

## Dr. John Oswalt, Hosea, Session 10, Hosea 11

### Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Study Guide, 4) Briefing Document, and 5) FAQs

#### **1. Abstract of Oswalt, Hosea, Session 1, Hosea Background and Hosea 1, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL**

This lecture by Dr. John Oswalt **analyzes Hosea chapter 11**, exploring its structure and metaphors. He **interprets the chapter's themes** of God's unwavering love for Israel despite their repeated unfaithfulness, using metaphors of marriage, parent-child relationships, and farmer and livestock. Oswalt **connects Hosea's message to the contemporary church**, highlighting the parallels between ancient Israel's rejection of God and modern Christians' struggles with surrender and control. He emphasizes God's enduring love and capacity for transformation, even amidst the consequences of human choices. The lecture also **examines textual interpretations and the concept of "fulfillment"** in scripture, using the example of Hosea 11:1 and its connection to Matthew 2.

**2. 14 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Oswalt, Hosea, Session 1 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament → Minor Prophets → Hosea).**



**Oswalt\_Hosea\_Session10.mp3**

### 3. Oswalt, Hosea, Session 1, Hosea Background and Hosea 1

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the main themes and important ideas from the provided transcript of Dr. John Oswalt's lecture on Hosea 11:

#### **Briefing Document: Dr. John Oswalt on Hosea 11**

**Overview:** Dr. Oswalt's lecture focuses on Hosea chapter 11, exploring God's unwavering love for Israel despite their repeated unfaithfulness. He delves into the changing metaphors used to describe God's relationship with Israel, from husband-wife to father-child, and even farmer-animal. The lecture also tackles themes of sin, idolatry, surrender, and the nature of God's anger and redemption. Oswalt emphasizes that God's actions are motivated by love, even when discipline is necessary.

#### **Key Themes and Ideas:**

##### **1. Structure of Hosea:**

- Oswalt proposes a structure for the book of Hosea, dividing it into sections:
- Chapters 1-3: The parable of Hosea and his unfaithful wife, representing God's love for Israel.
- Chapters 4-14: Exploration of Israel's infidelity and God's responses.
- Further subdivisions within 4-14:
  - 4:1-6:3: "No knowledge of God" (da'at) - emphasizing a lack of intimacy.
  - 6:4-11:11: "No steadfast love (hesed) for God".
  - 11:12-End: "No faithfulness or truth."
- He acknowledges that creating a neat outline for Hosea is difficult due to the repetition of themes in different forms.

##### **1. Shifting Metaphors of God's Relationship:**

- The lecture highlights a shift in metaphor from husband-wife to parent-child in chapter 11.

- **Parent-Child Metaphor:** God's love for Israel is portrayed as a father's love for his child: caring, training, and disciplined yet tender.
- This is not a king-subject relationship but a personal, familial one: "You're my subject, yes. You're my bride, yes. You're my child for whom I give my life."
- The metaphor goes "behind marriage," and represents a blood relationship from the outset.
- He highlights Exodus 4:22-23, where Israel is referred to as God's "firstborn son".
- **Farmer-Animal Metaphor:** Later in the chapter (verse 4), God is depicted as a farmer who leads his animals with "cords of kindness" and "bands of love" (Hebrew: *aha*, affection), emphasizing God's humane approach, and not a harsh beating.
- Oswalt notes, "I became to them as one who eases the yoke on their jaws. I bent down to them and fed them." This illustrates a gentle, loving approach.

#### 1. **God's Love as Motivation:**

- God's actions are always motivated by love. As Oswalt states, "God is motivated toward us by love."
- This love is the central reality of biblical faith.

#### 1. **Israel's Unfaithfulness and Rejection of God:**

- **The Nature of Sin:** A key element of sin is the refusal to surrender one's will to God, expressed as "I want what I want, when I want it, where I want it."
- **Idolatry:** Idols give the illusion of control; people seek to meet their own needs rather than surrendering to God and letting Him meet their needs. Oswalt says, "I have the illusion that I, with my hands, can supply my needs."
- People trust idols (like the Baals) over God because idols do not ask for surrender.
- Idols also represent earthly, tangible things like money and pornography, which provide a false sense of control.
- Israel continually went "away from" God, despite God's repeated calls: "The more I called them, or the more they were called, the more they went away."

#### 1. **God's Healing and Compassion:**

- God is not only the instructor but also the healer: "I took them up by their arms, but they did not know that I had healed them."
- The image of God healing children who have fallen down deepens the parental love aspect of the metaphor.
- He "restores" his children, in contrast to the "powerless" Baals who cannot do anything for them.

