



CELL GUIDE

TOPIC	The Heart of God	SPEAKER	DSP Edric Sng & Ps Esther Koh
THEME	Walk in Wisdom	DATE	9 and 10 May 2026

MESSAGE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

DSP Sng shared that Hosea was a prophet to the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Northern Israel was also commonly referred to as Ephraim, as the half-tribe was significant among the tribes of the North. Hosea prophesied during the reign of King Jeroboam II, who was militarily successful but did evil in God's eyes. Hosea's broken marriage was a picture of Israel's unfaithfulness. However, the key picture in the book of Hosea is not one of judgment, but of love. Chapter 11 emphasises God's love for His children in the following areas: (1) Longsuffering, (2) Lifts you up, (3) Let's you go, (4) Longs for you, and (5) Leads you. Youth Pastor Esther also shared her personal journey as a mother of two and the spiritual mother for the Youth Church. Both Pastors exhorted the congregation to understand the heart of God, which is love for His children, manifested and demonstrated, especially during this special Mother's Day season.

GOD'S LOVE FOR HIS CHILDREN

1. Longsuffering

In Hosea 11:1-2, God says He loves His child Israel, calling him out of Egypt; however, the more Israel was called, the further the nation went from God. From the time of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob to the era of the kings, God's people were in a perpetual cycle of deliverance and oppression from their enemies. Yet God never gave up on His chosen people. 2 Peter 3:9 & 15 also expounds on God as longsuffering towards us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. The long-suffering of our Lord is our salvation.

2. Lifts you up

Hosea 11:3-4 says God taught Ephraim to walk, taking them by the arms. However, they did not realise it was God who healed them, leading them with cords of human kindness, ties of love, and was to His people like one who lifts a little child to the cheek and bends down to feed them. Similarly, children are oblivious and ignorant when they are young about how much their parents love and care for them and about how their parents bring them up in the ways of the Lord. Just as parents encourage, nudge, and train their children to take their first baby steps to walk, God constantly lifts us up in life's challenging situations. We can always count on Him.

3. Lets you go

Hosea 11:5-7 shows how Israel's stubbornness and refusal to repent result in their enemies overcoming them. But that doesn't mean that God cuts His people off. God's discipline is for His people to understand the true consequences of their disobedience and unfaithfulness. The Northern Kingdom of Israel was exiled by the Assyrians in 722 BC, while Judah, the Southern Kingdom, was exiled by the Babylonians in 586 BC. Hebrews 12: 10-11 further demonstrates this point and states that God disciplines us for our good in order that we may share in His holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it. Paul explains in 1 Corinthians 5:5 that the end goal of discipline is so that a man's spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord.

4. Longs for you

Hosea 11:8-9 shows God's heart, where He does not want His children to be destroyed, such as in the case of Admah and Zeboyim, which were cities destroyed just like Sodom and Gomorrah (Deuteronomy 29:23). God's people are the apple of His eye. Regardless of how far they stray from Him, He loves them and always longs for them to return to Him, just like in the parable of the Prodigal Son.

5. Leads you

Hosea 11:10-11 reveals God's plans for His people. His people will follow His leading and, although dispersed and exiled by their enemies, will be gathered again and settled into their homes. This was seen through the three waves of return from exile. The first wave in 538 BC led by Zerubbabel and Joshua, the second wave during 458 BC by Ezra, and finally in 445 BC led by Nehemiah. This was also mirrored in the aftermath of the Second World War, when the modern nation of Israel, formed by the Jewish diaspora scattered through the nations because of the war, were gathered back in their homes.

CONCLUSION

God is a personal God whom we, His people and children, can trust and depend on. He loves us so much that He sent Jesus to die for us and to reconcile us to Himself. We can experience God's love through our biological and spiritual parents. God's heart is for us to live life abundantly and for our children to excel beyond us. God calls us all to be parents. In the upbringing of our own biological and spiritual children, discipline should not be punitive, malicious, vindictive, or mean. Disciplining is for discipleship and ungirded by love.

God's love empowers us to parent in His image. His love directly transforms and strengthens our children to walk in confidence and wisdom. Just as babies might not understand the love their parents have for them, and children in general may be rebellious at times, we also sometimes reject God's goodness and rebel in disobedience. God is always there beside us, teaching us how to walk, disciplining us for holiness sake, creating in us a clean heart and renewing a right spirit within us. The heart of God is long-suffering love, lifts us up, at times lets us go, longs for us, and leads us.

QUESTIONS

1. What are the five aspects of God's love for His children we can learn from Hosea Chapter 11? Which of these aspects speak to you the most in your current season?

2. God lifts us up, but He also sometimes lets us face the consequences of our choices. How can we tell the difference between God's loving discipline and punishment? Can you share the most recent time when a difficult consequence helped you grow or turn back to God?

3. Is there anyone in your life who needs to know how much God loves them and how precious they are to Him? How will you reach out to share with this person?