

## ***RISKING ALL FOR LOVE***

**Lord, you want me to do what? Hosea 1:1—2:1**

*“In the place where it was said to them, ‘You are not my people,’ they will be called ‘sons of the living God.’ ” Hosea 1:10b*

### **Day 1: Read Hosea 1:1—2:1.**

1. For a brief introduction to Hosea, let’s return to the time of the Exodus when God led the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt. Read Exodus 20:18–19 and describe why God chose to speak to his people through prophets. (See also Deut. 18:9–22.)
2. Reread the words of Moses in Deuteronomy 18:14–22 and list some of the characteristics of a true prophet of God.
3. How do we know that Hosea is a true prophet? (Hint: Note all occurrences of the words “The LORD said...” in Hosea 1.)
4. Hosea is one in a long line of prophets, but who is the ultimate fulfillment of Moses’ words? (John 1:45; 5:46–47; Acts 3:22–26)

### **Day 2: Read Hosea 1:1–2.**

5. Hosea lives in the northern kingdom of a prominent, powerful, and prosperous Israel. The world looks at Israel and sees success, but when God looks at Israel what does he see? (vs. 2)
6. Does the spiritual condition of his people come as a surprise to God? (Deut. 31:16–18)
7. Do you think God’s assessment of their condition comes as a surprise to Israel? Explain your answer.
8. Think about your own heart. What sins do you minimize or ignore? What sins do you consider too trivial to repent of? Meditate on James 4:1–10, and ask God to show you where you have been unfaithful to him...and then ask him for the grace to repent.

### **Day 3: Read Hosea 1:2–9.**

9. What instruction does God give to Hosea? (vs. 2)
10. Who does “the adulterous wife,” Gomer, represent?

11. Why do you think it isn't enough for God to send Hosea out with a spoken message alone?
12. How does his obedience to God prepare Hosea to fulfill his appointed task? For example, what do you think Hosea learns through his own marriage about God's love for his people?

**Day 4: Read Hosea 1:2–9.**

13. If Gomer represents the nation of Israel as a whole, who might her children represent?
14. God gives the children unusual names. Jezreel is the firstborn. Jezreel is the name of a well-known town and valley in Hosea's homeland. It had been the site of glory for Israel in the days of Gideon, but more recently it had been the site of King Jehu's bloodbath (read about it in 2 Kings 9-10). The name is a reminder that God will punish the rulers of Israel, Jehu's descendants. And indeed, soon after Hosea's prophecy, the last of Jehu's line is assassinated, and only about 30 years later, Israel's "bow" (vs. 5)—its army—is defeated and the nation is taken into exile by Assyria.

What does God name the other two children, and what do their names mean?

15. Look at the three names and their meanings. What progression, if any, do you see in these successive messages to Israel?

**Day 5: Read Hosea 1:10—2:1.**

16. How is the whole tone of these verses different from the rest of the chapter?
17. What promises does God pour forth in the following verses:
  - a. verse 10a
  - b. verse 10b
  - c. verse 11
18. What surprising reversal of the meanings of the children's names occurs at the end of chapter 1?
19. What effect would this message have on Hosea's audience?
20. What effect does the message of God's unconditional love and saving grace have on you?