

# Book of Hosea

## Study BIBLE



## Introduction

Book No	28
Name	Hosea
Written By	Hosea
Testament	Old
Category	Minor Prophets
Date Written	Approx. 715 BC
Place Written	Northern Israel
Audience	To the people of Israel
Purpose	To illustrate God's love for his sinful people
History Covered	753 - 715 BC
Chapters	14
Verses	197
Key Verse	Then said the LORD unto me, Go yet, love a woman beloved of her friend, yet an adulteress, according to the love of the LORD toward the children of Israel, who look to other gods, and love flagons of wine. (3:1)
Key People	❖ Hosea ❖ Gomer
Key Places	❖ Samaria

### Purpose of the Book

God told Hosea to find a wife and revealed to him ahead of time that she would be unfaithful to him. Although she would bear many children, some of these offspring

would be fathered by others. In obedience to God, Hosea married Gomer. His relationship with her, her adultery, and their children became living, prophetic examples to Israel.

The book of Hosea is a love story—real, tragic, and true. Transcending the tale of young man and wife, it tells of God’s love for his people and the response of his “bride.” A covenant had been made, and God had been faithful. His love was steadfast, and his commitment unbroken. But Israel, like Gomer, was adulterous and unfaithful, spurning God’s love and turning instead to false gods. Then after warning of judgment, God reaffirmed his love and offered reconciliation. His love and mercy were overflowing, but justice would be served.

The book begins with God’s marriage instructions to Hosea. After Hosea’s marriage, children were born, and each given a name signifying a divine message (chapter 1). Then, as predicted, Gomer left Hosea to pursue her lusts (chapter 2). But Hosea (whose name means “salvation”) found her, redeemed her, and brought her home again, fully reconciled (chapter 3). Images of God’s love, judgment, grace, and mercy were woven into their relationship. Next, God outlined his case against the people of Israel: Their sins would ultimately cause their destruction (chapters 4; 6; 7; 12) and would rouse his anger, resulting in punishment (chapters 5; 8–10; 12–13). But even in the midst of Israel’s immorality, God was merciful and offered hope, expressing his infinite love for his people (chapter 11) and the fact that their repentance would bring about blessing (chapter 14).

The Book of Hosea is about a people who needed to hear the love of God, a God who wanted to tell them, and the unique way God chose to demonstrate His love to His people. The people thought that love could be bought (“Ephraim has hired lovers,” 8:9), that love was the pursuit of self-gratification (“I will go after my lovers who give me,” 2:5), and that loving unworthy objects could bring positive benefits (“They became an abomination like the thing they loved,” 9:10).

God wanted Israel to know His love, which reached out for unlikely and unworthy objects (“When Israel *was* a child, I loved him,” 11:1), which guided with gentle discipline (“bands of love,” 11:4), and which persisted in spite of the peoples’ running and resisting (“How can I give you up?” 11:8).

The problem was how to get this message of God's love to a people not inclined to listen, and not likely to understand if they did listen. God's solution was to let the prophet be his own sermon. Hosea would marry an impure woman ("wife of harlotry," 1:2), love her fully and have children by her (1:3), and go after her and bring her back when she strays ("Go again, love," 3:1). In sum, Hosea was to show by his own love for Gomer the kind of love God had for Israel.

These lessons stand out clearly from the Book of Hosea:

1. If the people around us do not see the love of God in us, they will not find it anywhere. Like Hosea, all believers are called to demonstrate to their neighbors by their attitudes and by their actions God's love in Christ to a world blindly groping for indications of authentic love.
2. The only perfect example of love is found in God Himself. When God enters into marriage with His people, He recites vows that promise permanence, a right relationship, fair treatment, love unending, tenderness, security, and continuing self-revelation (2:19, 20). Our love must drink from this spring; then draw for others, offering to them, not the best form of human love we can give, but the pure, undiluted love of God in Christ.

The book of Hosea dramatically portrays our God's constant and persistent love. As you read this book, watch the prophet submit himself willingly to his Lord's direction; grieve with him over the unfaithfulness of his wife and his people; and hear the clear warning of judgment. Then reaffirm your commitment to being God's person, faithful in your love and true to your vows.

