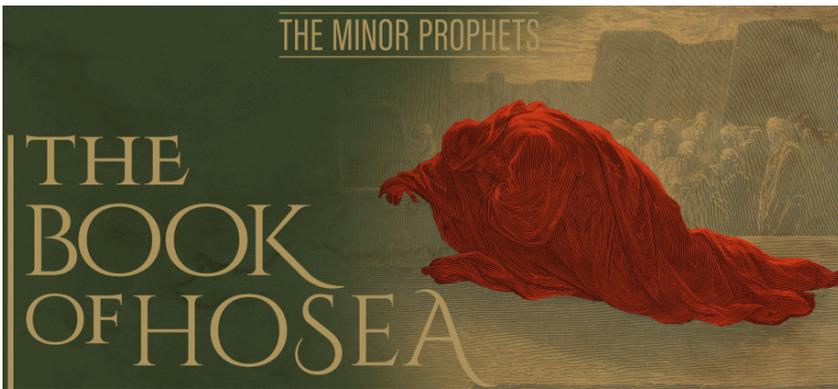


# HOSEA

## Faithful Love for the Unfaithful Lover

A St. Paul's Lutheran Bible Study



The Book of Hosea portrays God's relationship to Israel through the picture of a husband and wife. However, in chapter 11, the illustration between God and Israel is portrayed through a parent-child relationship. In other words, we are allowed to look into the heart of God in chapter 11 - to see His relationship to Israel through an endearing parent-child relationship.

And what do we learn about this parent-child relationship? Perhaps Eugene Peterson's paraphrase captures the sentiments of God's heart via Hosea 11. He states,

*"When Israel was only a child, I loved him. I called out, 'My son!' – called him out of Egypt. But when others called him, he ran off and left me. He worshiped the popular sex gods, he played at religion with toy gods. Still, I stuck with him. I led Ephraim. I rescued him from human bondage, But he never acknowledged my help, never admitted that I was the one pulling his wagon, That I lifted him, like a baby, to my cheek, that I bent down to feed him. Now he wants to go back to Egypt or go over to Assyria – anything but return to me! That's why his cities are unsafe – the murder rate skyrockets and every plan to improve things falls to pieces. My people are hell-bent on leaving me. They pray to god Baal for help. He doesn't lift a finger to help them. But how can I give up on you, Ephraim? How can I turn you loose, Israel? How can I*

### HOSEA 11:1-12

Author:

Hosea the Prophet

Date:

740-715 BC

Place:

Israel

Purpose:

Israel was like an unfaithful wife. She was attracted away from her husband (the Lord) to other lovers (idols). In the book of Hosea, the Lord calls Israel back to Himself. It is a call for Israel to forsake her unfaithfulness and be restored in the Lord's faithfulness.

Other:

Hosea is the most quoted book of the Minor Prophets in the New Testament.

*leave you to be ruined like Admah, devastated like luckless Zeboim? I can't bear to even think such thoughts. My insides churn in protest. And so I'm not going to act on my anger. I'm not going to destroy Ephraim. And why? Because I am God and not a human. I'm The Holy One and I'm here – in your very midst."*

Often times we repeat the national history of Israel in our personal lives. The Lord has indeed redeemed us from darkness unto light via baptism. He has given us all good things: forgiveness, life, salvation, food, water, clothing, etc. And yet, many days of our lives we so easily listen to the call of our idols.

This difficult news for any church and pastor to hear is that they can call out – in the name of the Lord – to everyone who has ears, and many will keep sacrificing to their idols. It is true, God called through Moses, the judges, the priests, the kings, the prophets, pastors, laymen, deacons, etc... and people want to do the exact opposite. So, what does this mean, though? Tragically, some churches and pastors will come to believe that the message of the call must change. And so, as we have previously established, many churches change their call to entice people into the church and into the fold. Alas! When we change the message of the Word, we are no longer feeding sheep but entertaining goats.

In times like this, it is important to go back to the basics. Consider Romans 10; Paul states the following order:

Sent → Preach → Hear → Believe → Call → Saved

In other words, since God wants all to be saved, He sends people to preach so that people can hear so that people can believe so that people can call on the name of the Lord and be saved. HOWEVER, not everyone will abide in the Gospel! Indeed, Paul wanted both Jews and Gentiles to be saved, although not all men will give obedience to the Gospel. Many will reject the beautiful message. And this behavior/rejection? It is not the fault of the Gospel but the fault of ears that don't hear and hearts that are hard. It is the result of people who hear the call of their idols and not the call of the Lord.

There is a divine tension between the three following items:

- \* Christ is the Savior of the World
- \* God Earnestly Desires that Each Person Be Saved
- \* Salvation Has Been Secured But Some Are Lost Due To Unbelief.

With remaining time see the following sets of verses:

John 3:16 – 2 Peter 3:9 – Matthew 23:37

John 1:29 – Ezekiel 33:11 – Acts 7:51

1 John 2:2 – 1 Timothy 2:4 – 2 Peter 2:1

