



# Boston Catholic Journal

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## Song of Hosea



## How Can I Forget ...?

There is a very beautiful hymn, "*How Can I Forget and Leave My Loved one?*", whose origin appears to be unknown, but which has long been so much part of our own journey, both individually, and as a Community of Cloistered Nuns.

It has often been used at Clothing Ceremonies of Sisters, and for the Profession of Vows, in the presence of a dying sister, and even for funerals, for it speaks of the Bridal love of God for His people Israel, its speaks of His faithful love to a wayward people, and to our our own wayward hearts.

For anyone who has known God, who has experienced His love, mercy and forgiveness, this song will speak poignantly.

It is a staggering reminder of how great the love of God was, *and is* for His people. Although they strayed far from Him, prostituted themselves amongst the nations, worshipped false idols, and and had fallen into every manner of evil and idolatry, God never ceased to love them, never relented in calling them back to Himself.

God loved His people passionately, *He loves us still, passionately*. He wants our hearts and He is the most jealous of lovers. His ear is not bent to idle words uttered in rote, nor His eye turned to the trappings of external worship – *He seeks the very heart. Your heart! My heart!*

If you sincerely take time to reflect upon it, it is nothing less than thrilling how God loves us! Can you not yet hear the voice of God calling to you across the wilderness of this world and within the desert of your own heart, "*How can I forget and leave my loved one?*"

Spend some time praying and contemplating the profound and beautiful words of this song, based upon the words of the Prophet Hosea:

## **How Can I Forget and Leave My Loved one?**

**H**ow can I forget and leave My loved one?  
How can I depart from her, wounded is My heart.  
How can I forget that I'm compassion,  
How can I depart from her  
nearer to My heart.  
O Israel, why have you pierced My heart?  
Why have you gone?  
See your love is melting like the dewdrop,  
dry and fallow lies your ground,  
withered is My heart.  
How can I forget that I have made you?  
Given you My life and love,  
promised you My heart.  
How can I forget that you do need Me,  
Even though you leave me  
I shall woo your heart.  
O Israel why have you gone  
so far in search of love?  
Can't you feel the coolness of My shadow?  
Water when you're thirsting, rain when you are dry.  
I shall call until My heart will find you.  
Lead you to My wilderness, speaking to your heart.  
I shall give you back your fruit and vineyard.  
I shall give you hope and love  
as when you were young?  
O Israel how can I keep you back and make you Mine?  
I will heal the wounds inflicted on you.  
Comfort I will bring you, tender is my heart.  
Will you be free? Will you return to Me,  
and be My bride?  
I shall make you mine My love forever.  
Give Me back your faithful love  
give Me back your heart.  
O Israel will you return to Me  
and be My bride ?

May the Holy Spirit breath upon these words and upon your heart as you read these beautiful words, may He illuminate for you, what He would have you receive into the deepest recesses of your soul ...



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