



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

BIBLE FOUNDATIONS

Hosea the Prophet

God's Faithful Love for an Unfaithful People

The Short Answer

Hosea prophesied during the final decades of the northern kingdom of Israel, a time of outward prosperity, political instability, idolatry, injustice, and spiritual unfaithfulness. God used Hosea's life and message to reveal a painful truth: Israel had repeatedly abandoned the God who loved, rescued, provided for, and entered covenant with them. Yet Hosea is not merely a book about Israel's sin. It is a book about **God's character**. God is holy and will not ignore persistent rebellion. His judgment is real. But His love is also persistent, compassionate, and astonishingly gracious. Again and again, Hosea exposes Israel's unfaithfulness while revealing God's desire that His people return to Him. The book ultimately points beyond Israel's immediate circumstances toward the greater restoration God would accomplish through Jesus Christ.

Hosea 1-14

Opening Memory Anchor

Human unfaithfulness does not change God's character. He remains holy, just, merciful, and faithful.



WELCOME

This guide is meant to send you back to Scripture

Hosea's message spans fourteen chapters. Part One introduces the prophet, the shape of the book, Israel's covenant unfaithfulness, the prophetic marriage, idolatry, judgment, repentance, and God's faithful love. Part Two addresses historical and interpretive questions and traces the book's major New Testament and Gospel connections.

Foundational truth

Hosea is not ultimately a story about how lovable God's people are. It is a story about how faithful God is.

How to use this study

- Open and read the cited passages rather than relying only on summaries.
- Distinguish what Scripture explicitly teaches from theological inference.
- Use the Memory Anchors to retain major ideas.
- Where Scripture leaves mystery, do not manufacture certainty.

PART ONE

BEGINNER GUIDE

Start by reading: Hosea 1-3; 4-6; 7-10; 11-14.

1. WHO WAS HOSEA?

Hosea was a prophet God sent primarily to the **northern kingdom of Israel**, which Hosea frequently calls **Ephraim**, after one of its largest and most influential tribes. Read **Hosea 1:1**.

Hosea ministered during the reigns of several kings of Judah and during the reign of **Jeroboam II of Israel**. His ministry likely stretched across several decades in the eighth century BC and continued into the turbulent period leading toward Israel's conquest by Assyria in **722 BC**.

Hosea lived during roughly the same broad prophetic era as **Amos, Isaiah, and Micah**. Amos especially shares Hosea's concern about a society that maintained religious activity while tolerating injustice, corruption, and spiritual rebellion. Together, these prophets show that prosperity and outward worship were not evidence of covenant faithfulness.

Under Jeroboam II, Israel experienced considerable prosperity and territorial expansion. But after Jeroboam's death, political instability accelerated. Kings were assassinated, alliances shifted, and Assyria increasingly dominated the region. Behind those political problems was a much deeper problem: **Israel had abandoned covenant faithfulness to God**.

2. HOW IS THE BOOK OF HOSEA ORGANIZED?

Hosea has two broad movements.

Hosea 1-3 - Hosea's family as a prophetic sign. The opening chapters focus on Hosea's marriage, his children, and the symbolic meaning of his family life. God uses these events to make Israel's spiritual unfaithfulness visible.

Hosea 4-14 - God's case against Israel. The remainder of the book contains prophetic messages exposing Israel's idolatry, corruption, false worship, political alliances, injustice, and rejection of God.

These chapters move repeatedly between accusation, warning, judgment, compassion, repentance, and promised restoration. Hosea is largely poetic, and the book can sometimes feel abrupt. The prophet may move rapidly from one image or accusation to another, then suddenly shift into a tender expression of God's compassion. Readers should not be discouraged if some sections feel intense or fragmented. The overall message becomes clearer when the book is read as a whole: **God's people have been unfaithful, but God remains holy, just, compassionate, and faithful**.

3. WHAT WAS WRONG WITH ISRAEL?

Israel's greatest problem was not Assyria. It was spiritual unfaithfulness. God had rescued Israel from Egypt and entered covenant with them at **Mount Sinai**. See **Exodus 19-24**. There God formally identified Israel as His covenant people and gave them His commands.

