

*A Love That Will
Not Let Me Go*

Leader Guide

(NASB and ESV)

A STUDY ON HOSEA

KINGS & PROPHETS SERIES

COURSE 8

A Love That Will Not Let Me Go Leader Guide (NASB and ESV)
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Chattanooga, Tennessee 37422

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3rd Edition (12/2022)

USING LEADER GUIDES

Leader Guides are intended for you, the leader, to guide your Precept Upon Precept® and In & Out® discussions. They are designed to help you reason through the content of the lessons and to ensure you have understood what your group should have learned from their study. The guides offer effective plans for leading discussions.

The Holy Spirit is your guide as you prepare. He is the one who knows what your group needs to apply to their lives. Pray for them as they study and for yourself as you prepare to lead the discussion.

These guides can be used for either the NASB or the ESV edition of the courses. ESV words follow the NASB after a slash / or are set off with parentheses.

Leader Guides include the following:

- Lesson emphasis
- A logical order for the discussion
- Discussion questions
- Suggested visual aid(s)

Practical tips for using the Leader Guide:

- **Don't simply "do" the lesson.**
Stay with the lesson until you have a good understanding of it. This will give you a better grasp of how the Leader Guide takes you through the lesson.
- **You don't have to ask every question in the guide.**
Often one question will be covered while discussing another question so there is no reason to ask it. Your goal is not to ask every question, but to ask enough questions to make sure your group understood the lesson and to help them apply the truths to their lives.

Using the Leader Guide with In & Out


When your entire group uses In & Out

Compare an In & Out lesson with the Leader Guide. Use what relates to the In & Out lesson as a guide for the discussion. Don't teach what's not in In & Out lessons. Remember your goal in the discussion is for your group to discuss what they've learned, not for you to lecture on what you learned.

For groups studying both Precept Upon Precept and In & Out

Use the Leader Guides as designed for PUP, knowing that the In & Out assignments will be covered in the discussion. Make a note in the Leader Guide of what is not in the In & Out.

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**A LOVE THAT WILL NOT LET ME GO—HOSEA
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 1**

Lesson emphasis:

- Hosea 1–3
- Spiritual harlotry

Tell your group to look at their At a Glance chart, the map, and “The Rulers and Prophets of Hosea’s Time” as visual aids for this discussion.

You can begin your discussion by asking when God spoke to/through Hosea from Hosea 1:1–2.

God first spoke to him when Jeroboam was king of Israel and Uzziah, Azariah, was king of Judah. God continued to speak to/ through Hosea when Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah ruled the Southern Kingdom of Judah.

According to the chart “The Rulers and Prophets of Hosea’s Time,” this total time could have been from 755 to 714 B.C.

Micah and Isaiah also prophesied during the time God spoke to Hosea. They prophesied to Judah, while Hosea prophesied to Israel in the north.

God spoke the messages of Hosea 1–3 before the Assyrians invaded Israel in 732 or 733.

HOSEA 1

Verses 1-3

What did the Lord tell Hosea the first time He spoke to him?

God told Hosea to take a wife of harlotry / whoredom and have children of harlotry / whoredom because the land—the people of the land—committed flagrant harlotry (ESV—great whoredom).

Hosea was obedient and gave the people of his time signs or pictures from God. The signs from Hosea’s life showed Israel what God thought about them and how He would deal with them in the near and distant future.

How do the cross-references compare with this?

Isaiah 20:1-4

Isaiah went about barefoot and naked for three years as a sign against Egypt and Cush to show that Assyria would carry away captives of Egypt and exiles of Cush.

Jeremiah 13:1-11

God told Jeremiah to hide a linen waistband / loincloth at the Euphrates River, then later dig it up. It was worthless / good for nothing. This showed that God would destroy Judah and Jerusalem.

God's people should have clung to Him, but they didn't. As the waistband / loincloth became worthless / good for nothing in the ground, so were the wicked who refused to listen to God.

1 Corinthians 9 and Romans 14–15

Paul became the slave / servant to all. He was all things to all men / people; meaning—

To the Jews, he was a Jew.

To those without the law / outside the law—Gentiles—he was as without the law.

To the weak, he became weak.

Believers aren't to let what they eat or drink be more important than what their brothers think about it.

Believers' lives should be living pictures of who God is and how He deals with people.

Ask your group how these truths apply to their lives and give them time to talk about it.

Lead your discussion back to Hosea 1 and ask about verses 4-5.

Tell your group to look at the map as a visual aid for this part of your discussion.

Jezreel was the first of Hosea's children.

God gave each one of them a name relative to what would happen to Israel.

Jezreel means "God sows"¹

The context of verse 4 tells that his name was a pronouncement of judgment.

God would

punish the house of Jehu for the bloodshed / blood of Jezreel,

put an end to the kingdom of the house of Israel,

and break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel.

NOTE: 2 Kings 9–10 tells about Jehu's reign as a king of Israel. God used him to wipe out Ahab's house and eradicate Baal worship from Israel, yet Jehu did not turn aside from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat. Most of those events took place in the territory of Jezreel.

Ask what your group learned from 2 Kings 15 and 17 about Israel's punishment.

The Assyrians went against Israel two times and took captives both times.

The first was in about 732 or 733 B.C., and the final one was in 722 B.C.

¹James Strong, *Enhanced Strong's Lexicon* (Woodside Bible Fellowship, 1995), H3157.

