

Dr. John Oswalt, Hosea, Session 12, Hosea 13

Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Study Guide, 4) Briefing Document, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Oswalt, Hosea, Session 12, Hosea 13, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. John Oswalt's lecture on Hosea 13 explores the Israelites' idolatry and its consequences. **He connects** their rejection of God with their subsequent suffering, emphasizing the importance of trust in God rather than self-reliance. **Oswalt uses** examples from history and personal anecdotes to illustrate how human pride and self-sufficiency lead to spiritual death. **The lecture also** contrasts God's wrath as a natural consequence of actions, not arbitrary punishment, with God's ultimate redemption. **Finally**, the lecture concludes with a plea for renewed trust and faith in God.

**2. 11 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of
Dr. Oswalt, Hosea, Session 12 – Double click icon to play in
Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL]
Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament →
Minor Prophets → Hosea).**



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3. Oswalt, Hosea, Session 12, Hosea 13

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the main themes and important ideas from the provided source, "Oswalt_Hosea_EN_Session12.pdf":

Briefing Document: Dr. John Oswalt on Hosea 13

Overall Theme: This session focuses on Hosea 13, specifically highlighting the consequences of Israel's (particularly Ephraim's) unfaithfulness and their turning away from God. Dr. Oswalt emphasizes that this unfaithfulness is rooted in a prideful self-sufficiency that leads to spiritual death and ultimately, God's judgment. He also uses the chapter as a broader commentary on the human condition and the importance of trusting God.

Key Ideas and Facts:

1. Ephraim's Rise and Fall:

- Ephraim was once a powerful and influential tribe in Israel. "When Ephraim spoke, people trembled. He was exalted in Israel."
- This power led to pride and a turning away from God to Baal worship. "But he came guilty of Baal worship and died." This transition highlights the danger of pride and self-reliance.
- The text draws a direct connection between their prosperity/influence and their subsequent rebellion, which is a recurring theme of the Bible, including the book of Hosea.

1. Idolatry as a Product of Pride:

- Idols are not just physical objects but are created in the minds of people to reflect their desires and attempt to control their circumstances. "The idols, and I want to say the idol gods, are the works of our hands, and I want to go a step beyond that. They are the works of our minds."
- By worshipping idols, people essentially worship themselves, believing they are the source of their own lives and blessings. This results in a spiritual death because "the only source of life is God."

1. **The Illusion of Self-Sufficiency:**

- People often turn from God when they feel they are doing well and have everything they need. "These people have not lost their faith. They've simply found it unnecessary. Who needs God? I'm doing fine."
- Oswalt uses the anecdote of a professor who "put his faith in a drawer" and found it gone later to illustrate how neglecting faith leads to its eventual disappearance.
- This reinforces the idea that self-reliance is a dangerous illusion that can easily fall apart during tragedy. "And oftentimes, it is the tragedy, the crisis that forces us to say, oh my goodness, I can't get along without God."
- He notes, "there are no atheists in foxholes."

1. **Human Nature's Tendency Toward Death:**

- Dr. Oswalt points out that humanity, in its fallen state, cannot produce true life. "Left to ourselves, we produce death."
- He uses examples of failed human ideologies such as Communism to illustrate that even the most elegant theoretical systems fail because they neglect human nature's inherent tendency toward self-interest and sin. "Looked at on paper, communism is an extremely elegant political theory... but it leaves out one thing: our fallen nature."
- He suggests that advancements in technology may not ultimately be a blessing if they are not aligned with God's will due to humanity's inherent self-destructive tendencies. "Given humanity's fallen nature, whatever we produce is going to have a death-dealing part of it."

1. **The Emptiness of Idolatry:**

- The passage highlights the hollowness of idolatry through the powerful imagery of verse 3: "Therefore, they will be like the morning mist, like the early dew that disappears, like chaff swirling from a threshing floor like smoke escaping through a window." The images emphasize the fleeting and insubstantial nature of the idols and the things people pursue instead of God.
- This stands in stark contrast to the "fullness" of verse 2, representing the many things that the people are chasing and that feel real, but which are actually empty.

1. **Serving God Out of Gratitude, Not Self-Interest:**

- The text contrasts serving God for what we can get out of him with serving him out of genuine gratitude for what he has done. "Why should we serve God? Because of what he's done for us, not because of what we can get out of him."
- True gratitude, as emphasized in the Bible, focuses on God's character and nature, not just His provision. "Most of the expressions of thanks in the Bible are for God, not for what he's given us, not for what he's done for me, but for who he is."
- The discussion pivots on the idea that blessings come from God and that we should not take credit for them. "Your Father graciously accomplished it through you. Don't forget that. Don't forget that."