That covenant background is essential for understanding Hosea. Israel's idolatry was not simply choosing another religious preference. It was **betraying an established covenant relationship with God**. God had rescued them, bound Himself to them covenantally, provided for them, and called them to belong to Him.

- Idolatry
- Baal worship
- Sexual immorality
- Dishonesty
- Violence
- Corrupt leadership
- Faithless priests
- Political dependence on foreign nations
- Religious rituals without genuine devotion to God

The people still practiced religion, but their hearts had wandered. **Religious activity is not necessarily the same thing as faithfulness to God**. Israel continued sacrifices and ceremonies while simultaneously pursuing idols and injustice. God wanted more than outward religious performance. He wanted His people to **know Him**.

4. WHY DID GOD TELL HOSEA TO MARRY GOMER?

Read **Hosea 1:2-3**. God commanded Hosea to marry Gomer, described in language associated with sexual unfaithfulness. Their marriage became a living picture of the relationship between God and Israel.

Just as marital unfaithfulness violates a covenant relationship, Israel had violated its covenant with God by pursuing other gods. The marriage imagery is especially powerful because Israel's relationship with God was not casual. At Sinai, God had entered covenant with His people. Hosea therefore uses marital betrayal to illustrate **covenant betrayal**.

The central point is not that Hosea's marriage provides an ordinary model for Christian marriage. It does not. Hosea received a unique prophetic calling connected to a specific message God was communicating to Israel.

Christians disagree about some details of Gomer's situation. Some understand Hosea 1:2 to mean that she was already sexually immoral when Hosea married her. Others believe the language anticipates the unfaithfulness that followed. Still others have proposed that the account functions primarily as prophetic symbolism.

The most natural reading treats Hosea's marriage as a real event with prophetic significance, while recognizing that the text does not answer every question about Gomer's earlier life. What Scripture makes unmistakably clear is **why the marriage matters**: Israel had treated God with covenant unfaithfulness. Hosea's painful family experience made that spiritual reality visible.

Important Safeguard

Hosea should never be used to tell someone that remaining indefinitely in abuse, exploitation, or danger is required in order to imitate God's love. Hosea's prophetic marriage was a unique divine calling. It is not a universal command governing every troubled marriage.

5. WHY WERE HOSEA'S CHILDREN GIVEN SUCH UNUSUAL NAMES?

Read **Hosea 1:4-9**. The names of Hosea's children became prophetic messages.

JEZREEL - The name pointed toward coming judgment connected with Israel's violent history and also anticipated the breaking of Israel's military power.

LO-RUHAMA - The name means approximately "**Not Pitied**" or "**No Mercy**." It signaled that judgment was approaching.

LO-AMMI - The name means "**Not My People**." This was devastating covenant language. Israel had persistently rejected the God who had called them His people.

But remarkably, judgment is not the final word. Immediately after announcing judgment, God begins speaking about future restoration. Read **Hosea 1:10-11 and 2:23**. Those who had been called "Not My People" would again be called God's people. That promise becomes especially important in the New Testament.

6. WHAT DOES SPIRITUAL ADULTERY MEAN?

Throughout Scripture, marriage sometimes provides a picture of covenant faithfulness. Israel belonged to God through covenant, yet repeatedly pursued idols. Hosea therefore describes idolatry using the language of adultery and prostitution.

This imagery is intentionally disturbing. Idolatry is not presented merely as making an intellectual mistake about religion. It is **relational and covenantal betrayal**.

Israel had experienced God's rescue and provision and then credited other gods for what God had given. Read **Hosea 2:5-8**. Israel believed the Baals had provided grain, wine, oil, silver, and gold. God says: **They failed to recognize the true Provider**.

This remains an important spiritual warning. A gift can become an idol when the heart begins trusting, worshiping, or living for the gift rather than the Giver.

7. WHO WAS BAAL?

"Baal" could refer to Canaanite deities associated especially with fertility, storms, agricultural productivity, and prosperity. Because ancient Israel depended heavily upon agriculture, Baal worship offered a powerful temptation.

People could begin thinking: **Perhaps worshiping Yahweh is not enough. Maybe honoring Baal will help guarantee rain, crops, fertility, and prosperity.**

Israel often did not simply stop acknowledging God. Instead, they mixed worship of the LORD with pagan practices. This is sometimes called **syncretism** - combining beliefs or worship practices that do not belong together.

