

## Hosea Introduction Living for the Weekend

For the Israelites living during the reign of King Jeroboam, life was good in the Northern Kingdom. The economy was improving and most people had jobs. There was rain for their crops. Families were healthy. The occasional tug on their hearts to live wholeheartedly for the One, True God came less and less often, mostly only when one of those crazy prophet-types was walking through one of their respective towns. They were busy, happy, and certainly not interested in giving up anything in order to think seriously about God. They were living for the weekend.

Hosea heard the call of God in his heart and was one of the very few who responded. He longed to know God better, so he searched for all the truth he could find. In his heart he learned to communicate with God as he worked and ate and even as he slept. He realized soon that God was asking him to give every minute of his life to telling others about Him. He heard the soft whispers of God in his ear and began to travel farther and farther away from his home – going from one city in Israel to another – beginning to preach and teach the words of God.

God was warning the Israelites to turn from their soft lives full of idols, and turn back to Him. But they had no desire to hear such a ridiculous message from an obviously pathetic young man – who had no wife, no children, no future. Work hard they would, but they were not interested in listening to an idiot, nor in giving up their fun – their weekends. “God is a God of love,” they must have said. “He would not ask us to give up all the things that make life wonderful for us!”

He was a young bachelor, and it did get lonely. People were curious about him when they first realized he was a prophet, but before too long his audiences got smaller and smaller.

But there was no turning back from the call of God on his life...