

RISKING ALL FOR LOVE**Anatomy of Infidelity Hosea 4**

“There is no faithfulness, no love, no acknowledgment of God in the land.” Hosea 4:1b

Day 1: Read Hosea 4.

1. To whom is Hosea speaking and what are the three indictments that he brings on God’s behalf? (vs. 1) What must be going on in God’s heart as he brings these charges? (Reflect on 2:19–20.)
2. In the Old Testament the verb “to know” indicates sexual intimacy in marriage. What insight does this give into Hosea’s statement in verse 1, “There is... no knowledge of God in the land.” (ESV)
3. Describe the mayhem that erupts when Israel breaks relationship with God and disregards His law. (vs. 2) Why do you think Hosea’s list includes the social crimes of the Ten Commandments? (See Matt. 22:36–40.)
4. What judgments of God fall on the earth because the Israelites forsake the knowledge of God, truth, mercy and restraint? (vs. 3)
5. Think of a time when you have chosen to turn away from God. God always forgives our sin when we confess; write a time when you have seen God redeem even the consequences of that sin.

Day 2: Read Hosea 4:4-9.

6. Describe what the blindness of disobedience looks like. (vs. 5)
7. What did God intend for Israel’s glory to be? (Isa. 60:19) The Israelites have forsaken that glory for idols—what does this profit them? (vs.7; Jer. 2:11–13)
8. In verse 6, what two accusations does God level at his children, both priest and people? What are the tragic consequences of this behavior? (vss. 6, 9)

Day 3: Read Hosea 4:5–14.

9. What was the role of the priest? (See: Lev. 10:10–11; Mal. 2:7) Why is part of the blame for the people’s condition laid at the feet of the priests? (vss. 5–8) How might the charge of verse 8 be quite literal? (Lev. 6:26)

10. What does verse 6 mean when it says that “my people are destroyed from lack of knowledge”? How do we guard ourselves against this same destruction? (2 Tim. 3:14–16; Col. 3:16)

11. The priests’ obsessions have been food and sex; how do these ultimately fail them? (vs. 10a) What does Jesus tell us about fleeting pleasures and lasting satisfaction? (Mt. 18:6; Jn. 4:13–14)

12. “Harlotry, wine and new wine enslave the heart” (vs. 11, New KJV). Describe the indulgent downward spiral that gets Israel to this point. What else in your personal experience has a tendency to “enslave” your heart? (Consider Mt. 6:19–21.)

Day 4: Read Hosea 4:11–15.

13. The poem of verses 12 and 13 begins with people consulting a wooden stick and ends with them lying under the trees. How is this behavior utterly foolish and yet so alluring? What finally leads the people of Israel astray? (vss.1, 12)

14. The worship of God had become so intermixed with the worship of Baal that the two almost became melded into one divine being. As Christians we are now God’s temple (1 Cor.6:19–20); how might we be incorporating cultural non-biblical perspectives into our daily practical living (worship)? (Read Jas. 4:4–6.)

15. In verse 15 what is God warning the Southern Kingdom Judah against? What is happening at these two sanctuary sites as a result of the bad teaching of the priests and the disobedience of God’s people? (See Hos. 9:15; Am. 4:4.)

16. Why do you think Hosea gives an injunction against the people’s saying “As surely as the LORD lives!” before entering these sites? (vs. 15; Jer. 5:2)

Day 5: Read Hosea 4:16–19.

17. What does Hosea mean when he uses the interesting word picture of Israel as a lamb who is stubborn like a heifer? (vs.16). Is there an area in your life where you are stubbornly, rebelliously refusing to let God rescue and shepherd you? (Reflect on; Mt: 18:12–13)

18. There is a two-pronged sad ending to this lifestyle of rebellion; what is it? (vs. 17)

19. Where is the glimmer of hope for the future of Israel? (vs. 19b; Jer. 31:16–20) To what hope can we as God’s children cling? (Read Isa. 53:5–6; Heb. 12:5–6; Rev. 3:19–20.)