God repeatedly rejected this mixture. Read **Hosea 2:13, 8:4-6, and 13:1-2**. The issue was not merely religious preference. Israel was transferring trust and worship that belonged to God alone.



8. DOES GOD REALLY JUDGE HIS PEOPLE?

Yes. Hosea does not soften God's judgment. Israel's persistent rebellion would have consequences. Read **Hosea 9:1-3; 10:13-15; 13:7-16**.

God had warned Israel repeatedly through His covenant and His prophets. Yet generation after generation continued turning away. Eventually Assyria conquered the northern kingdom.

In **722 BC**, Samaria fell after a prolonged siege, and many Israelites were deported. See **2 Kings 17** for the broader biblical explanation of Israel's fall. Second Kings makes the theological reason explicit: Israel persistently rejected God, worshiped idols, ignored His commands, and refused repeated prophetic warnings.

God's patience should never be confused with indifference toward sin.

Memory Anchor

God's patience is real - but so is His holiness.

9. IF GOD KNEW ISRAEL WOULD BE UNFAITHFUL, WHY DID HE LOVE THEM?

Because God's love begins in **His character**, not in human deserving. Hosea repeatedly reminds Israel that God had loved, rescued, taught, fed, protected, and cared for them.

One of the most moving passages occurs in **Hosea 11**. Read **Hosea 11:1-4**. God describes Israel almost like a loving father teaching a child to walk. He had cared for them tenderly. Yet Israel continually turned away.

Then comes one of Hosea's most remarkable descriptions of God's compassion. Read **Hosea 11:8-9**. God's holiness does not make Him cold or detached. His judgment is righteous, yet His compassion is genuine.

Hosea reveals both truths together: **God takes sin seriously because He is holy**. And: **God pursues restoration because He is loving and merciful**.

10. WHAT DOES GOD ACTUALLY WANT FROM HIS PEOPLE?

Hosea gives one of Scripture's clearest answers. Read **Hosea 6:6**. God says He desires **steadfast love rather than sacrifice, and knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings**.

This does not mean the sacrifices God commanded were inherently wrong. The problem was performing religious rituals while living in rebellion.

The Hebrew word often translated **steadfast love, mercy, lovingkindness, or faithful love** is *hesed*. The word carries ideas of loyal, covenantal love and faithfulness.

God wanted His people's worship and lives to reflect a genuine relationship with Him. Jesus later quoted Hosea 6:6 when confronting religious leaders who understood religious rules but had missed God's heart of mercy. See **Matthew 9:13 and 12:7**.

Religious activity without love for God and faithful obedience can become spiritually empty.

11. WHAT DOES REPENTANCE LOOK LIKE IN HOSEA?

Repentance is more than feeling bad about consequences. It means genuinely returning to God. Hosea repeatedly calls Israel to return.

Read **Hosea 10:12**. The imagery is agricultural: Break up unplowed ground. Sow righteousness. Seek the LORD.

Then read **Hosea 14:1-4**. The book ends with an invitation: **Return to the LORD**. Israel is told to bring words of repentance, confess sin, abandon false sources of security, and depend upon God's mercy.

God responds with an extraordinary promise: He will heal their waywardness and love them freely.

Biblical repentance therefore includes: **Recognizing sin -> turning from false gods -> returning to God -> trusting His mercy -> walking differently**.

Repentance does not purchase God's grace. It receives God's mercy with an honest and surrendered heart.



PART TWO

WANT TO GO DEEPER?

INTERMEDIATE

Interpretive Posture

Where Scripture speaks clearly, believe it. Where Christians draw inferences, identify them as inferences. Where Scripture leaves mystery, trust God's character and obey what He has made clear.

12. WHY DOES HOSEA SOMETIMES CALL ISRAEL "EPHRAIM"?

After Solomon's kingdom divided, the northern tribes became the kingdom commonly called **Israel**, while the southern kingdom became **Judah**. Ephraim was one of the largest and most influential northern tribes. Because of that prominence, prophets sometimes used **Ephraim** as another name for the entire northern kingdom.

