

Prone to Wander
Hosea 1:1-11; 6:1-3; Isaiah 53:5-6; Matthew 18:11-14

0.0 Introduction

- 0.1 Is any child in *your* family prone to wander?
- 0.2 Bible uses various terms for sin (e.g. transgress boundary; miss mark; violation)
- 0.3 Isaiah's "suffering servant" helped wandering humans (53:6): 'all to own way // sheep'

1.0 Hosea in Ancient Israel

- 1.1 Prophesied in Northern Kingdom ("Ephraim" – 35x) 753-722BC
- 1.2 Three decades to connect choices with natural/divine outcomes: idolatry & injustice
- 1.3 Theme: the people/country of Israel are God's bride – but what is her relationship?
- 1.4 Analogy: marry a prostitute and name the children accordingly: Gomer →
son Jezreel (3-5), daughter Lo-Ruhama (6-7) and son Lo-Ammi (8-9)
- 1.5 Whether literal or figurative, the message of *wandering off* is clear

2.0 Beyond Hosea

- 2.1 Insight into human behavior (Is.53:6; Rom.3:23, 7:14-20)
- 2.2 Insight into collective (societal/cultural) tendencies
- 2.3 Insight into God's approach: "punish just a little while" (4), "but I will have mercy (7),
"yet children like sand" (10) – and "great will be the day of Jezreel" (11) < wandering
- 2.4 Divine metaphor: looking for the lost sheep (Matt.18:12-14 // Lk.15:1-7)

3.0 Divine Shepherds

- 3.1 The loving Father – even to a prodigal son (Lk.15:11-32; also, woman & coin, 8-10)
- 3.2 The Son (of Man) who reaches out "to seek & save the lost" (Lk.19:10 < Zacchaeus)
- 3.3 The Spirit "who searches everything" (I Cor.2:10) & 'helps, guides (Jn.16:7-13)
- 3.4 And even co-opting frail & faulty human shepherds (Heb.13:7,17)

4.0 Importance of This for Us Today

- 4.1 Know yourself and be realistic about your heart (and be merciful toward others)
- 4.2 Observe how God is reaching out to you – right now (open yourself to it)

August 1 – Stress in the Early Church (Acts)
August 8 & 15 – Other Sermon Requests?