2 Kings 15:27-29

These verses describe the first captivity of the Northern Kingdom in 732 B.C. Most of Israel was taken at that time including the east side of the Jordan and Galilee.

2 Kings 17:5-6, 18, 22-23

This tells about the final exile of Israel to Assyria in 722 B.C.

God’s people Israel—His wife—sinned against Him, feared other gods, walked in the customs of the nations, built high places, rejected God’s covenant and statutes, passed their children through the fire of Molech, broke God’s commandments . . . and He brought judgment.

He broke Israel’s bow approximately 200 years after the kingdom divided in 931 B.C.

NOTE: The valley of Jezreel is a great plain in Israel, a great battlefield. It’s also known as the valley of Megiddo and plain of Esdraelon.

Verses 6-9

Direct the discussion back to Hosea. Ask about the next children who were born to Hosea and Gomer and the message in their names.

Lo-ruhamah means, “she has not obtained compassion.” (ESV says he named her “No Mercy.”)

God would no longer have compassion / mercy on Israel; He would not forgive them.

However, He said He would have compassion / mercy on Judah and deliver them Himself.

NOTE: If your group has been studying the Kings and Prophets series, someone might remember how God did that. It was when the Assyrians came against Judah during King Hezekiah’s reign, 2 Kings 19. The angel of the Lord struck 185,000 Assyrians and King Sennacherib of Assyria departed—deliverance not by bow, sword, battle, horses, or horsemen—just as God said through Hosea.

When Lo-ruhamah / No Mercy was weaned, Gomer conceived again. God said, “Name him Lo-ammi (ESV—Not My People), for you are not My people and I am not your God.”

Hosea 1:10–2:1

Ask about the contrast between verses 9 and 10.

Although punishment was soon coming for Israel, verse 10 begins with “yet.”

In the future God will multiply His people beyond number.
In the valley of Jezreel, they’ll again be called His sons / children.

He is the living God, and the restorer.

In Hosea 2:1 God calls them Ammi—His people—when He again will have compassion—Ruhamah—on them in the valley of Jezreel. (ESV says for verse 1, you are my people and you have received mercy.)

Ask your group how what they observe about God relates to their lives.

Tell them to look at their At a Glance chart and ask what they wrote as a theme for this chapter.

Hosea’s wife and children of harlotry / whoredom; the land commits harlotry / whoredom

HOSEA 2

Verses 2-7

What are these verses about?

The repeated word in these verses is “harlot(ry) / whoredom.”

Gomer, Hosea’s wife, was the harlot / whore as was God’s wife Israel.

What do Hosea 1–2 teach about spiritual adultery / whoredom?

Hosea 1:2 says it is forsaking the Lord.

Hosea 2:5 describes it as acting shamefully.

Verse 13 says it leads to forgetting God.

Ask about the picture of Hosea and Gomer and what God told Israel through it.

She practiced harlotry / whoredom although married, but God said He would make it impossible for Israel to reach her “lovers,” the other nations. Although they would run to Assyria or other nations for help instead of God, He would not allow them to get help.

As a result she, Israel, would know that it’s better with her husband God than with others. It’s a picture of Israel returning to the Lord after He uses the nations against her.

Verses 8-13

Ask what your group learned from these verses.

God’s the giver.

He gave Israel everything they needed; He more than amply supplied all.

But He told them He was about to take it back.

He was about to use Assyria to remove the people from their land.

He uncovers sin.

No one can rescue from His hand.
He punishes.

Israel used things God gave them for idol worship.

All the things listed in these verses happened when Assyria took Israel into captivity.
Exposed, no gaiety / mirth or festal assemblies / appointed feasts . . . only judgment for following others instead of God.

Again, ask your group how the truths about God affect their lives?

How does Ezekiel 16 compare with Hosea 1 and 2?

This passage shows how bad Judah got before being taken into captivity.

God had entered into a covenant with them; they had become His. He took care of Israel, and she became His wife. As any husband, He expected faithfulness.

The people of Israel were involved in all sorts of idolatry, which is harlotry / whoredom. They forsook the Lord who had delivered them from Egypt and had given them this land. They went after the idols of the land and the help of others instead of Him.

They multiplied their harlotries / whoring, and God gave them up to their desires. Israel even paid the nations tribute for protection instead of depending on God.

God would bring on Israel the blood of His wrath and jealousy.

But just as God says through Hosea that He will again have compassion / mercy on Israel, He says through Ezekiel that He will remember His covenant, establish an everlasting covenant with Israel, forgive them for all they have done.

Verses 14-23

Ask about the flow of thought continuing into these verses.

This chapter ends with hope for the future as did Hosea 1.

They will forget the idols as they had forgotten God. He will cause them to forget.

A day is coming when God will make a covenant for His people with the beasts, etc. of the land. The land will be fit for their habitation. There'll be no more war in their land.

God will again have a faithful wife—betrothed to Him forever.

betrothed, though, in righteousness
justice
lovingkindness / steadfast love
compassion / mercy
faithfulness

Then Israel will know their God, their faithful husband who punished them, but didn't completely destroy them.

“In that day”—the time in the future of Israel's return to the Lord,

God will respond / answer
to the heavens.

They'll respond to / answer the earth (rain perhaps).

The earth will respond to / answer the grain, wine, oil—His provision again.

They'll respond to / answer Jezreel, sowing God's people back in the land.