### Overview

- ❖ 28<sup>th</sup> book of the BIBLE, Old Testament, 1<sup>st</sup> among the 12 minor prophets and 6<sup>th</sup> among the 17 prophetic books
- ❖ Hosea ministers to the Northern Kingdom of Israel.
- ❖ Since Ephraim is the largest tribe in the Northern Kingdom, sometimes the kingdom is referred to as Ephraim.
- ❖ Hosea's career spanned about 45 years, from 755 B.C. to about 710 B.C.
- ❖ The Book of Hosea covers approximately 40 years of his prophetic ministry.
- ❖ Hosea's ministry spanned:
  - Four kings of Judah (Uzziah - Hezekiah).

- Six kings of Israel (Zechariah - Hoshea).
- ❖ Hosea was:
  - The son of Beri. (1:1)
  - Husband of Gomer. (1:3)
  - Father of two sons and one daughter.
- ❖ Hosea is not mentioned elsewhere in the Bible.
- ❖ Hosea was a younger contemporary of Amos.
- ❖ Hosea was a contemporary of two Southern Kingdom prophets:
  - Isaiah
  - Micah.
- ❖ Hosea utters approximately 150 statements concerning the sins of Israel. More than half of them deal with the sin of idolatry.
- ❖ Using metaphors and various images, Israel is upbraided for their:
  - Lying
  - Ingratitude
  - Murder
  - Idolatry
  - Insincerity
  - Covetousness
- ❖ More than any other of the Old Testament prophets, Hosea's personal life and experiences illustrate his prophetic message.
  - An adulterous wife (Gomer) and a faithful husband (Hosea).
  - Gomer runs after another man - physical adultery.
  - Israel runs after other gods - spiritual adultery.
- ❖ Hosea and Gomer's three children are appropriately named by God as signs to Israel.
  - Zereel - "God Scatters."
  - Lo-Ruhamah - "Not Pitied."
  - Lo-Ammi - "Not My People."
- ❖ Four attributes of God are seen in the Book of Hosea.
  - Chapters 4-7 - God is HOLY
  - Chapters 8-10 - God is JUST
  - Chapters 11-14 - God is LOVING and GRACIOUS

## Hebrew Names of GOD used in Hosea

❖ EL

❖ EL-ELYON

## Revelation of JESUS CHRIST

The New Testament writers draw upon Hosea for teaching about the life and ministry of Christ. Matthew sees in 11:1 a prophecy that was fulfilled when Jesus as a baby was literally taken into and brought out of Egypt, parallel to Israel's long stay in Egypt and the Exodus (Matt. 2:15). The writer of Hebrews finds in Jesus the One who enables believers to offer acceptable sacrifices of praise by which we become recipients of God's merciful forgiveness (14:2; Heb. 13:15).

For Peter, Jesus provides the basis by which those who were outside the family of God are now admitted to a relationship with Him (1:6, 9; 1 Pet. 2:10). To Paul, Jesus fulfills Hosea's promise that One would break the power of death and the grave, and bring resurrection victory (13:14; 1 Cor. 15:55). Paul's teaching on Christ as the Groom and the church as the bride corresponds to the marriage ceremony and vows whereby God enters into a permanent relationship with Israel (2:19, 20; Eph. 5:25–32).

Jesus also, in at least two of His sermons to the Pharisees, takes His text from Hosea. When questioned about His spending time in the homes of tax collectors and sinners, Jesus quotes Hosea to show that God desires not just empty words or heartless rituals, but genuine care and concern for people (6:6; Matt. 9:13). And, when the Pharisees accuse Jesus' disciples of Sabbath breaking, Jesus defends them with the same reminder that the heart of God places concern for human need above religious form (Matt. 12:7).

## Work of THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Book of Hosea teaches two outstanding lessons concerning the Holy Spirit: 1) It is important to depend on the presence of the Spirit, and 2) negative things happen when the Holy Spirit is missing from a life.

Twice Hosea uses the phrase "the spirit of harlotry" (4:12; 5:4), and tells the consequences of being filled with an unholy spirit. Like Paul in Ephesians, Hosea connects such a spirit with wine, which enslaves the heart. This spirit of harlotry also causes people to stray into false ways and false worship in contrast to the Holy Spirit

who guides us in true ways and true worship (4:11–13; Eph. 5:17–21). John records the words of Jesus concerning the ministry of the Holy Spirit who will witness to Christ; on the other hand, the spirit of harlotry keeps people from knowing God (5:4; John 15:26).

The love of Hosea for his wayward wife reminds us that the preeminent fruit of the Spirit is love (Gal. 5:22). “The love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us” (Rom. 5:5).

