

Bible Synthesis IV
(Bible Survey)

**INTRODUCTION TO
HOSEA**

1. INTRODUCTION

Hosea has been called “the Jeremiah of the northern kingdom,” for he, like Jeremiah, was called to weep and suffer. He prophesied in Samaria (Israel) just before that nation fell into Assyrian bondage and destruction. Notice Hosea 13:16 for his prophetic description of Israel’s fall before the ruthless Assyrian horde.

“Samaria shall become desolate; for she hath rebelled against her God: they shall fall by the sword: their infants shall be dashed in pieces, and their women with child shall be ripped up.” —Hosea 13:16

2. AUTHOR

- (1) Hosea—His name means “salvation.” That is the same as Joshua’s original name (Deut. 32:44). He also had the same name as the last king of Israel before the Assyrian captivity, Hoshea (II Kings 17:1–6)
- (2) His father was Beerli (Hosea 1:1)
- (3) We know nothing of Hosea beyond those things we read about him in the book.

3. RECIPIENTS

Israel—It is written primarily to the northern kingdom, frequently called Ephraim by Hosea (37 times). (1:1, 4–6; 4:1; 5:1; etc.).

4. DATE

- (1) Between 785 and 725 B.C.
During the reign of Jeroboam II (793 to 753 B.C. who was great grandson of Jehu) in Israel. And of the following kings of Judah: Uzziah (791 to 740 B.C.), Jotham (750 to 736 B.C.), Ahaz (736 to 716 B.C.); and Hezekiah (716 to 687 B.C.).
- (2) He was contemporary with Isaiah—see Isaiah 1:1, where the list of the kings of Judah is the same as those in Hosea 1:1. He was also contemporary with Amos (but younger) and with Micah (but older).
- (3) He wrote before the Assyrian captivity of the northern kingdom which took place during the early part of the reign of Hezekiah in Judah. That captivity took place in 722 B.C.

5. PURPOSE OF THE BOOK

- Almost 200 years earlier the nation Israel had divided and become two nations. The Ten Tribes to the north (called Israel or Ephraim) had established a kingdom under Jeroboam I which was independent of the kings which descended from David. Jeroboam established the golden calf as its official national god. The LORD had sent prophets—Elijah, Elisha, Jonah, Amos, and now Hosea, all to no avail.
- Hosea is a living object lesson. He married a wife, Gomer, who became unfaithful and went into harlotry. Later, after she was abandoned by her lovers, Hosea went and bought her back for himself. Spiritually speaking, Israel was Jehovah’s wife. She had been unfaithful to Him and had gone deeper into idolatry (spiritual adultery) and sin. Hosea was to announce that Jehovah would chasten His unfaithful “wife,” but that eventually He will buy her back and restore her to the place of blessing.

6. THEME

“Redeeming Love”

God’s unchanging love will not fail on Israel’s behalf, for He will “heal their backsliding” and “love them freely.” Because of His steadfast love He would one day espouse her to Himself again in such a way that she too would become possessed with a steadfast love.

7. KEY PASSAGES

Hosea 3:1; 2:13–15; **6:1**

8. KEY WORD

“Return” (15 times) —This proves this book to be “a treatise on repentance.” —Herbert Lockyer

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OUTLINE OF HOSEA

Note: “The book as a whole cannot be outlined, for how can anyone outline the sobbing of a heartbroken person?” —Lockyer

Two parts:

- (1) Personal — The Prophet and His Faithless Wife, Gomer —Hosea 1–3
- (2) Prophetic — The LORD and the Faithless Nation, Israel —Hosea 4–14

- 1. Personal —The Prophet and His Faithless Wife, Gomer —Hos. 1–3**
 - (1) Marriage of Hosea and Gomer —Hosea 1
 - (2) Gomer Proves Unfaithful —Hosea 2
 - (3) Hosea Commanded to Take Gomer Again —Hosea 3

- 2. Prophetic —The LORD and the Faithless Nation, Israel —Hos. 4–14**
 - (1) Israel Plays the Harlot —Hosea 4–5
 - (2) Israel (Ephraim) Will Return in Last Days; Judged for her Current Sins —Hosea 6
 - (3) Israel Could Escape Judgment by Turning to God Who Loves Her —Hosea 7–12
 - (4) Israel will turn from Idols —Hosea 13–14