1. **God's Jealousy and Wrath:**

- God's judgment is described as both the fury of a "frustrated tyrant" and the natural consequences of turning away from God, which is more explicitly explained using the book of Romans, chapter 1.
- God's wrath isn't a personal tit-for-tat, but rather the result of living in ways contrary to His design for humanity. "The judgment that falls on us is the judgment that is simply a matter of cause and effect."
- He lets people take the road they've chosen, a road which is ultimately death.
- God is portrayed as fighting for his people "out of jealousy," as a loving Father disciplines his children.
- Romans 1:18-21 is quoted to highlight how people suppress the truth about God and turn to idols despite knowing better. "For although they knew God, knew that God existed...they did not glorify him as God and did not give thanks."

1. **Trusting God as the Foundation of Life:**

- God designed the world for relationship, starting with our relationship with him. "God has made the world for relationship."
- Healthy relationships are built on trust, which is rooted in trusting God's goodness. "If you know that your life is in God's hands and those hands are good, you don't have to be grasping."

- God's initial dealings with Abraham were focused on providing tangible blessings (land, offspring, reputation) to demonstrate His trustworthiness. "He is countering the devil. The devil convinced Eve and Adam that God was not trustworthy."
- Trust in God frees people from being "grabbers" and allows them to be trustworthy individuals in their relationships.

1. **The Danger of Self-Reliance and False Rulers:**

- When people do not trust God, they expect their political rulers to fulfill their needs, which is an impossible task, thus condemning the rulers to failure. "When we won't trust God, what do we expect of our political rulers? And by expecting that of them, what do we condemn them to? Exactly. They cannot succeed. It's impossible."
- Oswalt draws a parallel between the Israelites' desire for a king and modern views of government, contrasting the concept of a government providing for needs versus one protecting liberties.
- The idea is presented that the desire to rely on a government that provides for all needs will ultimately lead to ruin. "But if the king has to exist to provide my needs, it's over. It's over."

1. **Hosea 13:14 - An Interpretive Crossroads:**

- The verse "I will deliver this people from the power of the grave. I will redeem them from death. Where, O death, are your plagues? Where, O grave, is your destruction? I will have no compassion." is discussed as a "crux interpretum," a problem or a crossroads for interpretation.
- Dr. Oswalt suggests that the first part of the verse is likely a series of rhetorical questions rather than promises: "Shall I deliver this people... Shall I redeem them... Where are your plagues... Where is your destruction?" Thus, in the immediate context, it suggests a negative judgement.
- He contrasts this with Paul's use of the same phrases in 1 Corinthians 15, where they are presented as a victory over death through Christ. He proposes that Paul changed the picture by reinterpreting them in the light of Christ's resurrection.
- Ultimately, he concludes that Hosea 13:14 should be understood as a warning - "You're not going to get out of this alive unless you radically change your way of thinking, unless you radically change your trust structure."

1. The Enduring Reality of Human Brutality:

- Hosea 13:16 is read as an illustration of the ongoing brutality of humanity. "They will fall by the sword. Their little ones will be dashed to the ground. Their pregnant women were ripped open."
- Oswalt states that human cruelty hasn't changed throughout history and only God can change that. "Human brutality hasn't changed at all. Only God can change that."

1. Call to Trust and Repentance:

- The session ends with a personal anecdote about the beauty of the landscape of Israel juxtaposed with the harshness of the desert wind.
- The story of Abraham and Lot is presented as an example of trusting in God's provision over human desires, "Better the rocks from the hand of God than the grass that you grabbed for yourself."
- Oswalt stresses the importance of choosing a different path, turning back to God, and trusting in His character and faithfulness to receive his blessings.
- He concludes with a prayer for renewed trust in God, especially during the Christmas season.

Implications:

- The session urges listeners to examine their own lives, considering whether they are relying on themselves or God.
- It highlights the dangers of pride and self-sufficiency and the importance of gratitude.
- It reinforces the need to trust God, even in difficult circumstances, as a means to have healthy relationships and experience true life.
- It challenges the listener to not expect political rulers to provide for needs, but instead focus on protecting liberties and trusting God's provision.
- It warns that without repentance and trust in God, humanity will continue down a path of destruction and brutality.