## Mega Themes of Hosea

### THE NATION’S SIN

Just as Hosea’s wife, Gomer, was unfaithful to him, so the nation of Israel had been unfaithful to God. Israel’s idolatry was like adultery. They sought illicit relationships with Assyria and Egypt in pursuit of military might, and they mixed Baal worship with the worship of God.

Like Gomer, we can chase after other loves—love of power, pleasure, money, or recognition. The temptations in this world can be very seductive. Are we loyal to God, remaining completely faithful, or have other loves taken his rightful place?

### GOD’S JUDGMENT

Hosea solemnly warned Judah against following Israel’s example. Because Judah broke the covenant, turned away from God, and forgot her Maker, she experienced a devastating invasion and exile. Sin has terrible consequences.

Disaster surely follows ingratitude toward God and rebellion. The Lord is our only true refuge. If we harden our heart against him, there is no safety or security anywhere else. We cannot escape God’s judgment.

### GOD’S LOVE

Just as Hosea went after his unfaithful wife to bring her back, so the Lord pursues us with his love. His love is tender, loyal, unchanging, and undying. No matter what, God still loves us.

Have you forgotten God and become disloyal to him? Don’t let prosperity diminish your love for him or let success blind you to your need for his love.

### RESTORATION

Although God will discipline his people for sin, he encourages and restores those who

have repented. True repentance opens the way to a new beginning. God forgives and restores.

There is still hope for those who turn back to God. No loyalty, achievement, or honor can be compared to loving him. Turn to the Lord while the offer is still good. No matter how far you have strayed, God is willing to forgive you.

### Life Lessons in Hosea

<b>Truth</b>	<b>Lesson</b>
<p><b>Growing in Godliness</b></p> <p>When God directed Hosea to marry an unfaithful woman, He was calling this faithful prophet to be a living illustration of His love for His people. Similarly, He calls us to exhibit unconditional love to the world around us. Paul expressed the essence of this kind of godly living when he wrote, “Therefore be imitators of God as dear children” (Eph. 5:1).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Recognize that the way we demonstrate God’s love through our lives is the most powerful witness we will ever offer. Though God’s specific command to Hosea should be viewed as unusual, it helps us understand that God calls each of us to display His Word and His character in our lives.</li> <li>❖ Be an extension of God’s forgiveness, and seek to restore any broken relationship with those around you. Hosea’s actions reflected God’s loving forgiveness toward His people.</li> <li>❖ Ask and look for opportunities to be an expression of God’s love in all you do.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Cultivating Dynamic Devotion</b></p> <p>Hosea reveals God’s loving heart.</p> <p>God’s desire to bless His people far outshines the darkness of their sin.</p> <p>Repeatedly, God returns to the promise of restored relationship as the underlying purpose of His necessary judgment. The Lord</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Pursue knowing the Lord. Ask Him to revive, heal, and restore you, and to give you new life.</li> <li>❖ Understand that God’s faithfulness to come to you now—and ultimately—is as dependable as the sun that rises every morning.</li> <li>❖ Be assured that God values your relationship with Him more than He desires your service for Him.</li> <li>❖ Hear the loving heart of the Lord.</li> </ul>

<p>puts premium value on His relationship with us. Let us seek faithfully to return that love with obedience.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Though Israel had sinned gravely, He still loved His people and could hardly bear to execute the judgment they had brought upon themselves.</li> <li>❖ Know and understand that God is loving, merciful, compassionate, and patient. He has given everything, including His Son, to restore us to Himself.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Pursuing Holiness</b></p> <p>Keep watch over your heart and over your spiritual life. Sin is insidious; it may seem harmless in the beginning, but its end brings destruction and separation from God. Do not allow it to germinate in the soil of your heart.</p> <p>Hosea instructs us to break up the hard places in our lives and to sow the seed of righteousness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Recognize that, at times, the Lord may remove His presence from us and allow hardship and misery in response to our sin. He does this in order to draw us back to Himself.</li> <li>❖ Sow righteousness in your life and you will reap the fruit of faithfulness and mercy. Ask God to show you and to soften any places in your spiritual life that have become hardened so that the soil of your heart will be ready to receive seed that will bear much fruit.</li> <li>❖ Turn from your sin with God's help. Look expectantly to the Lord. Walk in mercy and justice.</li> </ul>
<p><b>The Walk of Faith</b></p> <p>Hosea was willing to endure unimaginable personal sacrifice to walk in obedience to the Lord. Israel's unwillingness to follow the Lord provides a vivid contrast to Hosea's life of faith.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Note that there is no record of Hosea's arguing with God or resisting the Lord's will for his life.</li> <li>❖ He simply obeyed in faith. Ask God to birth that kind of faith in you.</li> <li>❖ Pursue and value godly knowledge and wisdom.</li> <li>❖ Understand that what you do not know can hurt you.</li> </ul>

