be considered below.

Multiple times throughout *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, Greidanus mentions allusions, particularly when speaking of when longitudinal themes in the Old Testament can allude to just a single word in the New Testament, depending on lexical terminology.¹ When Greidanus is discussing how New Testament references are one of Greidanus's ways of interpreting the Old Testament in light of Christ, he mentions

¹ See Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament: A Contemporary Hermeneutical Method* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999), 224, for an example.

that “New Testament references and allusions may at times provide an unexpected link to Christ in the New Testament.”² I would agree, but nowhere in *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament* does he clarify the parameters of a biblical allusion. Without set criteria and carefully defined terminology one can stray into possible eisegesis while interpreting and applying the text, which Greidanus wholeheartedly does not desire to do in his work. However, it would be helpful at the beginning of the book to define several exegetical terms including inner-biblical exegesis or inner-biblical reuse³ as I would prefer for clarity’s sake, and inner-biblical allusion.⁴ It would also be helpful to have specified criteria for what classifies as textual links for cases that are not direct citations or quotations, such as inner-biblical allusions. This would then help discern the author’s original intended meaning of the text, instead of classifying biblical allusions as those that simply have similar or shared vocabulary.⁵ Defining terminology that is within the larger scholarly discussion on inner-biblical exegesis would be helpful to interpret longitudinal themes and New Testament references more accurately while utilizing Greidanus’s methodology.

Greidanus’s methodology possesses many strengths, including that he has set criteria for each of the seven ways of interpretation, besides biblical allusions within the ways of longitudinal themes and New Testament references. For example, the way of

² Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 269.

³ See Walter C. Kaiser Jr., “Inner Biblical Exegesis as a Model for Bridging the ‘Then’ and ‘Now’ Gap: Hos 12:1–6,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 28, no. 1 (March 1985): 34, who defines inner-biblical exegesis and what I would define as inner-biblical reuse, as “the study of the relationship between earlier Biblical texts (which have already assumed a normative or even a canonical status in the community) and their reuse in subsequent texts.”

⁴ See Jonathan Neal Atkinson, “New Exodus, New Covenant, New Creation: The Reuse of the Old Testament in Joel” (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2022), 92, who defines inner-biblical allusion as “the reuse of a text in a way that does not explain its plain meaning, thus distinguishing it from inner-biblical exegesis/interpretation.”

⁵ See Jeffrey M. Leonard, “Identifying Inner-Biblical Allusions: Psalm 78 as a Test Case,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 127, no. 2 (2008): 246, and Atkinson, “New Exodus, New Covenant, New Creation,” 102, for listed criteria on determining literary and/or thematic dependence and relationship.

redemptive-historical progression is outlined clearly by Greidanus who includes examples of Luke and Paul using redemptive-historical progression to preach Christ.⁶ As long as the set criteria allows one to exegete the text, with the purpose of uncovering the original author's intended meaning, then it is helpful and needed. Without set criteria and clearly defined terminology, there remains no standard for exegetical interpretation.

I consider Greidanus's inclusion of longitudinal themes within his methodology a strength, since some scholars might not refer to thematic connections as a helpful, let alone a needed component for a hermeneutical method. Just like how typology looks at the escalation of a type of Christ throughout redemptive history, longitudinal themes help to display the development of how God gradually reveals Himself and His will throughout redemptive history.⁷ Thematic connections can help to more fully display what God is doing across various books of the Bible and across major redemptive time periods. It would only cause the hermeneutical method to lack in fullness if longitudinal themes were not considered.

Another major strength of Greidanus's writing, both in *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, which would be more broadly read by pastors and teachers, and in his example of his methodology applied to the Biblical text in *Preaching Christ from Genesis*, is that he uses simple and not overly technical language. This allows those who are not as familiar with the original languages to clearly understand the connections he makes throughout the Bible using the seven ways of interpretation. His *Preaching Christ from Genesis* provides exegetical, homiletical, and devotional content, while not being overly academic and technical. I have attempted to conduct my writing in this study as Greidanus would have if he was writing on the book of Hosea, while providing at times more technical comparisons of the text.

⁶ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 204–5.

⁷ Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 222.

CHAPTER 12

CONCLUSION

Throughout this study, I have applied Greidanus's redemptive-historical Christocentric hermeneutic to Hosea 1–3. For each of the four selected preaching texts that divide the first three chapters of Hosea, I have incorporated the seven ways of interpreting the Old Testament in light of Christ, so that one is able to utilize the interpretation and application for preaching Christ from the book of Hosea. As shown from the study above, there are a plethora of ways to preach Christ from the narrative of Hosea's relationship with Gomer, and the prophecy of God's judgment and mercy upon His people Israel. Greidanus's hermeneutical methodology has proven faithful to the text and provides a balanced approach to interpreting Old Testament texts in light of Christ and the New Testament. His methodology could be utilized for further study of the interpretation and application of Hosea 4–14 and other Old Testament books.

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ABSTRACT

A CHRISTOCENTRIC INTERPRETATION OF HOSEA 1–3: AN APPLICATION OF SIDNEY GREIDANUS’S CONTEMPORARY HERMENEUTICAL METHOD

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Many hermeneutical approaches have been utilized to interpret the Old Testament in light of Christ throughout church history. Sidney Greidanus, in his *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, has formulated a redemptive-historical Christocentric hermeneutic that provides set criteria, clearly defined terminology, and a balanced approach to interpreting the Old Testament through the redemptive-historical fulfillment of the New Testament. For this reason, I have chosen to apply Greidanus’s seven ways of interpretation to Hosea 1:1–3:5 and analyze the selected preaching texts to determine if his methodology is affective.

Chapter 1 introduces the thesis of the study, the difficulty of interpreting the Old Testament in light of the New Testament, and Greidanus’s methodology as a possible solution to the difficulty. Chapter 2 outlines a survey of scholarship of hermeneutical methods used to interpret the Old Testament in light of the New Testament. Chapter 3 includes a summary of Greidanus’s methodology, which is utilized in this study to analyze Hosea 1–3. Chapter 4 contains a structural outline for Hosea 1:1–3:5, and chapter 5 contains the preaching texts I will use throughout the study and the reasoning for dividing the text as I have demonstrated. Chapter 6 observes the importance of identifying the historical context of the selected preaching text before providing interpretation and application to the text, and the chapter highlights how I will proceed in

overviewing contextual observations for each preaching text. Chapters 7–10 analyze the selected preaching texts of Hosea 1:1–3:5 by overviewing the historical context of each preaching text and then by utilizing Greidanus’s seven ways of interpreting the Old Testament in light of Christ. Chapter 11 contains a critical analysis of Greidanus’s hermeneutical methodology. Chapter 12 concludes that Greidanus’s methodology is biblically faithful to the text and it shows there are numerous ways to preach Christ throughout the dramatic narrative of Hosea and Gomer, and through the prophetic message of judgement and hope to Israel. Greidanus’s methodology could be used to analyze the remainder of the book of Hosea and other books in the Old Testament.

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