This briefing doc provides a comprehensive overview of Dr. Oswalt's teaching on Hosea 13, emphasizing the need for humility, gratitude, and absolute trust in God as the foundation for life.

4. Briefing Document, Oswalt, Hosea, Session 12, Hosea 13

Hosea 13 Study Guide

Quiz

1. According to Hosea 13:1, what was Ephraim's initial position of influence, and what led to their downfall?
2. Why does Dr. Oswalt suggest that people who are successful might find God unnecessary?
3. According to the lecture, how are idols not just works of hands, but also works of the mind?
4. What is the relationship between serving God and experiencing true life, as discussed in the lecture?
5. How does the lecture contrast verses 2 and 3 of Hosea 13, and what feeling does each verse convey?
6. What does the passage in Hosea say about why we should serve God?
7. What does the lecture suggest is the connection between gratitude and the Christian walk?
8. How does Dr. Oswalt interpret the imagery of God as a lion, leopard, and bear in Hosea 13?
9. How does the lecture differentiate between God's wrath and a "red-faced tyrant," and what is the consequence of disobeying God?
10. What does the lecture say is necessary for healthy relationships and where does that come from?

Answer Key

1. Ephraim was once exalted in Israel, and people trembled at his word, but his downfall began when he turned to Baal worship and idol worship, which was a rejection of God.
2. People who are successful and have a good life may feel they do not need God because they feel self-sufficient and are able to manage without needing to rely on a higher power.

3. Idols are not just physical creations but also constructs of the mind as people create their own idea of God to serve their own purposes and wants.
4. Serving God, according to the lecture, should be about loving and appreciating what God has done for us. This recognition leads to a deeper and more fulfilling relationship with God and life.
5. Verse 2 feels full and active with descriptions of idolatry, while verse 3 conveys emptiness and hopelessness, using metaphors like mist, dew, chaff, and smoke.
6. The passage suggests that we should serve God not for what we can get out of Him, but because of what He has already done for us and out of love and thankfulness.
7. Gratitude is essential because it directs our thanks to God for who He is, not just for His gifts, helping us remember God's goodness and avoid self-worship.
8. The imagery represents the consequences of disobedience, not God's personal fury, but rather the natural outcomes of choosing a path away from Him.
9. God's wrath is not about personal vengeance, but giving people over to the natural consequences of their choices, leading them to destruction.
10. Healthy relationships are built on trust, which originates from having moral integrity grounded in the knowledge of a trustworthy God, freeing individuals from grasping and self-centered behaviors.

Essay Questions

1. Analyze the progression of Israel's spiritual decline in Hosea 13, as presented by Dr. Oswalt, focusing on how prosperity and pride contribute to their rejection of God.
2. Discuss Dr. Oswalt's interpretation of Romans 1 in relation to Hosea 13, exploring how they both depict humanity's tendency to reject God and the consequences that follow.
3. Evaluate the significance of the rhetorical questions in Hosea 13:14, considering both the negative interpretation discussed by Dr. Oswalt and the positive application by the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 15.

4. Explore the theme of trust as presented in the lecture, illustrating how trusting God enables both individual spiritual well-being and the formation of healthy relationships.
5. Discuss the implications of understanding God's wrath not as personal retaliation but as the natural consequences of rejecting Him, referencing both Old and New Testament scripture.

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Ephraim:** A prominent tribe of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, often used as a metonym to represent the entire Northern Kingdom in the book of Hosea.
- **Baal:** A storm god worshipped by the Canaanites, whose worship led Israel away from their covenant with God, seen as a symbol of idolatry in Hosea.
- **Idols:** Physical objects or mental constructs that people worship in place of the true God, representing a shift in loyalty and trust away from God to created things.
- **Rhetorical Questions:** Questions that are not meant to be answered, but to make a point, in this case, Dr. Oswalt suggests that Hosea 13:14 contains rhetorical questions to emphasize the consequence of unrepentance.
- **The Khamsin:** A hot, dry, and oppressive wind that originates in the desert, used as a metaphor for the judgment that is coming upon the unfaithful in Hosea 13.
- **Trustworthiness:** The quality of being reliable and dependable; crucial to healthy relationships and is derived from an individual's trust in God.
- **Redemption:** The act of saving or being saved from sin, error, or evil, a central theme of the lecture, as demonstrated by God's eventual deliverance.
- **Gratitude:** Being thankful or appreciative of God's character, his gift of life and other blessings, rather than being transactional. This is foundational to Christian worship.
- **Futile:** Incapable of producing any result; pointless, or not working toward a positive outcome.
- **The Cross:** The symbol of Jesus' death and sacrifice, that through trusting him, death is not the end of the story, but rather a new beginning.