So when Hosea speaks about Ephraim, he is frequently addressing Israel as a whole. This helps readers avoid mistakenly thinking every reference concerns only one tribe.

13. WHAT WAS HAPPENING POLITICALLY DURING HOSEA'S MINISTRY?

Hosea ministered while the ancient Near East was being transformed by the expansion of the **Assyrian Empire**.

After Jeroboam II's prosperous reign, Israel experienced extraordinary political instability. Several kings ruled for very short periods, and some gained power through assassination.

Meanwhile Israel attempted to survive through political alliances. Sometimes leaders looked toward **Assyria**. At other times they looked toward **Egypt**.

Hosea repeatedly condemns this frantic dependence upon foreign powers. Read **Hosea 7:11; 8:9; 12:1; 14:3**.

The problem was not that diplomacy itself is inherently sinful. The deeper problem was that Israel sought security everywhere except in faithful dependence upon God. Hosea exposes a recurring human temptation: When fear rises, people often reach first for whatever appears powerful, visible, and controllable. Israel's alliances became another expression of misplaced trust.

14. WHY DOES HOSEA KEEP RETURNING TO ISRAEL'S HISTORY?

Hosea frequently reaches backward into Israel's story. He refers to events and people including Egypt and the Exodus, Jacob, the wilderness, Baal-peor, Gibeah, Israel's kings, and God's past provision. See, for example, **Hosea 9:10; 10:9; 11:1; 12:2-6, 12-13; 13:4-6**.

Hosea is doing more than recalling history. He is showing that Israel's current rebellion belongs to a much longer pattern. They repeatedly forgot God after experiencing His goodness.

But the same history also proves God's faithfulness. Israel's past simultaneously reveals: **human inconsistency and divine faithfulness**.

That is why knowing biblical history matters. Scripture repeatedly teaches God's people to remember what God has done. Spiritual forgetfulness makes present compromise easier.

15. WHAT DOES HOSEA 11:1 HAVE TO DO WITH JESUS?

Hosea 11:1 says: "**Out of Egypt I called my son.**" In Hosea's immediate context, the "son" is **Israel**. Hosea is looking backward to the Exodus. Yet **Matthew 2:15** applies this passage to Jesus after Joseph and Mary take Him to Egypt and later return.

Matthew is not ignoring Hosea's original meaning. He is showing Jesus reliving and fulfilling Israel's story. Israel was called God's son yet repeatedly failed to obey. Jesus, the true and faithful Son, succeeds where Israel failed.

This is an important example of biblical typology. The New Testament sees patterns in Israel's history reaching their fuller significance in Christ. Hosea 11:1 therefore first describes **Israel's historical Exodus**, while Matthew reveals a deeper redemptive pattern fulfilled in **Jesus**.



16. HOW DOES THE NEW TESTAMENT USE "NOT MY PEOPLE"?

Read **Hosea 1:10 and 2:23**. Hosea moves from judgment language - "**Not My People**" - to restoration: "**You are My people.**"

The apostle Paul draws upon Hosea in **Romans 9:25-26** while explaining God's saving mercy and the inclusion of Gentiles among His people.

Peter uses similar Hosea language in **1 Peter 2:10**: those who once were not a people are now God's people; those who had not received mercy have now received mercy.

The New Testament therefore sees Hosea's restoration language participating in the larger biblical story of God's redeeming grace. Through Christ, God is forming a people belonging to Him from Jews and Gentiles. See also **Ephesians 2:11-22**.

17. WHAT DOES "I DESIRE MERCY, NOT SACRIFICE" REALLY MEAN?

Hosea 6:6 can be misunderstood as though God were rejecting Old Testament worship. But God Himself had established Israel's sacrificial system.

The problem was **hypocritical worship**. Israel wanted religious ceremony without covenant faithfulness.

Jesus applies Hosea's principle twice. Read **Matthew 9:9-13**. Jesus responds to criticism over eating with tax collectors and sinners by telling His critics to learn what Hosea 6:6 means. Then read **Matthew 12:1-8**. Again Jesus uses Hosea when religious leaders condemn His disciples.

In both settings, religious correctness had become detached from understanding God's mercy. The warning remains relevant: It is possible to know religious practices while misunderstanding the heart of the God those practices are supposed to honor.