#### 1. **Fulfillment of Prophecy:**

- Oswalt discusses how Matthew 2 uses Hosea 11:1 ("Out of Egypt I called my son") in reference to Jesus's return from Egypt.
- He argues that the word "fulfill" can have a range of meanings (e.g. correspond to, demonstrate the meaning of, parallel). Hosea 11:1 is an example of literary correspondence where the same event (being called out of Egypt) happens to both Israel and Jesus.

#### 1. **Exile as a Consequence of Sin:**

- Oswalt draws parallels between the Exodus from Egypt and the exile to Assyria and Egypt, stating that Israel was "going right back to the slavery in which they were."
- The exile is not God's primary intention, but a consequence of not living according to God's design. As Oswalt says, "it's if you won't live according to the way I designed the world to function, then it's going to hurt."
- God doesn't want to destroy but ultimately to refine. "God's final word is never destruction."

#### 1. **God's Righteous Anger and Compassion:**

- Oswalt clarifies that God's anger is not like human anger. "It's a righteous anger. It's not just selfish; you can't do that to me. "
- It is justified because God gives warnings beforehand.
- Despite their rebellion, God's compassion is evident in his words: "How can I give you up, O Israel? ... My heart recoils within me. My compassion grows warm and tender."
- He emphasizes that God does not *send* people to hell, but rather allows them to go because of their choices.

### 1. The Holy Nature of God:

- God is "the Holy One," which means the "absolutely other in whose presence we cannot exist."
- The sacrificial system is designed to allow people to be in the presence of a holy God.
- Oswalt uses the metaphor of a blast furnace and bales of hay to describe the holiness of God versus the frailty of humanity. He also notes that God's invitation is to be "transformed" rather than to simply engage in transactional religion.

### 1. God's Promise of Restoration:

- Oswalt emphasizes that God will not wipe his people off the face of the earth, but rather bring them back, using exile to refine them. He states, "I, in fact, am going to use the exile to refine you."
- They will go after the Lord. "When he roars, his children will come trembling."

### 1. Application to Contemporary Issues:

- Oswalt draws a parallel between Israel's unfaithfulness and the modern exodus of young people from the church, tying it to a lack of foundational faith in the home. He also makes a connection to the transactional nature of modern religion.
- He uses the image of the albatross from "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" to illustrate how unresolved issues (like unforgiveness) can weigh people down, and that God can free us through transformative experiences of "the refiner's fire."
- Oswalt also warns against "eternal insecurity," which suggests that God will only take care of people who don't sin. Instead he urges people to remember, "How can I let you go? How can I give you up?" emphasizing God's enduring love.

### Concluding Thought:

The lecture concludes with the idea of God's transformative love. While God's holiness is like a "blast furnace," he invites us into a process of transformation, changing "bales of hay" into "Damascus steel." This transformation is necessary for true forgiveness and freedom.

### Key Quotes:

- "God is motivated toward us by love."
- "It's really a repetition of a whole lot of things in different ways and different forms. To say, these people are not, in any sense, Yahweh's marriage partner, and yet Yahweh will not give up on them."
- "You're my subject, yes. You're my bride, yes. You're my child for whom I give my life."
- "The more I called them, or the more they were called, the more they went away."
- "I have the illusion that I, with my hands, can supply my needs."
- "I became to them as one who eases the yoke on their jaws. I bent down to them and fed them."
- "God's final word is never destruction."
- "How can I give you up, O Israel? ... My heart recoils within me. My compassion grows warm and tender."
- "I am God and not a man, the holy one in your midst."
- "How can I let you go? How can I give you up?"

This briefing document provides a comprehensive summary of the core ideas in Dr. Oswalt's lecture, highlighting the complex and multifaceted nature of God's relationship with Israel.

## 4. Briefing Document, Oswalt, Hosea, Session 1, Hosea Background and Hosea 1

### Hosea Chapter 11 Study Guide

#### Short Answer Quiz

1. What are the three sections Dr. Oswalt proposes for understanding the book of Hosea, and what key characteristic does he assign to each section?
2. In Hosea 11:1, God uses the metaphor of a parent-child relationship. What does this metaphor reveal about God's connection to Israel that the husband-wife metaphor does not?
3. Explain how Dr. Oswalt interprets the phrase, "the more I called them, the more they went away." What human tendency does this reveal?
4. Why do people create idols, according to Dr. Oswalt? How does this relate to our relationship with God?
5. How does Dr. Oswalt connect the concept of healing with God's teaching and training of Ephraim?
6. Explain Dr. Oswalt's interpretation of "fulfillment" in relation to Hosea 11:1 and Matthew 2, and list at least two ways in which biblical fulfillment can be understood.
7. How does Dr. Oswalt describe the ways in which God led Israel, using a metaphor related to farming and cattle? What does this metaphor illustrate about God's character?
8. Why does God say he will not respond to the people's cries in Hosea 11? According to Dr. Oswalt, what were the people doing when they called out to God?
9. What does Dr. Oswalt suggest about God's intent behind the exile of Israel and how does it relate to Hosea 11:8-9?
10. How does Dr. Oswalt define "the holy," and how does this concept relate to humanity's ability to be in the presence of God?

