

Before you start, did you ask God to speak to you through His Word and to give you life changing insights?

Chapter 11

A STRONG STATEMENT OF LOVE:

There are some great chapters of the Bible, which describe for us God's great love. If I were to ask you to name a few of these chapters, I think your responses might include many of the following:

1. 1 Corinthians 13: This has to be first on everyone's list. This chapter is even known as the "love chapter."
2. The book of the Song of Solomon: Many of you might select this entire book for your list of great love chapters of the Bible. It rightfully deserves a place because it certainly does present God's beautiful picture of what a meaningful love relationship between a husband and a wife should look like.
3. The book of Ruth: Outside of the story of the great love which God has for us, this is perhaps the greatest story of sacrificial love which we have in the Bible. It is a story of love and redemption.
4. John chapter 3: Might be on your list simply because it contains that very simple verse, learned early in our Christian walk, which describes the height and depth of God's love - He loved us so much that He gave us His only Son.

Yet, as we were making out our list, few of us if any would include *Hosea 11*, one of the ***greatest*** love chapters of all time. What an emotionally charged description of God's love. Even though the people are rebellious, God still loves them. He loves Israel as a parent loves his son, although he has been greatly disappointed with him. God has showered His love upon His child, but the child has increasingly walked away. Finally, it was time for what we call tough love.

Centuries before Hosea stepped on the scene, Israel followed God out of the land of Egypt in the exodus. How does God describe his care for the Israelites during that time? v1-4

What does God call Israel in verse 1? What else could this verse mean?
What was part of the reason they wandered those 40 years in the wilderness?

As the Lord stated repeatedly through the book of Hosea, what would be the consequences of Israel's' rebellion? v5-7

What is meant by "gentle cords"?

What is "backsliding"? v7

Find some information on "Admah" and "Zeboim"-?

In verse 8, what does God do that gives them a glimmer of hope?

In verse 9 the Lord states that "I am God and not man." While it seems elementary to state that God is not a man, what assurance do you personally draw from the this verse?

How would GOD demonstrate His mercy to Israel? v10-11

How can a child who is given an abundance of love, mercy, and grace treat a Father with so much disrespect? Yet, we have done just that for centuries. As we look at how the Israelites turned their backs on God we need to look no further than the mirror in front of us to see a reflection of those same Israelites.

What did you learn about God in this chapter?