5. FAQs on Oswalt, Hosea, Session 12, Hosea 13, Biblelearning.org (BeL)

FAQ: Exploring Themes of Faith, Pride, and Divine Judgment in Hosea 13

1. **What is the central problem identified in Hosea 13 concerning Ephraim and Israel?**
2. Hosea 13 highlights Israel's (specifically Ephraim's) descent from a position of influence and exaltation to one of spiritual death due to their embrace of idolatry, particularly Baal worship. They attributed their prosperity to their own strength and ingenuity rather than acknowledging God, leading to a sense of self-sufficiency that made them believe they did not need God. This pride and subsequent turning away from God is a recurring pattern throughout the text.
3. **How does the text connect prosperity and turning away from God?**
4. The text strongly connects prosperity with the tendency to turn away from God. It suggests that when people are successful, self-sufficient, and have their needs met, they are more prone to forget their dependence on God. This leads to a sense of pride and the belief that they do not need divine assistance, thus turning to idols and self-made solutions rather than relying on God. The example of the United States is used to illustrate how when "fed and satisfied," people often become proud and forget God.
5. **What does the text mean when it says that people create idols with their "hands and minds?"**
6. The text suggests that idols are not merely physical objects crafted with hands, but also ideas and concepts formed in the mind. These idols can be anything that replaces God as the source of life and meaning, including personal achievements, possessions, or human-constructed religions. The text emphasizes that these man-made idols and the systems they create, cannot ultimately provide true life or satisfaction.

7. **What is the significance of the imagery used in verse 3 (mist, dew, chaff, smoke) in contrast to verse 2?**
8. Verse 2 is characterized by a feeling of fullness and human activity, representing the energy and effort people put into their self-made idols and systems. In stark contrast, verse 3 uses images of mist, dew, chaff, and smoke to symbolize the emptiness, fleeting nature, and ultimately futile results of those pursuits. The shift in imagery emphasizes the emptiness and transient nature of what people pursue when they turn away from God.
9. **Why is gratitude to God for *who He is* emphasized as more important than gratitude for what he *gives*?**
10. The text emphasizes that true gratitude should focus on God's inherent character and goodness, rather than being based solely on what He provides. Gratitude rooted in God's nature fosters a deeper relationship with Him and acknowledges Him as the ultimate source of all good. When we focus only on what we *receive*, it can lead to an attitude of entitlement and the tendency to forget or minimize God's role in our lives.
11. **How is God's "wrath" described, and how does this relate to the consequences of rejecting him?**
12. God's wrath is not presented as an act of personal revenge or a red-faced tantrum, but rather as a natural consequence of rejecting His design for life. It's depicted as God "giving them over" to the destructive paths they choose, allowing them to experience the natural results of their rebellion, which are ultimately death-dealing. When people live outside God's design for healthy relationships (which require trust) and instead build lives that do not reflect moral integrity, the natural consequences of this are damaging.
13. **What does the text teach about the importance of trust in God and how does this impact relationships and life in general?**
14. The text emphasizes that a life submitted to God, grounded in trust in His goodness and faithfulness, is essential for true and abundant life. Trust in God creates a foundation of moral integrity which translates into healthy relationships with others. When people trust that God is in control and working for their good, they don't need to grasp or covet, and they become more trustworthy themselves. This trust extends beyond just personal benefit, creating productive and life-giving partnerships.

15. How does Hosea 13:14 provide both a challenge and a source of hope, and how does the New Testament address this?

16. Hosea 13:14 is considered an interpretive crux, where the text asks rhetorical questions. It's argued the passage may not offer the redemption originally thought. God's use of destruction, like a lion or bear, is the answer to these rhetorical questions. However, Paul quotes this verse in 1 Corinthians 15 in a positive way, celebrating Christ's victory over death. This shows how God's redemption history changes the situation: While death was victorious in Hosea's time, Christ's resurrection reverses this and offers hope, as death and the grave are now defeated. This emphasizes the ultimate hope and redemption available through Jesus Christ even in the face of present suffering and consequences of sin.