#### Short Answer Quiz - Answer Key

1. The three sections are chapters 1-3 (parable of Hosea and Gomer, illustrating God's love), 4:1-11:11 (no knowledge of God, then no steadfast love for God) and 11:12-end (no faithfulness or truth).
2. The parent-child metaphor highlights God's deep, personal care, blood relationship, tenderness, training, and discipline. It goes beyond marriage into something more fundamental.
3. Dr. Oswalt interprets it as revealing a human tendency toward rebellion; the very act of calling can incite a desire to resist submission. It demonstrates a natural resistance to surrendering one's will.
4. People create idols to feel a sense of control over their lives and needs, as an illusion of self-sufficiency; this is in opposition to surrendering to God, who knows our true needs and offers to meet them.
5. He connects healing with the restorative aspect of parental care during the learning process; when a child stumbles, the parent heals their injuries, deepening the loving relationship, showing that God is not just a teacher but a compassionate healer.
6. Dr. Oswalt says "fulfillment" can mean correspondence or demonstrating the meaning of something. He uses the passage to show how Jesus's journey out of Egypt corresponded with God's calling Israel out of Egypt to demonstrate the meaning of both events.
7. He uses the metaphor of a farmer leading cattle with cords of kindness and bands of love to illustrate God's gentle affection. God leads with humane cords rather than with a choke collar or severe discipline, showing His tenderness toward His people.
8. God will not respond because they treat Him like an idol, attempting to use Him for their own ends without repentance or true submission. They called out to Yahweh for help but without intending to change their ways.
9. He suggests that God does not intend to destroy, but that exile is the consequence of Israel's choices and a refining process rather than an act of vengeance. The exile happens because of human choices, but God hates that the people must suffer for those choices.
10. Dr. Oswalt defines "the holy" as the absolute other, in whose presence we cannot exist without being destroyed. The sacrificial system, the temple, and the person



of Jesus make it possible to live in relationship with God without being destroyed by His holiness.

## Essay Questions

1. Explore the various metaphors used in Hosea 11 (parent-child, husband-wife, farmer-animal) and discuss how each metaphor uniquely contributes to our understanding of God's relationship with Israel and what those metaphors communicate to us.
2. Analyze the concept of "control" as presented in Dr. Oswalt's lecture. How does the illusion of control manifest in the lives of the Israelites and in contemporary society, and what are the consequences of pursuing this illusion?
3. Discuss the different ways Dr. Oswalt interprets the concept of "fulfillment" in biblical texts. Using examples from the lecture, explain how this interpretation shifts traditional understandings of prophecy.
4. Examine the contrast between human reactions to wrongdoing (revenge, anger, etc.) and God's reactions to Israel's disobedience in Hosea 11:8-9. What does this reveal about the nature of God and his relationship with humanity?
5. In what ways does Dr. Oswalt connect the struggles of ancient Israel to contemporary challenges within the church and society? Use examples from his lecture to explain how understanding Hosea 11 can help address issues such as declining church attendance, superficial spirituality, and the lack of commitment.

## Glossary of Key Terms

- **Da'at:** The Hebrew word for "knowledge," which Dr. Oswalt suggests has a double meaning of intimacy or sexual union, highlighting the relational aspect of knowing God.
- **Hesed:** The Hebrew word for "steadfast love," or covenant loyalty, which Dr. Oswalt uses to describe the relationship God desires from His people.
- **Idols (Baal):** Objects or figures to which people give their allegiance, often seeking control over their lives, representing things other than God that one looks to for fulfillment.
- **Fulfillment:** The concept in which an Old Testament passage is seen to find its deeper meaning in a New Testament event. It can include direct quotes, predictions, illusions, literary correspondence, typology, illustration, and analogy.
- **Typology:** A method of biblical interpretation where an Old Testament person, event, or thing is seen as a pattern or foreshadowing of a New Testament reality.
- **Mammon:** A biblical term for wealth or possessions, often personified as a rival to God, representing the temptation to prioritize material things over spiritual values.
- **Holy:** The absolute otherness of God, characterized by purity and power, in whose presence fallen humanity cannot exist without divine intervention or mediation.
- **Refiner's Fire:** A metaphor for challenging and transformative experiences, often associated with divine discipline, that purify and strengthen faith.
- **Blast Furnace:** A metaphor used by Dr. Oswalt to describe the intense holiness of God, inviting us into a transformative experience, where impurities are burned away, and we are refined.
- **Exile:** The forced removal of a people from their homeland; In the book of Hosea, it refers to the exile of Israel, which is seen by Oswalt not as God's ultimate goal of destruction, but as a means of refining and restoring his people.

