

Hosea

GOD'S FAITHFUL LOVE
FOR HIS FAITHLESS PEOPLE

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A Love That Won't Let Go Hosea 11

All of the evil in the world can be traced back to wrong thinking about God. This is true ultimately – Eve ate the fruit and gave it to her husband because she thought wrong thoughts about who God is and what He is like. But it's also true individually – I sin because I think wrong thoughts about God. One of the most important things we can understand about God is his love for us, learning what God's love is like as he describes it, not as we would describe it. In this passage, we learn a very important truth about God's love.

God's love is a love that won't let go

- I. **God shows us his intensely personal love and care (vv 1-4).**
 - A. God's love is like the love of a caring father.
 - B. God's love is like the love of a caring farmer.

- II. **God shows us our sinful response (v 2).**
 - A. We ignore God's calls (cf. Hosea 4:7; 10:1).
 - B. We pursue our own way.

III. God shows us his response to his rejected love (vv 5-9).

- A. God becomes angry when we sin against him (vv 5-7).
 - 1. God threatens to bring calamity and disaster (vv 5-6).
 - 2. God threatens to ignore the cries of his people (v 7).

- B. God gives mercy when we sin against him (vv 9-10).
 - 1. God's compassion pushes him to show mercy.
 - 2. God's holiness pushes him to show mercy.

IV. God shows us how to respond to his love (vv 10-11).

- A. We should glory in God's love.
- B. We should return to God.

Believe it or not, this is a Christmas passage! Matthew quotes Hosea 11:1 to describe Joseph taking Mary and Christ to Egypt. Many people have struggled with how Matthew could quote this, since it doesn't seem at first to refer to the Messiah. The answer is probably that Matthew means "fulfill" not in the sense of a definite prophesy, but as fulfilling a pattern that God intended for Christ. Although Hosea may not have necessarily had the Messiah in mind, Matthew points to this passage to show that Jesus fulfilled the same pattern Israel did.

God's son Israel was called out of Egypt but failed to love and serve God, but Christ was called out of Egypt and obeyed the Father perfectly. Where Israel failed, Christ succeeded! His success is put on our account (2 Corinthians 5:21) and provides the hope and motivation we need to live for God!