

Purpose

To illustrate God's love for His sinful people

Meaning of Name

"Salvation"

Date Written

Approx. 715 BC, events from about 753-715 BC

Setting

Hosea began his ministry during the end of Jeroboam II of Israel; he prophesied until shortly after the fall of Samaria in 722 BC.

Key Verse

"Go and get your wife again. Bring her back to you and love her, even though she loves adultery. For the Lord still loves Israel even though the people have turned to other gods, offering them choice gifts." *Hosea 3:1*

Key People

Hosea, Gomer, and children

Special Features

God is depicted as husband, father, lion, leopard, bear, dew, rain, moth, and others; Israel is pictured as wife, sick person, vine, grapes, early fruit, olive tree, woman in childbirth, oven, morning mist, chaff, and smoke.

An Overview (14 Chapters)

- Hosea's Wayward Wife (1:1-3:5)
- God's Wayward People (4:1-14:9)

Major Themes

- *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. We too can chase after other loves. Are we remaining completely faithful, or have other loves taken His rightful place?
- *God's Judgment:* Because Israel broke God's covenant, turned away from Him, and forgot her Maker, she experienced a devastating invasion and exile. Sin has terrible consequences. If we harden our hearts against God, 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.
- *Restoration:* Although God will discipline His people for sin, He encourages and restores those who have repented. There is still hope for those who turn back to God. No matter how far you have strayed, God is willing to forgive you.