## 5. FAQs on Oswalt, Hosea, Session 1, Hosea Background and Hosea 1, Genres, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

### Frequently Asked Questions about Hosea 11

1. **How is the book of Hosea structured according to Dr. Oswalt?** Dr. Oswalt suggests a possible structure for Hosea where chapters 1-3 serve as a parable of God's love, depicted through Hosea's relationship with his prostitute wife. Chapters 4-14 delve into Israel's unfaithfulness. He further divides chapters 4-14 into sections characterized by a lack of knowledge of God (4:1-6:3), a lack of steadfast love for God (6:4-11:11) and a lack of faithfulness or truth (11:12-end). He emphasizes that this is not a rigid outline, but a way to grasp the recurring themes of the book.
2. **What is the significance of the parent-child metaphor used in Hosea 11?** The parent-child metaphor highlights the deep, personal, and caring relationship God desires with Israel, emphasizing his love and tenderness. It goes beyond a king-subject relationship, or even a husband-wife one, suggesting a blood relationship from their origin in Egypt. This also underscores God's care, training, discipline, and the tenderness he provides, as a parent would for a child. It implies an intimate bond where God is not merely a ruler but a loving caregiver who is invested in their growth and well-being.
3. **Why did God's calling lead to the Israelites going away from Him?** The Israelites' inherent sinful nature caused them to turn away when God called them. The act of calling implies a need for submission and surrender of one's own will, which is counter to the human tendency of wanting control and independence. The core of the sinful disposition is the stubborn will that says, "I want what I want, when I want it, where I want it." This desire for self-determination and autonomy often manifests as a rejection of God's will and guidance.
4. **Why do people create and cling to idols, according to the source?** People create idols, according to the source, because they provide the illusion of control. Idols provide an illusion that they can, with their own hands or efforts, supply their needs and fulfill their desires without needing God. This desire for self-sufficiency is rooted in a distrust of God's ability and willingness to provide for their needs, and in a desire to be in control. Idols are not limited to physical statues but can encompass things like money, pornography, or anything that gives the illusion of self-reliance.

5. **How does the idea of "healing" relate to God's teaching and training in Hosea 11:3?** God's healing is portrayed in the image of a parent caring for their child who has stumbled. It emphasizes God's compassion and restoration in addition to His teaching. He doesn't merely teach them how to walk; when they fall or are hurt, God provides comfort and healing. It is not simply instruction, but also tender restoration. This healing is further contrasted with the emptiness of the idols who can do nothing. It highlights that God is not just an instructor but a source of restoration and care.
6. **What is meant by the concept of "fulfillment" in the context of Hosea 11:1 and its connection to Jesus' journey to and from Egypt?** The idea of fulfillment in Hosea 11:1, "Out of Egypt I called my son," has a broader meaning than a simple prediction. It can mean correspondence, demonstrating the meaning of a previous event, or typology. Matthew applies this verse to Jesus' return from Egypt, not as a literal prediction but as a demonstration of the same theme: a beloved son being called out of Egypt, reflecting the historical and spiritual parallels between Israel's exodus and Jesus' life. It illustrates that scripture's meaning is often seen in how later events resonate with, and illuminate the meaning of, earlier ones.
7. **How does the metaphor of God as a loving farmer in Hosea 11:4 highlight God's character?** The metaphor of God as a loving farmer using "cords of kindness" and "bands of love" illustrates God's gentle and affectionate nature. It depicts a God who leads and guides with compassion rather than harshness, contrasting it with how they treat one another. The emphasis is on God's care and concern for his people. He does not try to break their will but leads with humane cords, easing the burden rather than exacerbating it.

8. **Why does God say He will not "come in wrath" in Hosea 11:9, despite Israel's unfaithfulness and the coming exile?** God's statement in Hosea 11:9, "I will not come in wrath," is not about denying that consequences are coming but about clarifying God's motives. God's heart recoils from destroying them, despite their actions; His discipline stems from a righteous and justifiable anger, not from petty, selfish motives. Exile is not intended to obliterate them, but rather to refine them. It's a consequence of their choices, not an act of God seeking revenge. He is motivated by love and a desire to transform and heal, even when that entails allowing people to face the natural consequences of their actions. The image of God as a blast furnace transforming "bales of hay" into "Damascus steel" shows how He uses even the most challenging experiences to bring about redemption and renewal.