

Sunday, June 12, 2022
“Minor Prophets: Eternal Questions”
Summary of The Message of Hosea: What is Love?
Wayne Shelton

Hosea (focal: v1a: *“The word of the Lord that came to Hosea”*)

Hosea is one of the longest and oldest books of the Minor Prophets and it focuses on the northern kingdom of Israel. Most of the Minor Prophets focus on the southern kingdom of Judah because only Judah existed when they were prophesying. And one of the three ‘old men,’ Micah, focused on Judah before Israel fell. But Hosea and Amos, prophesied about the northern kingdom – the 10 tribes who had followed Jeroboam in rebelling against Solomon’s son a couple of hundred years earlier. The northern kingdom of Israel was beset with troubles from the very beginning. The decades before Jeroboam II, who reigned when Hosea prophesied, were tumultuous. The nation had gone through king after king after king; and by the time of Jeroboam II and Hosea in the second half of the eighth century, the country appeared to be in terminal decline. The empire of Assyria, located just north of Israel, was the great power of the day, and it continually nibbled away at Israel’s borders, often threatening to strike its very heart. Hosea does not have a very clear outline. But very broadly we can say that chapters 1-3 contain everything we know about Hosea’s personal history as well as some prophecy. Then chapters 4-14 are a collection of prophecies that warn of God’s coming judgment as well as several promises of hope. It is amid all these particulars that we learn a lot about real love.