He will sow them in the land, have compassion / mercy on them; He will have a people.

Ask what your group learned about the context of Hosea 2:23 and Paul's quote of it in Romans 9:25-26.

Hosea said it in reference to those God called “Lo-ammi / Not My People”—His people Israel whom He judged. But He gave them hope that in the future they'll again be His people.

Paul quoted Hosea in reference to the gospel going to Gentiles also.

What is a possible theme for Hosea 2?

Contend / plead with your mother; God will punish; then betrothed to Him

How does Hosea 1–2 relate to Christians and their relationship to God?

being God's people
knowing Him
being faithful to Him

Sons of the living God

HOSEA 3

What is chapter 3 is about?

The Lord told Hosea to love Gomer again.

It was another picture of God and Israel. Although they had turned to other gods, He still loved them and would forgive.

Hosea bought his own wife. Love was the basis of his restoration. She stayed with him and didn't have a man, even Hosea, for many days.

Tell your group to look at their At a Glance chart and ask about a theme of this chapter?

Love adulteress again; Israel return

What do the New Testament cross-references say about who believers are?
Also, ask how these truths relate to the lives of those in your group.

2 Corinthians 11:1-2; Revelation 21:9

Believers are betrothed to Christ, called His bride and the wife of the Lamb.

Ephesians 5:18-33

The marriage relationship of husband and wife is used to describe the relationship of Christ and the church. Christ is the head of the church, the Savior of the body, and the church is to be subject to / submit to Christ.

Christ nourishes and cherishes the church, the members of His body.

1 Corinthians 6:15-18; James 4:4

One joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him. To be joined elsewhere is prostitution.

The instruction is to flee immorality. Immorality is a sexual sin against one's own body. The believer is one with Christ. To be friends with the world is hostility / enmity toward God and these are called adulteresses. If one is hostile toward God, that one is His enemy.

1 John 5:19; Ephesians 2:1-3

The whole world lies in the power of the evil one. Ephesians describes how his sons of disobedience walk. It's a description of how believers formerly lived.

You could end by asking what your group learned about God or what ministered to them in this lesson.

**A LOVE THAT WILL NOT LET ME GO—HOSEA
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 2**

Lesson emphasis:

- Hosea 4–6
- Understanding what happens when people have no knowledge of God

REVIEW

Ask what your group remembers about Hosea 1–3. The At a Glance chart of Hosea will be a helpful visual aid for this discussion.

Israel committed harlotry / whoredom so the Lord told Hosea to take a wife and have children of harlotry / whoredom, and He told Hosea what to name them. Their names told of God’s coming judgment on Israel. But when Hosea bought back his own wife from harlotry / whoredom, Israel could see that God would return to them when they sought Him.

The Lord first spoke to Hosea, chapters 1–3, during Jeroboam’s and Uzziah’s reigns.

What are the main points of these messages?

Israel’s sin of spiritual harlotry / whoredom
God’s punishment for their sin
Future hope for God’s people

HOSEA 4

Verses 1-6

You might ask what the Lord said to Israel in this chapter. What was the first thing He told them to do and why?

Listen to His Word—that’s where knowledge of Him and understanding come from.
The Lord had a case / controversy against the inhabitants of the land. It was:

- no faithfulness
- no kindness / steadfast love
- no knowledge of God
- swearing
- deception / lying
- murder
- stealing
- adultery
- violence / bloodshed

Israel had rejected the knowledge of God—they were about to pay the consequences.

Ask your group how these first two verses relate to modern times and people where they live. Can these things be caused by the same lack of knowledge?

Relate the case / controversy God had against Israel to His Law, especially the Ten Commandments. Ask about the cross-references in Exodus and Psalms.

According to the law given to Israel in Exodus 20:3-17, they had broken all of the Ten Commandments. Israel had God's Word but rejected it. By rejecting it, they also rejected knowing Him. As Psalms 51 says, all sin is against God.

The result was that the land mourned and everyone languished. They were weak, wasting away. Even the beasts, birds, and fish were affected.

Sin affects everyone and everything. Sin seldom, if ever, affects only the doer.

The priests had rejected knowledge, and God rejected them from being priests. They had forgotten His Law, and as a result He forgot their children.

Verses 7-10

What do the cross-references say about priests?

Deuteronomy 31:9-13

They were sons of Levi and had been given the law and carried the ark. Every seven years at the Feast of Booths they were to read the law to the people, so the people could hear it and learn to fear the Lord.

Malachi 2:1-8

They were to honor God's name. They were to give true instruction with their mouths, not unrighteousness, and turn many from iniquity. They were to preserve / guard knowledge and men should seek instruction from them, for they were to be the messengers of the Lord.

Exodus 19:5-6

God's plan was for all of Israel to be His possession, a kingdom of priests and a holy nation, but not even the priests lived according to God's law.

In Hosea 4:6, God said that the priests had rejected knowledge and forgotten His law.

Leviticus 6:24-30; Deuteronomy 18:1-5

The priests fed on the peoples' sins. When the people brought sacrifices to the temple, the priests were allowed to eat some of the sacrifices. That was one way God took care of their needs. The priests of Hosea's time abused that provision.

The priest became like the people. One could not tell them apart. God would punish them for their ways.

They would eat but not have enough (ESV—not be satisfied).

They became corrupt.

Isaiah 28:7—They were drunkards.

