

## Bible Study Notes and Questions on Hosea

**Overview:** Hosea, son of Beeri was from the northern kingdom of Israel. He was a prophet in the eighth century BC from possibly 760-720. The name Hosea means “salvation”. The other names are Hoshea, Joshua and Jesus from the same root where Hoshea means “salvation” and Joshua and Jesus mean “Saviour”. The word of the Lord had come to him in the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah kings of Judah and in the time of Jeroboam, the son of Joash, king of Israel. Apart from what is said in **1:1** nothing more is known of Hosea.

Hosea was told by the Lord to marry “a wife of whoredom/harlotry” (**1:2**) called Gomer who conceived three children namely Jezreel meaning “God will scatter” or “God will sow”; Lo-ruhamah meaning “not an object of favour”, “without mercy; not having obtained mercy, not pitied” and Lo-ammi meaning “Once my people, but not so now” or “not my people”.

Commentators vary in views whether Gomer was immoral or not before Hosea married her. What we do know is the fact that Gomer proved unfaithful to Hosea in going after unlawful relationships just as Israel had proved disobedient to God in rejecting his laws committing spiritual adultery. Despite Gomer having left Hosea, the prophet still loved her and later on redeemed her from being in slavery putting her under discipline for a time (**3:1-5**). God has shown through Hosea his great love and grace for Israel even though the nation of Israel had rejected God’s word to them. The first three chapters have shown how Gomer’s unfaithfulness to Hosea is really an illustration of Israel’s unfaithfulness to God in **Chapters 4 to 14**.

In **Chapters 4-14** there is a detailed exposure of the sin of Israel especially in the northern kingdom which is often referred to as Ephraim because of being the largest and most central of the ten tribes. The following sins were 1) marital unfaithfulness. 2) independence of God’s chosen government. 3) the people’s disloyalty to God and to each other. 4) gross idolatry. 5) sexual immorality. 6) ignorance of God’s holy law. 7) ingratitude in behaviour. Israel had been prospering outwardly but inwardly decaying to the point of God bringing certain judgment. After king Jeroboam’s death there were six kings in Israel with the last king being Hoshea. Four of these kings were assassinated giving some indication of the state of the country being far away from the Lord. The landslide of wickedness had taken hold of Israel with people grossly steeped in much evil such as idolatry, drunkenness, debauchery, perjury, violence, banditry and adultery. **Chapters 1-3** could be taken as a prologue at the beginning leading to the start of the treatise properly in **Chapters 4-14** beginning in **4:1**: “Hear the word of the LORD, ye children of Israel: for the LORD hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land...”

This book has shown the love of God for his people, without compromising his holiness. There is revealed such sorrow in God’s heart because of much ingratitude and unfaithfulness amongst God’s people. God has shown great mercy and tenderness in pleading with his people to turn from their sins but there was no real evidence of any response to repent. God had no alternative in having to bring his judgments which would ultimately lead to the northern kingdom of Israel being invaded and given over to Assyria by 721BC.

The book of Hosea still gives hope for Israel being restored in the future particularly referred to in **2:14-23** and in the final chapter (**14:1-9**) because God will keep his covenants with Israel as his chosen nation. God’s deep love for Israel has been shown especially in **Chapters 11-14**. Israel has been disciplined for a time but will see the blessing of restoration to be a blessing to the whole world in a coming millennial kingdom under the rule of Jesus Christ when he returns to earth.

### Bible Study Questions on the Book of Hosea

**Chapters 1,2 & 3:** The unfaithful wife and the faithful husband.

**Q.1)** Read **Chapter 1**. A) What was known of the three children in giving the three names and their meaning? B) Show how the names of the three children relate to God's judgments on Israel. C) In **1:10-11** is there evidence of Israel being restored?

**Q.2)** Read **Chapters 2 & 3**. A) What do these chapters reveal of the character of Gomer? See **2:1-13** and also **1:2-3**. B) What is known of Israel's unfaithfulness to God in **2:1-13**? C) Show the evidence of the restoration of Israel. See **2:1, 14-23**. D) How did Hosea show himself to be a faithful husband to Gomer despite her unfaithfulness to him? See **3:1-5**.

**Chapters 4-14:** The unfaithful nation of Israel and the faithful God.

**Q.3)** Read **Chapter 4:1-19**. A) Make a list of the sins of Israel committed outwardly and consider the inward condition that caused such wickedness openly. B) What do we know of the way many priests were living in view of "*like people, like priests*" (**4:9**).

**Q.4)** Read carefully **5:1-15**. A) Write down any warnings of judgment coming on Israel. B) Who is the Lord specifically speaking to? C) Why had Israel become so spiritually sick?

**Q.5)** Read **Chapters 6 & 7**. A) Read **6:1-3**. Show whether there is any true repentance shown and consider what is meant by "*the third day*" (**6:2**). B) Read **6:4 to 7:16**. What is God presenting of his displeasure to Israel that would justify punishment for Israel? C) What did God really desire of his people? See **6:6** and also **1Samuel 15:22-23; Isaiah 1:11-20;**

**Jeremiah 7:21-24; Amos 5:21-24; Micah 6:6-8; Matthew 9:13; 12:1-8.**

**Q.6)** Read **Chapters 8 & 9**. A) Show how God has intended to punish his people Israel. B) Make a list of the sins of Israel that justify God bringing his judgment on his people.

**Q.7)** Read **Chapter 10**. A) Show the continual wickedness of Israel. You may wish to make a list. B) Show any further judgments to come from the Lord.

**Q.8)** Read **11:1-11**. Show the evidence of God's love for Israel even when his people turned against him.

**Q.9)** Read **11:12 to 13:16**. A) Consider carefully how God has dealt with Israel's unfaithfulness. You may wish to make a list of the sins of Israel and the punishments God will bring upon Israel. B) Show what God has done for Israel and the ways he has pleaded with Israel to repent.

**Q.10)** Read **Chapter 14**. Show the evidence of the restoration and repentance of Israel. Is there a future fulfilment being foretold in this chapter?

### Miscellaneous Questions

Some biblical references have been given to help answer the questions below but not a complete list which means further study is needed.

**Q.1)** What has this book revealed of who God is? Show his great love for his people. See **6:4; 11:7, 9, 12; 12:5; 13: 4, 9-10**.

**Q.2)** What was known of true and false prophets in this prophecy? See for example **9:7-9; 12:10, 13**.

**Q.3)** Is there evidence of prophecy that is still to be fulfilled? See **1:10-2:1; 2:14-23; 3:4-5; 14:4-9**.

**Q.4)** How does this book apply to us today? See for example **4:1-3, 11-19; 6:6-10; 7:1-5**.

**Q.5)** Whilst this prophecy is very much concentrating on the northern kingdom of Israel, how far does it involve Judah? See **1:1, 7, 11; 4:5; 5:5, 10, 13; 6:4, 11; 10:11; 11:12; 12:2**.

## Bibliography

The list of resources available will be helpful in studying the scriptures. The author may not necessarily agree with all the views of the writers of the reading material.

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