18. WHAT DOES HOSEA TEACH ABOUT FALSE SECURITY?

Hosea exposes several things Israel trusted instead of God: **Idols. Wealth. Military strength. Political alliances. Foreign nations. Religious rituals. Human kings.**

None could ultimately save them. Read **Hosea 8:4-7; 10:13; 12:8; 14:3**.

Israel's problem was not simply that these things existed. The problem was **trust**. They looked to created things for the security, identity, prosperity, and deliverance that ultimately belonged to God.

Modern idols may look different, but the spiritual question remains: **What is being asked to provide what only God can ultimately give?**

Money can be useful without becoming a god. Government can serve legitimate purposes without becoming a savior. Relationships can be precious without becoming ultimate. Work can be meaningful without becoming identity. Hosea continually redirects misplaced trust back toward God.

19. DOES GOD'S LOVE MEAN SIN DOESN'T MATTER?

Hosea strongly rejects that idea. God's love and God's holiness are not enemies. Because God genuinely loves His people, He refuses to pretend destructive rebellion is harmless.

Hosea contains some severe judgment passages. They should not be erased in order to make the book more comfortable. But neither should the judgment passages be separated from God's grief, compassion, and repeated invitations to return.

Read **Hosea 11:8-9** alongside **Hosea 13:4-16**. Readers may feel tension between these passages. Hosea intends readers to feel something of that tension.

Sin is genuinely destructive. Judgment is genuinely serious. God's compassion is genuinely deep. And restoration requires something more profound than simply overlooking evil.

The larger biblical story ultimately shows how God's justice and mercy meet in Christ. At the cross, sin is not declared insignificant. It is dealt with. And sinners are offered reconciliation with God through grace. See **Romans 3:23-26**.

20. DOES HOSEA 13:14 POINT TO RESURRECTION?

Read **Hosea 13:14** carefully. The verse speaks about ransom from the power of the grave and redemption from death, but its immediate context contains strong judgment language, which has led to interpretive discussion about precisely how the verse functions within Hosea. The apostle Paul later draws language from Hosea 13:14 together with Isaiah 25 when celebrating Christ's victory over death. Read **1 Corinthians 15:54-57**.

Paul declares: Death will not have the final victory. Through Jesus Christ, resurrection triumphs over the grave.

This is a good example of why Scripture should be read both in its original context and within the larger biblical storyline. Whatever interpretive questions surround the precise force of Hosea 13:14 in its immediate setting, the New Testament explicitly uses its language in proclaiming the ultimate defeat of death through Christ.

21. WHAT DOES HOSEA TEACH ABOUT GOD'S DISCIPLINE?

Hosea sometimes describes God removing the very things Israel wrongly attributed to idols. Read **Hosea 2:6-13**.

God blocks Israel's destructive path and removes false securities. This judgment has a restorative purpose in the surrounding passage. God exposes the emptiness of Israel's idols so that Israel may recognize the One who truly provided for her.

But caution is necessary when applying this personally. Christians should not assume that every hardship means God has removed something because of a specific personal sin.

Scripture itself rejects simplistic formulas connecting every instance of suffering to individual wrongdoing. See **Job** and **John 9:1-3**.

Hosea describes God's specific covenant dealings with Israel. The broader principle is that God may lovingly expose false trusts and discipline His children, but humans should be cautious about claiming to know God's hidden reasons for another person's suffering. See **Hebrews 12:5-11**.

22. WHAT MAKES HOSEA'S PICTURE OF GOD'S LOVE SO REMARKABLE?

Hosea does not portray God as emotionally indifferent toward rebellion. God speaks as: **Husband. Father. Provider. Healer. Redeemer.**

Israel's rebellion is therefore described not merely as lawbreaking but as relational betrayal. Yet God continues calling His people back.

Read **Hosea 2:14-23**. After judgment comes remarkable language of wooing, renewal, covenant blessing, and restored relationship. Then read **Hosea 14:4-7**.

God promises to heal their waywardness, love them freely, turn away His anger, restore flourishing, and provide security.

This does not mean God ignores repentance or justice. It means God's goal throughout the book is not destruction for destruction's sake. He desires restoration.