Jeremiah 5:30-31—They prophesied falsely and ruled on their own authority (ESV—at their direction).

Jeremiah 23:11-12; Hosea 5:1—They became polluted / ungodly and a snare.

Ask your group how 1 Peter 2:1-5, 9 relates to them as New Testament believers. You could ask them how they compare to the priesthood described by Peter and to the priests of Hosea’s day. What will help them to be better priests?

How does John 17:14-18 compare with this?

It is the Word of God that sanctifies, sets apart, the believer from the world. God’s Word is truth. Knowledge of God comes from His Word.

Verses 11-14

What do these verses say about harlotry / whoredom and adultery?

It takes away understanding.

A spirit of harlotry / whoredom led them astray, departing from God to wooden idols.

The daughters played the harlot / whore and committed adultery. The men would be held accountable for this because they had set the example. The people without understanding are ruined / come to ruin.

Verses 15-19

Who are these verses about? Tell your group to look at the map as a visual aid.

There was a caution for Judah not to become like Israel in spiritual harlotry / whoredom. Gilgal and Beth-aven were places connected with spiritual harlotry / whoredom in Israel.

Beth-aven might have been a deliberate name change given to Bethel since one of the golden calves that Jeroboam had built was placed in Bethel. Beth-aven means “house of iniquity or wickedness,”¹ and some believe that the name was changed from Bethel, which means, “house of God.”²

Others say that Beth-aven was actually a city near Bethel. Either way, it means “house of iniquity” and was an evil place.

¹R. L. Thomas, *New American Standard Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek Dictionaries*: Updated Edition, (Anaheim: Foundation Publications, Inc., 1998, 1981), H1007.

²R. L. Thomas, *New American Standard Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek Dictionaries*: Updated Edition, (Anaheim: Foundation Publications, Inc., 1998, 1981), H1008.

Israel had turned from God stubbornly so that He no longer pastured them as their Shepherd. He let them alone to bring judgment on them.

Even the rulers of Israel loved shame—deeds of shame in God’s sight.
But a time was coming when they would be ashamed.

Ask about “Ephraim” in verse 17. Who was he according to the Genesis cross-references?

Ephraim was one of Joseph’s sons who became one of the 12 tribes of Israel.
At the time of Hosea, it was the dominant of the northern tribes, and one of the few left.

Tell your group to look at their At a Glance chart and ask what they noted as a theme of this chapter.

A case / controversy against Israel; no knowledge of God; priests and people harlotry / whoredom

HOSEA 5

Ask how this chapter begins and compare this with 4:1.

Hear, give heed / pay attention, listen / give ear

Who needed to hear? And why?

Priests, royals, and people of Israel needed to hear God’s Word.
The leaders, priests, and king’s house needed to heed / pay attention to the prophecy because they were facing judgment for snaring the people.

“The revolters” went deep into depravity / slaughter. God’s people rejected the knowledge of Him and His law.

They were defiled by the idolatry, totally polluted and did not know the Lord.
They were unable to return to God because of that spirit of harlotry / whoredom within them.

They were enslaved to, overpowered by their sin. However, there was hope for them.

In 5:15 God said He was going away from them until they acknowledged their guilt and sought Him. Their affliction would cause them to seek Him.

How do the cross-references fit with this?

John 8:34-36

These verses make it very clear that everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin, but does not have to stay in that slavery. Jesus the Son sets men free.

Romans 6:6-18

Believers are freed from sin because the old self has been crucified with Christ.

Because of that fact, Christians are not to let sin reign in their bodies. They are able to present their members to God as slaves of righteousness.

Ask what your group learned about pride from verse 5, the word study, and the cross-references.

ga'own—“pride, arrogance, conceit”³

Pride testifies against the one who has it.
It’s self-exaltation. Israel had exalted itself above God.

Proverbs 8:13; 16:18; Mark 7:20-23; and 1 John 2:15-17

- God hates pride.
- Destruction comes as a result of pride.
- It comes from within, out of the heart, and defiles the person.
- It brings boastful pride / pride; it’s a lust / desire of the world.

Because of Israel’s, Ephraim’s, sins God withdrew from them. They were about to be devoured.

Tell your group to look at the map again and ask what they learned about the places in verse 8.

Gibeah, Ramah, and Beth-aven were all places in or near Benjamin. They were high hills, places for watchmen so the people could be warned of impending danger.

Blowing trumpets was a way to warn.

These three places were the last line of defense before Judah.

Gibeah

Judges 19:13-30

Harlotry, homosexuality, rape, death

Judah’s wound is mentioned in verse 13 along with Ephraim’s sickness. The sin was spreading to Judah.

NOTE: If you’ve been studying the Kings and Prophets Series, some in your group might remember when both kingdoms asked Assyria for help.

The contrast is in 2 Chronicles 32:7-8. Hezekiah encouraged the people to be strong and courageous and not fear. The One with them is greater (ESV—there are more with us) than the arm of flesh that the king of Assyria depended on, and God would help them.

³J. Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Hebrew (Old Testament)* (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).

Hosea says Ephraim went to one unable to heal. Had they gone to God, He would have healed them. But they chose to run to others instead—spiritual harlotry.

Instead of healing from the Lord, Israel faced Him tearing them to pieces (ESV—tearing them). God left them until they acknowledge their guilt and seek Him—that’s still future.

What is a possible theme of this chapter?

