

## Forgiven Bible Study

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### Hosea 1-3

The book of Hosea was written by Hosea, a prophet in the mid-eighth century B.C. Hosea is the first of the 12 books in the Bible known as the Minor Prophets. This simply means that these prophetic books are shorter than the major prophets, such as Jeremiah, Isaiah, or Ezekiel. Hosea's prophesy was no less important, however. All the prophetic books are equally important, it's just that some wrote more, and some wrote less.

Hosea and Gomer lived under the rule of King Jeroboam II. He was known as one of the worst kings in Israel's history. Due to his apathy, idol worship became rampant, which opened the door for Israelites to cheat, steal, and be morally corrupt. Violence and murder were normal occurrences. The people were so caught up in their sinful ways and a loving God was barely a memory for most if they remembered Him at all. They were completely unaware that they were facing war with Assyria, which would have been devastating with thousands killed or taken into slavery.

The prophesy of Hosea was an illustration of how God loved the children of Israel so much that He wanted to redeem them and bring them back to Him. Hosea was tasked by God to warn the children of Israel to turn from their wicked ways and come back to God. Hosea and Gomer's story was a beautiful love story, not just of forgiveness, but also reconciliation and redemption. It was a story of renewing trust between two individuals whose relationship was broken through sin, and a parody between Israel and God.

To be one with God the Father requires forgiveness. God has already forgiven us through the death and resurrection of His Son, Christ Jesus, but it remains our responsibility to take action and seek His forgiveness for ourselves. Once we do that we are reconciled, which simply means that our past is put away and is no longer being counted against us. We are redeemed, delivered from our sin. We are forgiven!

In 1 John 1:9 we are told that "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness." This is a promise right from His Word. Forgiveness meets reconciliation.

Group discussion:

1. What are some of the ways we hurt our relationship with God and need His forgiveness?
  - a. Perhaps we do not trust Him to help us with the little things, only the big issues.
  - b. We stop our daily fellowship with Him.
  - c. We hold onto grudges we have with others.
  - d. We do not forgive ourselves for things we have thought or done after He has forgiven us.
2. How does God's offer of forgiveness provide us with a second chance?
  - a. Repentance: we start believing He has kept His promises to us, and we start keeping ours.
  - b. Changing the way we view our everyday lives and how we allow God to help us.
  - c. Having daily talks with Him (prayer), not just reading our want list to Him, but giving thanks.
  - d. Sharing with others what God has done for us.
3. Do you believe God can forgive you and reconcile you to Himself in a renewed relationship?
4. Are you as generous in forgiving others as God has forgiven you?

***If I have wounded any soul today,  
If I have caused one foot to go astray,  
If I have walked in my own willful way,  
Dear Lord, forgive.***

***Charles Hutchinson Gabriel 1911  
"An Evening Prayer"***