Memory Anchor

God exposes sin not because He delights in separation, but because He desires faithful relationship and true restoration.

23. HOW DOES HOSEA POINT TO JESUS?

Hosea does not provide one simple messianic prediction that summarizes the entire book. Instead, multiple themes converge toward Christ.

THE FAITHFUL SON - Israel, God's son, repeatedly failed. Jesus fulfills Israel's calling faithfully. **Hosea 11:1 -> Matthew 2:15**

MERCY FOR "NOT MY PEOPLE" - Hosea anticipates restored covenant identity. The New Testament applies this restoration language within God's expanding redeemed people. **Hosea 1:10; 2:23 -> Romans 9:25-26; 1 Peter 2:10**

MERCY OVER EMPTY RELIGION - Jesus explicitly uses Hosea to reveal God's heart. **Hosea 6:6 -> Matthew 9:13; 12:7**

VICTORY OVER DEATH - Paul uses Hosea's language when proclaiming resurrection victory. **Hosea 13:14 -> 1 Corinthians 15:54-57**

THE FAITHFUL BRIDEGROOM - Hosea's marriage imagery belongs to a larger biblical pattern in which God relates covenantally to His people. The New Testament presents Jesus as the Bridegroom and the Church as His bride. See **Matthew 9:15; Ephesians 5:25-32; Revelation 19:6-9**.

Care is needed here: Scripture does not explicitly identify Hosea himself as a direct type of Christ. The stronger connection lies in the **covenant-love pattern** that develops throughout Scripture and reaches its fullness in Christ's sacrificial love for His people. Jesus does what Israel could never accomplish: He remains perfectly faithful. And through His death and resurrection, unfaithful sinners can be reconciled to God.



24. WHAT IS THE GOSPEL CONNECTION?

Hosea exposes a problem much larger than ancient Israel. Human beings continually turn from the Creator toward created things. Romans describes the same pattern. Read **Romans 1:21-25**. Humanity exchanges the glory of God for created things. That is idolatry.

The Gospel announces that God has acted to reconcile sinners to Himself through Jesus Christ. Jesus lived the faithful life humanity has failed to live. He died for sins. He rose from the dead. Forgiveness and reconciliation with God are offered by grace through faith. See **1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Romans 5:6-11; Ephesians 2:8-10**.

Hosea helps reveal why grace is so astonishing. God's grace is not offered to people who have successfully made themselves worthy. It is offered to sinners who need restoration. The appropriate response is the same invitation Hosea gave: **Return to the LORD**.

25. HOW DOES HOSEA END?

Hosea ends very differently from the destruction that might be expected after fourteen chapters of rebellion. Read **Hosea 14**.

The final chapter is an invitation to repentance and restoration. Israel is told to return. God promises healing.

The chapter closes with a wisdom-like challenge. Read **Hosea 14:9**. The wise person understands God's ways. The righteous walk in them. The rebellious stumble over them.

Hosea therefore ends by placing a decision before the reader. The book is not merely asking: **What happened to ancient Israel?** It is also asking: **Will God's Word be heard?**

PUTTING HOSEA TOGETHER

Movement	What It Reveals
COVENANT LOVE	God loves and provides for His people.
UNFAITHFULNESS	Israel turns toward idols and false security.
WARNING	God repeatedly calls Israel to return.
JUDGMENT	Persistent rebellion brings real consequences.
COMPASSION	God's heart remains merciful and restorative.
RETURN	God calls His people to repentance.
RESTORATION	God promises healing, renewed relationship, and future hope.
CHRIST	The larger biblical story reveals the faithful Son, Bridegroom, Savior, and risen Lord through whom sinners are reconciled to God.

WHAT SHOULD HOSEA CHANGE IN EVERYDAY LIFE?

1. IDENTIFY FALSE SOURCES OF SECURITY

Ask honestly: **What receives the trust that belongs to God?** Money? Relationships? Politics? Career? Health? Comfort? Approval? Control? Good things become spiritually dangerous when they become ultimate things.

2. DO NOT CONFUSE RELIGIOUS ACTIVITY WITH KNOWING GOD

Church attendance, Bible reading, giving, serving, and Christian language can all be valuable. But Hosea 6:6 asks a deeper question: **Is there genuine love for God and a life increasingly shaped by knowing Him?**

3. RETURN QUICKLY

Hosea repeatedly says: **Return**. Sin does not become safer by delaying repentance. When God exposes something, confess it honestly and return to Him. See **1 John 1:9**.