<p>Seeing this contrast challenges us to choose which example we will follow.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ In faith, acknowledge that there is no Savior besides the Lord. He alone is the one, true God, and salvation comes through no other than Jesus Christ (Acts 4:10–12).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Steps to knowing GOD</b></p> <p>Hosea perhaps more than any other prophet reveals the loving heart of GOD. GOD desires to bless not to chastise HIS people. The LORD puts a premium value on HIS relationship with us</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ recognize that GOD’ heart is for the full restoration of HIS people</li> <li>❖ understand that HE calls us to press on to know HIM so that HE can bring rich blessings to us</li> <li>❖ be assured GOD values our relationship with HIM more than HE desires our service</li> </ul>

### Praise Points in Hosea

- ❖ His blessings to us, for everything we have comes from him (2:8)
- ❖ His tenderness as he calls to us (2:14)
- ❖ His promise to restore us so that we can live in his presence (6:2)
- ❖ His desire for genuine worship rather than empty religion (6:6)
- ❖ His faithful, compassionate love that saves us from destruction (11:8-9).

### Worship Insights in Hosea

- ❖ Unfaithfulness to God in worship is like unfaithfulness in a marriage (1:2).
- ❖ The Lord desires to show his people love and faithfulness (2:19-20).
- ❖ Those who lead worship must exemplify purity and faithfulness in their own conduct (5:1-2).
- ❖ Although sometimes the Lord must punish us, he also desires to heal us and restore us (6:1).
- ❖ God calls us to soften our heart and obey his commands so that he can bless us (10:12).
- ❖ Regardless of how sinful we may be, God still calls us to return to him in repentance (14:1).

### An Outline of Hosea

**I. Title: The Word of Yahweh:** [Hos 1:1](#)

**II. The Word of Yahweh to and Through Hosea:** Hos. 1:2-14:8

**A. Yahweh's Word in Hosea's Family: Hos. 1:2-3:5****1. Hosea's Family and Israel: Hos. 1:2-2:23****a. Hosea's Wife and Naming and Renaming the Children: Hos. 1:2-2:1****(1)**Hosea's Family—Omens of Judgment: [Hos 1:2-9](#)**(2)**Israel Restored: Hos. 1:10-2:1**b. Judgment and Restoration of Israel: [Hos 2:2-23](#)****(1)**Yahweh's Exasperation with Israel: [Hos 2:2-13](#)**(2)**Yahweh's New Marriage with Israel: [Hos 2:14-23](#)**2. The Love of Yahweh and Hosea: [Hos 3:1-5](#)****B. Hosea's Prophecies: Hos. 4:1-14:8****1. Yahweh's Charge Against All Israel: [Hos 4:1-3](#)****2. Yahweh's Charge Against All the Priests: [Hos 4:4-19](#)****3. Israel's Leaders—A Snare: [Hos 5:1-7](#)****4. Ephraim and Judah in Conflict: [Hos 5:8-15](#)****5. A Call to Return: [Hos 6:1-3](#)****6. Yahweh's Desire for Loyalty: [Hos 6:4-6](#)****7. Surrounded by Their Deeds: Hos. 6:7-7:2****8. Domestic Politics Without Yahweh: [Hos 7:3-7](#)****9. International Politics Without Yahweh: [Hos 7:8-16](#)****10. Apostasy in Cult and Politics: [Hos 8:1-14](#)****11. No More Festivals: [Hos 9:1-9](#)****12. Rebels Rejected by Yahweh: [Hos 9:10-17](#)****13. No More Cult or King: [Hos 10:1-8](#)****14. Destroyed by War: [Hos 10:9-15](#)****15. Yahweh's Compassion for the Rebellious Child, Israel: [Hos 11:1-11](#)****16. Israel, the Habitual Deceiver: Hos. 11:12-12:14****17. Israel's Impending Destruction: [Hos 13:1-16](#)****18. Yahweh's Healing after the Disaster: [Hos 14:1-8](#)****III. Conclusion: A Word to the Wise: [Hos 14:9](#)**