Seek the Lord

Ask your group where they run when they’ve sinned. Where should they run?

HOSEA 6

Verses 1-3

What are these verses about?

There is a call to return to the Lord.

How do the cross-references relate to the exhortation in 6:1 to return to the Lord?

Lamentations 3:40; 1 Samuel 7:3-4; and Joel 2:12-13

Let us examine our ways and return to the Lord.

Returning has to be with all one’s heart.

God is gracious, compassionate / merciful, slow to anger, abounding in mercy, and relenting of evil / over disaster.

God called Israel through Samuel to return to Him with all their hearts and remove / put away foreign gods; serve Him alone. And they did for a time.

Ezekiel 37:21-28

Ezekiel 37 tells about the future time of restoration. God will bring Israel back to their land from the nations and cleanse them. He will be their God, they will be His people, and He will live among them forever.

Lead your discussion back to Hosea 6:1-3. What is the content of these verses?

It’s the hope of return and healing—future life for Israel.

There has been a pattern in the messages of Hosea.

Israel sinned, God judged them, but He left them with hope.

NOTE: Some think the message that began in Hosea 4:1 ends with the hope in Hosea 6:1-3.

Verses 4-11

If that is the case, then what begins in verse 4?

The next message in Hosea might begin with these verses and go through chapter 7.

The Lord begins with questions for both Ephraim and Judah.
What will He do with them?

God again pointed out Ephraim’s and Judah’s sins.
No loyalty to Him is one of them.
God desires loyalty / steadfast love, rather than going through the motions of sacrifice.

Ask about the word study and cross-references for “loyalty / steadfast love.”

chesed means “goodness, kindness, faithfulness.”⁴

God’s people were not loyal to Him. There was no faithfulness, no kindness, among them. Israel’s loyalty / steadfast love to God went away like the dew of the morning goes away.

Micah 6:8

He spoke to the Southern Kingdom of Judah while Hosea spoke to the north. Micah said part of what God requires is kindness—*chesed*—and to walk humbly with Him.

Matthew 9:10-13 and 12:1-7

Jesus said the same thing to the Pharisees who were more concerned with the letter of the law than compassion / mercy. He came to call sinners.

Lead the discussion back to Hosea 6:7-11. How does this chapter end?

God sent His prophets to warn His people because they’d broken, transgressed the covenant.

Hosea 4 tells that the prophets stumbled with the priests, the result being that God would destroy Israel. The ones who should have been light to Israel were in darkness themselves.

The priests were like raiders / robbers and murderers. Israel was defiled from all the harlotry / whoredom, and it was a horrible thing.

God’s people’s loyalty / steadfast love to Him was gone.
They didn’t know Him any longer.
They were still going through religious practices of offerings, etc., but it did no good.

⁴James Strong, *Enhanced Strong’s Lexicon* (Woodside Bible Fellowship, 1995), H2617.

They had transgressed God’s covenant—broken His law.
Even the priests were defiled.

They faced God’s judgment, although a brief word of hope is directed toward Judah.
Because of verse 11, some think the message begun in Hosea 4:1 ends here.

What is a possible theme for this chapter?

Return to the Lord and He’ll revive

Ask your group for the overall message and time of chapters 1–6. Who did God speak to?
Tell them to look at their At a Glance chart and the chart “Rulers and Prophets of Hosea’s Time.”

While the first messages in Hosea 1–3 were directed to Hosea, the second was to the people—especially the priests.

It was a message about their forgetting God’s law, and therefore having no knowledge of Him. Their spiritual harlotry / whoredom had taken away their understanding. God told them through Hosea that He would destroy them because of that.

The message in these chapters could have been given between the first and second times that Assyria took captives from Israel. Jotham and/ or Ahaz ruled Judah at that time.

This message has the same pattern as the first—
Israel’s sin, punishment, promise of return for the future

Ask your group if they have a knowledge of God, knowledge from His Word, accurate knowledge of Him?

Encourage them to continue in their study to gain that knowledge. It will guide them in life so that they don’t participate in spiritual harlotry / whoredom.

**A LOVE THAT WILL NOT LET ME GO—HOSEA
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 3**

Lesson emphasis:

- Hosea 7–10
- Israel’s progression of being swallowed by the nations

REVIEW

You could begin your review telling your group to look at their At a Glance charts.

What is Hosea 1–3 about?

God spoke to Hosea regarding Israel’s spiritual harlotry / whoredom.
His family was a picture of that harlotry / whoredom.

God showed

- Sin
- Judgment
- Return

What is Hosea 4–6 about?

God spoke through Hosea to Israel.
Their spiritual harlotry / whoredom kept them from knowing God.
The priests rejected His law.

He told them of

- Sin
- Judgment
- Return

HOSEA 7

Verses 1-7

What and who are these verses about?

Iniquity, evil, wickedness / evil, lies, adultery.
Yet they didn’t consider that God remembered those sins against Him.

The people and priests lied to the kings and princes to make them happy.
But they were angry and plotting / intrigue against each other, consuming / devouring
their rulers.

None of the kings called on God.

NOTE: If your group has studied the Kings and Prophets Series up to this point, you could ask them what they remember in general about the kings of Israel.

Verses 8-12

How did God describe those who should have known Him?

His holy, set-apart nation mixed with the unholy nations.
Ephraim was becoming weakened by mixing with the nations, but he didn't know it.

Pride kept them from turning to God.

For Israel, Ephraim, to turn to the nations for help was as much spiritual adultery as worshipping other gods. They turned away from God.

Instead of the rulers calling on God, they called on Egypt and Assyria for help.

They didn't see their strength being devoured by the ones they cried to for help.

God told them through Hosea that He was about to chastise / discipline them.

How does Hebrews 12:5-11 compare with Hosea 7:12 and with believers now?

God disciplines His children because He loves them.
He disciplines for good, to bring about righteousness.

Direct the discussion back to Hosea 7:13-16. Ask what was coming and why.

Woe for straying from God
Destruction for rebelling against Him
No redemption for lying against Him

Although things were not good in the Northern Kingdom—no grain, wine, etc.—the priests, the kings, and the people turned away from God and to others for help.

Verse 14 says they assemble themselves (ESV—gash themselves) and turn away from God (ESV—rebel against him).

NOTE: This was done in idol worship and for further understanding can be compared with 1 Kings 18:20-29.

They called to Egypt for help but found only derision there.

Ask what the theme of this chapter is.

No kings call on God, not returned, sought Him; woe to them, they rebelled

HOSEA 8

Verse 1

How does this chapter begin?

Blow the trumpet; the enemy is coming against (ESV—one like a vulture is over) the house of the Lord. Because they transgressed God’s covenant and rebelled against His Law.

Ask what your group learned about blowing trumpets and warnings.

Numbers 10:8-10; Ezekiel 33:1-11

Trumpets were blown for warning. God told the children of Israel to blow trumpets as an alarm when going to war against the adversary.

Acts 20:26-31

Paul presented the whole purpose / counsel of God as a warning against facing God’s judgment for sin. He instructed the overseers of the church to be on the alert for themselves and all the flock against the enemy.

Knowing Him through His Word and telling others the message of the gospel is one way to sound the alarm.

Encourage your group to share with others what they’ve learned in Hosea.

You might ask about the repetition of 6:7 in 8:1.

They transgressed the covenant and rebelled against God’s law.
Knowing the truth, instead of believing lies, is a safeguard against coming judgment.

Verses 2-7

Ask about the main points of these verses and compare with Galatians 6.

Israel claimed to know God, but didn’t listen to Him.

Verses 5-6 tell of the foolishness of worshiping a god made by men.
God’s anger burned against His people.
They were going to reap consequences of what they had sown.

Galatians 6:7-9

People now can claim to know God, but are facing consequences of judgment.
God knows hearts; He can’t be deceived like people can.

Ask your group to evaluate what they’re sowing.

Verses 8-10

Ask about the consequences stated in these verses and compare with 2 Kings 15.

God’s people swallowed up by the nations, among the nations, their allies.
They were to have been the light to the nations.

2 Kings 15:17-21

Hosea prophesied at that time.

Israel’s king Menahem gave Pul—Tiglath-pileser—king of Assyria silver, which he got from taxing his people, for protection.

Shortly after that God used Assyria to take Israel captive from their land.

Verses 11-14

What are these verses about?

Israel had forgotten his Maker, but God remembered Israel’s sins and was about to punish them.

Both Israel and Judah were against God at this point, and they would both be punished for it.

Tell your group to look at their At a Glance chart and ask about a possible theme for Hosea 8.

Israel swallowed up among the nations; forgot their God

HOSEA 9

Verses 1-6

What was going to happen and why?

Ephraim will return to Egypt, slavery in a foreign land.
They would be taken to Assyria.

God was specific in telling of the punishment and retribution coming on them.

Tell your group to look at the chart “The Rulers and Prophets of Hosea’s Time” and the cross-reference in 2 Kings 17 and ask when this message might have been given.

This message of Hosea might have been during Hoshea’s reign as king of Israel.

2 Kings 17:1-6, 22-23

Hoshea was the last king of Israel before the exile in 722 B.C.

Ahaz, a wicked man, was the king in Judah.

Shalmaneser was the king of Assyria after Tiglath-pileser.

Shalmaneser found out that Hoshea had gone to So, the king of Egypt, for protection. Therefore, the king of Assyria got rid of Hoshea by putting him in prison.

Shalmaneser besieged Samaria for three years and in Hoshea's ninth year of reign, captured Samaria and took them into exile to Assyria all because of idolatry—they forsook God, forgot Him.

They did not depart from this wickedness until He sent them into captivity, removed them from His sight.

How do the warnings in Hosea relate to those in Deuteronomy?

Deuteronomy 28:58-68

God had warned His people before this happened.
And He referred to inflicting them with the diseases of Egypt and returning there.

He also warned them through His prophets while they were turning from Him.

Verses 7-14

What do these verses say?

The prophet was a fool. The iniquity was great.

They had gone deep into depravity / corruption as in the days of Gibeah. Let your group share what they remember about Gibeah from the last lesson. Gibeah was in Benjamin and was the place of gross homosexuality that was not judged by their brothers.

Woe to Ephraim! God was about to depart from them.

Verses 15-17

Ask what your group learned from these verses and about Gilgal from the cross-references.

Joshua 4:19-24; 5:8-11; 1 Samuel 11:14-15

Gilgal was the place where Israel entered their land of promise. Twelve stones were taken from the river bottom and placed on the bank as a reminder, a memorial of what God had done. It was where they first ate fruit of their land.

It was also the place of circumcision as a sign that God had rolled away the reproach of Egypt.

Hosea 4:15; 9:15; 12:11; Amos 4:4; 5:4-5

Gilgal became a place of sacrifice. God told Amos not to go there. The people were making useless sacrifices instead of obeying.

It became a place of evil.

God would love them no more.
cast them away.

They would be wanderers among the nations.
This is still true today even though some Jews have returned to Israel.

Ask what your group noted on their At a Glance as a theme for this chapter.

Days of punishment have come

HOSEA 10

NOTE: As most of this chapter is repetition—in different words—of what God already said in the previous chapters, you don't need to spend much time discussing this.

Ask for the main point and if your group had questions about any part of it.

Faithless Israel would be carried to Assyria.
They had forgotten their God.
They had mixed with the nations and would be swallowed up by them.
Their kings would be completely / utterly cut off.

The days ahead for them would be brutal. Apparently they knew about Shalman's brutality at a now unknown place, Beth-arbel.

NOTE: Shalman might be a reference to Shalmaneser, Tiglath's son and heir to his throne.

This segment does not end in hope. Israel was told what to do in verse 12—seek the Lord. They did not.

Israel went from being mixed up with the nations to being swallowed up by the nations, because they did not seek God.

To end your discussion, you can ask your group how they are to seek the Lord and what the results are of seeking Him with a whole heart.

**A LOVE THAT WILL NOT LET ME GO—HOSEA
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 4**

Lesson emphasis:

- Hosea 11–14
- God’s love and compassion toward His people

REVIEW

To begin, ask what your group remembers about the first three segments of Hosea. Tell them to look at their At a Glance charts.

Hosea 1–3	Pictures of Israel’s spiritual harlotry / whoredom
Hosea 4–6:3	perish for their lack of knowledge of God
Hosea 6:4–10:15	mixed with the nations, swallowed up by them

Ask about the pattern of the messages.

Sin
Punishment
Return

In light of this pattern, ask your group if they think that Hosea 11:1-11 is the end of the third message or the beginning of the fourth.

Since this chapter is more about God’s compassion on Ephraim, it would fit the pattern of all four messages if it was the end of the third message; 6:4–11:11.

HOSEA 11

Verses 1-7

What are these verses about?

Israel’s past, what God had done for them
God loved Israel.
He called them.
But they turned to idols, to Baals.
He taught them.
He healed them.
But they didn’t know it.

They were about to perish for their lack of knowledge, for their rejection of His law.

Ephraim/ Israel refused to return to God, so the king of Assyria would rule them. They would become slaves as they had been in Egypt.

God’s people were bent on turning away from Him.

Verses 8-11

Ask your group how they understand God’s heart toward His people in these verses. Compare with verses 1-4.

His compassion was toward them, and He didn’t want to give them up.

How do the cross-references about Admah and Zeboiim help explain what Hosea said? Tell your group to look at the map while discussing these places.

Genesis 10:15-19; 14:1-9; and Deuteronomy 29:22-29

Admah and Zeboiim were two cities God destroyed completely with Sodom and Gomorrah.

He was not going to completely wipe out His people Israel.

Verses 9-11 tell of hope for them.

He is the Holy One in their midst. After their punishment, He would restore them. Some of this prophecy refers to the time of Jesus’ second coming.

Verse 11 could be the conclusion of Hosea’s third message, an ending with hope.

Tell your group to look at their At a Glance chart again and ask about a theme for Hosea 11.

Israel turned from God, but He will not destroy them

HOSEA 11:12–12:14

NOTE: The NASB¹ and ESV² marginal notes say Hosea 11:12 is the beginning of chapter 12 in the Hebrew.

Since this might be the beginning of Hosea’s last message, you can ask when the Lord spoke this. Tell your group to look at the chart “The Rulers and Prophets of Hosea’s Time.”

Hosea 1:1 says that God’s word came to him during Hezekiah’s reign over Judah. Assyria took Israel captive during the sixth year of Hezekiah’s reign after besieging Samaria for three years.

So this last message could have been during those siege years.

¹New American Standard Bible: 1995 update, marginal note (Hosea 11:12).

²The Holy Bible: English Standard Version, marginal note (Hosea 11:12).

Ask about the pattern of this last message if it begins with Hosea 11:12.

Israel's sin, God's coming punishment, hope for the future.

Who is contrasted with whom in 11:12–12:1?

God, the Holy One, is faithful. (ESV says Judah was still faithful to the Holy One.)

Ephraim was deceitful.

They turned from their covenant with God to make one with Assyria.

That covenant was about to be their ruin.

What did God remind Ephraim/ Israel of in this chapter? Why?

He told of their history, recounting His faithfulness to them.

He called them to return to Him, the Lord of Hosts.

He went all the way back to Egypt, telling them that He had been their God since then.

He reminded them of the prophets He'd sent to them beginning with Moses, verse 13.

God kept them through the years and spoke to them, calling them to Him.

But they forgot Him, rejected knowledge of Him.

They boasted in their riches, saying they had found wealth for themselves.

Let your group discuss if they've ever done what Ephraim did, what the consequences were, and the hope.

You can ask if anyone learned something they want to discuss from the Genesis cross-references about Jacob's life. If they're all familiar with it, you don't need to make time to discuss it.

Bethel is mentioned in verse 4 as the place where Jacob—Israel—found God, and the Lord spoke to him there. But it had become a place of idolatry.

God called them to return to Him.

He called them to persevere as their father Jacob had done.

How do the cross-references in Genesis and Exodus compare with Hosea 12:12-13?

Genesis 28:1-2; 29:20-30; Exodus 13:3

Jacob went to Aram to get a wife from his relatives.

The prophet in verse 13 probably refers to Moses who led them out of Egypt.

But in Hosea's time, they didn't listen to God's prophets, so their guilt was on their own heads.

Ask about a chapter theme for Hosea 12.

Jacob and God; return and wait for Him

HOSEA 13

Ask about the flow of thought from chapter 12.

He continued speaking about Ephraim.

At one time he was powerful, but he forgot God, exalted himself, and became proud.

Ask your group what they learned about Ephraim, and when he held an exalted position in Israel.

Genesis 48:8-20

Jacob, when blessing Joseph's sons, placed Ephraim, the second born, before Manasseh. He was given the firstborn blessing and made greater than the older. His descendants would become a multitude of nations.

Numbers 13:1-3, 8, 16; Joshua 1:1-6

Joshua, a leader in the tribe of Ephraim, was one of the 12 spies sent into the promised land. He also was the one who led Israel into the promised land. God told Joshua that He would be with him as He was with Moses.

You might ask what they learned from the 1 Kings 11 and 12 cross-references about another Ephraimite who was offered an exalted position.

NOTE: Jeroboam was the first king of Israel, but not the same as the king of Hosea's time.

Jeroboam, an Ephraimite, was Solomon's servant, a valiant warrior / very able and over all the forced labor of the house of Joseph.

Before King Solomon died, God told Jeroboam that he would reign over 10 tribes of Israel and over whatever he desired if he would listen to all God's commands and walk in His ways.

When Jeroboam became king of Israel, the northern ten tribes, he set up golden calves in Bethel and Dan, because he was afraid of losing his kingship. He established feast days and false priests and made it easy for the Northern Kingdom to worship the idols as God, rather than taking the long trip to Jerusalem to worship God as He had commanded.

Ask about the history from 1 Kings 16:29-33.

Ahab was worse than Jeroboam as he worshiped the gold calves but also brought Baal worship to Samaria, the capital of the Northern Kingdom.

Lead the discussion back to Hosea 13.

Verse 4 repeats 12:9; He had been the Lord their God since Egypt.
And they were to have known / knew no other.
He is the only savior!

God cared for them in the wilderness.
But when they were satisfied, their hearts became proud and they forgot Him.

He was their Savior, but they turned against their Help.
Destruction was coming on them. They faced God's wrath.

Verses 10-11 recount the history of when Israel asked for a king. It was because they rejected God as their king. They were about to lose their king until the end time.

Ask how the statement used in verse 14 compares to Paul's use in 1 Corinthians 15:50-57.

First Corinthians is a positive statement—the sting of death removed by the death and resurrection of Christ.

But in Hosea it was a negative statement. God was not going to deliver them from death.

NOTE: In Hebrew, Hosea 13:16 is the first verse of chapter 14.^{3, 4}

Samaria would not escape punishment for rebellion against her God.
The short description, verses 15-16, of the siege and battle with Assyria is terrible.

Ask about possible themes for chapter 13.

Idolatry, destruction; shall I redeem them, no compassion

HOSEA 14

How does this last message of Hosea continue?

The call to return is most prominent in this chapter. The whole book ends with God calling to His people Israel to return to Him. It ends with hope for that return.

He tells the wise and discerning to pay attention to what Hosea said; it also applies now.

Help your group to think about sharing what they've learned in Hosea with Jewish friends they have.

³*New American Standard Bible: 1995 update*, marginal note (Hosea 13:16).

⁴*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*, marginal note (Hosea 13:16).

Tell your group to look at their At a Glance chart. Then ask about themes for the chapter and the book.

Hosea 14 Return and I will heal, love

Book theme Return from harlotry and nations; He will heal us

Compare the call with the other cross-references they studied.

1 John 1:5-10

Confess your sins.

Then God will forgive and cleanse because He is faithful and righteous / just.

Isaiah 55:6-7; Lamentations 3:19-23; Micah 7:18-20

Seek Him; call on Him while He is near.

Forsake wickedness, and He will have compassion.

His compassions never cease or fail. (ESV—His mercies never come to an end.) They are new every morning. Great is His faithfulness.

There is none like God who pardons iniquity and casts sins into the depth of the sea.

Ask what they learned about God's redemption of Israel in the latter days from the cross-references.

Deuteronomy 4:27-31

Because He is compassionate, when Israel, in their distress / tribulation, calls on Him with all their heart and soul, He will not fail / leave them or destroy them, nor forget the covenant He swore to their fathers.

Isaiah 42:23–43:7

Jacob or Ephraim paid no attention / did not take it to heart when the Lord poured out His anger. However, He redeemed them and they are His. When they walk through the water or fire, they will not be destroyed. He is the Holy One of Israel, their Savior. They are precious in His sight / eyes, honored, and loved. There's hope for everyone called by God's name.

Jeremiah 30:23–31:14

This speaks of the gathering of all the remnant of Israel from every corner of the earth. God will turn mourning into joy, give them joy / gladness for sorrow. They shall be satisfied with His goodness.

End your discussion by asking what your group learned for their life from this study of Hosea.