4. REMEMBER GOD'S PAST FAITHFULNESS

Israel repeatedly forgot. Remembering God's character and works strengthens present faith.

5. RECEIVE GRACE WITHOUT MINIMIZING SIN

Grace does not mean sin was insignificant. The cross demonstrates both the seriousness of sin and the extraordinary depth of God's mercy.

REVIEW & RETENTION

1. Which kingdom was Hosea primarily sent to?

The northern kingdom of Israel, frequently called Ephraim.

2. What did Hosea's marriage symbolize?

Israel's covenant unfaithfulness toward God.

3. What covenant background helps explain Hosea's marriage imagery?

God's covenant with Israel established at Sinai.

4. What was Israel's central spiritual problem?

Idolatry and abandonment of faithful relationship with God.

5. What does *hesed* communicate?

Steadfast, loyal, covenantal love and faithfulness.

6. What does Hosea 6:6 teach?

God desires genuine covenant love and knowledge of Him rather than empty religious ritual.

7. What major empire eventually conquered Israel?

Assyria.

8. When did Samaria fall?

722 BC.

9. What invitation repeatedly appears throughout Hosea?

Return to the LORD.

10. How does Matthew use Hosea 11:1?

Jesus fulfills the pattern of God's Son coming out of Egypt.

11. What is Hosea's central message?

God is holy and judges persistent rebellion, yet His covenant love remains astonishingly faithful, compassionate, and restorative.

KEY PASSAGES TO REMEMBER

Hosea 1:10-11	Judgment will not have the final word.
Hosea 2:19-20	God promises restored covenant relationship.
Hosea 4:6	God's people are suffering from rejecting knowledge of Him.
Hosea 6:6	God desires faithful love and knowledge of Him, not empty ritual.
Hosea 10:12	Seek the LORD.
Hosea 11:1-4	God remembers His tender care for Israel.
Hosea 11:8-9	God's compassion is powerfully revealed.
Hosea 13:14	Language later used by Paul in proclaiming victory over death.
Hosea 14:1-4	Return, healing, and freely given love.
Hosea 14:9	The wise walk in the ways of the LORD.



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

A SIMPLE READING PLAN

For readers studying Hosea directly alongside this guide:

Day 1 - Hosea 1-3	Hosea's family and God's covenant relationship with Israel
Day 2 - Hosea 4-6	Israel's charges and God's desire for faithful love
Day 3 - Hosea 7-9	False security and approaching judgment
Day 4 - Hosea 10-11	Sowing and reaping; God's fatherly compassion
Day 5 - Hosea 12-14	Israel's history, final warning, repentance, and restoration

As each section is read, ask:

- What does this reveal about God?
- What does it reveal about the human heart?
- Where does the passage fit within the larger biblical story?
- How should this truth shape faith and obedience?

A FOUR-SESSION STUDY PACE

For a small group, class, or slower personal study:

SESSION 1 - HOSEA 1-3 God's covenant love and Israel's unfaithfulness	Focus on Hosea's family as a prophetic sign, the children's names, covenant betrayal, judgment, and the first promises of restoration.
SESSION 2 - HOSEA 4-6 Knowing God versus empty religion	Focus on Israel's charges, lack of knowledge of God, corrupt worship, and Hosea 6:6.
SESSION 3 - HOSEA 7-10 False security and approaching judgment	Focus on political alliances, misplaced trust, idolatry, sowing and reaping, and the consequences of persistent rebellion.
SESSION 4 - HOSEA 11-14 Compassion, return, and restoration	Focus on God's fatherly love, His holiness, Hosea 13:14, the call to return, and the book's final vision of healing and restoration.

FINAL MEMORY ANCHOR

Hosea is not ultimately a story about how lovable God's people are.

It is a story about how faithful God is.

He is holy enough to confront sin, just enough to judge rebellion, compassionate enough to call sinners back, and gracious enough to provide restoration.

In Jesus Christ, that restoring love reaches its greatest expression.

Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus.