

# Guided Bible Study

Salendine Nook Baptist Church

Hosea 2 v. 14 - 3 v.5

A modified Version of Scripture Union's  
LifeBuilder Bible Study Series originally written by  
Dale & Sandy Larsen



# About These Bible Studies

For the purposes of our Bible Studies we will be using Scripture Union's LifeBuilder Bible Study Series. We will be looking at the book of Hosea, that is found in the Old Testament. The studies were originally written by Dale & Sandy Larsen, but we will be modifying them in order that they become more usable for home study during this time of lockdown.

These studies give us the opportunity to study the Bible in a greater depth and to reflect on what it is saying to us – much like we would do in our normal Wednesday Morning Bible Study. To give a sense of group study, it is suggested that you do the study on a Wednesday morning, for an hour, starting at 10.30am. Get yourself a tea or coffee, a Bible, pen and paper (for any notes you want to make) and begin studying.

Hope that you enjoy it.

**Pastor Ian**

# Context

God never gives up on us. When we stray or make a mistake, God continues to pursue us with a relentless love. In Hosea's unfailing love for his wayward wife, he lived out the way God loves his people. His story is a reminder that God will never abandon us.

In choosing to study Hosea, we venture into a turbulent place of love and justice, promise and pain, close to the heart of God. The prophecy of Hosea does not progress logically from beginning to conclusion. Its writing is circular, going back and forth between judgment and mercy. We get a sense of God arguing with himself about Israel – not that God has trouble deciding what to do, but he feels the pain of conflict between what he wants for Israel and what he must do because of their sin.

Hosea shares God's conflict when at God's command he marries – and stays married to – the immoral woman Gomer. It is the conflict of anyone who cares deeply about a wayward person. God condemns Israel's sin and knows Israel deserves to be written off; yet he hangs on, unwilling to give up on them. God eventually let Israel be defeated in the Assyrian conquest, but he did not ultimately abandon his people whom he loved.

# Study 2 -

## A Vision of the Possible

The first step. The first words spoken. The first time behind a steering wheel. The first job. Those joyful 'firsts' thrill us not so much for themselves as for the promise that this child will mature into a strong, capable person, one for whom walking and talking and driving and working are normal parts of life. Each of us wants to see the people we love fulfil their highest potential.

**PERSONAL REFLECTION.** *Who comes to mind when you see the word **encourager**? What difference has that person made to you in your life?*

Our dreams can be self – centred, such as when we long for another person to carry out our own frustrated plans. God has a vision for his people, and his vision is pure, healthy and wholly for their own good.

We have seen how sin has broken the heart of Hosea and of the Lord. Now God offers a fuller vision of the hope he held out in Hosea 1 v. 10 – 11.

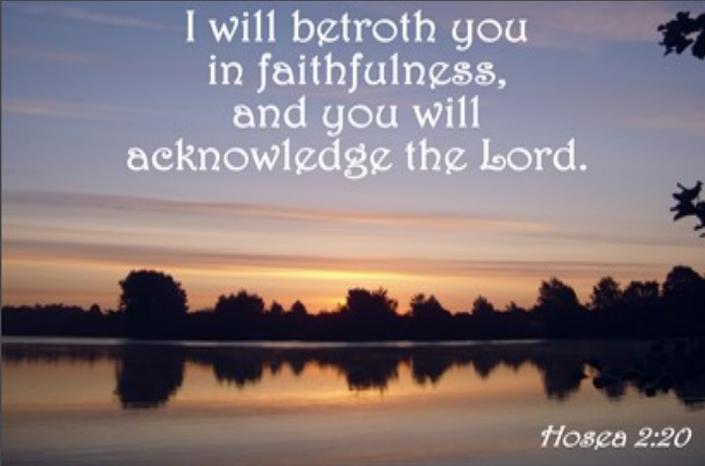
Read Hosea 2 v. 14 – 23.

### QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT:

- In your own words, sum up God’s vision for his people’s future as it is stated through Hosea’s poetic language.
  - In contrast to the first part of chapter 2, this passage offers hope for Israel. How does God’s forgiveness give you hope?
  - What changes did the Lord want to see his people make in response to his love?
  - What indications do you see that God would take steps to bring reconciliation between himself and Israel?
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Now read Hosea 3 v. 1 – 5

- In addition to the difficult commands of chapter 1, what does God now ask Hosea to do?
- Putting yourself in Hosea’s place, how do you think you would have responded to God’s command?
- Besides the money and grain (**Hosea 3 v. 2**), what else would Hosea have to give up to get Gomer back?
- In Hosea 2 v. 15 God said he would make the Valley of Achor (**trouble**) ‘a door of hope’. Israel knew Achor as a valley of defeat where Achan sinned by keeping part of the Jericho plunder (**Joshua 7**). What place, event or situation is a ‘Valley of Achor’ for you – a place of spiritual defeat?



Now

or

Later

Draw a house with a shaky foundation of crumbling stones. Label each broken stone with a popular but false hope in which people commonly put their trust. Circle the stones that represent false hopes that still attract you.

Draw another house with a solid foundation. Label its stones with trustworthy hopes such as God's love, God's forgiveness, heaven and the presence of the Holy Spirit.



# To help you in your study

The studies purpose is: To explore God's hope for his people despite their present wonderings.

God longed for Israel to be intimate with him, to forsake their rival gods, to be faithful to him, and to love only him.

God will respond favourably to Jezreel, and the other two names have been reversed: '**Not my loved one**' will be **loved by God**, and '**not my people**' will be called **the people of God**. God's mercy has changed everything.

It is not clear why or from whom Hosea had to buy Gomer back. There is evidence that the price he paid was the market value of a slave. Therefore, Gomer may have sunk to the point of selling herself into slavery, or she may have gotten into a debt she could not pay back.

**Hosea 3 v. 3** is the first time the **NIV** uses the word *prostitute* in relation to Gomer, though other translations refer to her '*harlotry*' from the beginning of the book. The word could refer either to a common prostitute or to a cult prostitute of Baal's fertility rites.

The prediction of the Israelites living many days without religious or secular leadership (Hosea 3 v. 4) apparently refers to their coming exile into Assyria.

Hosea would have to give up any pride, resentment, unforgiveness, grudges and self – righteousness.

*Some of the later question are personal questions. Please try and work through them in an honest and open manner. What you share in your study will be between you and God.*

*A space for your own prayer of confession to God . . . . .*

# Contact

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