

# Guided Bible Study

Salendine Nook Baptist Church

Hosea 6 v. 11 - 7 v.16

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



# About These Bible Studies

*These Bible 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.*

*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.*

*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 6 -

## No Place To Hide

Do you remember playing 'hide-and-seek'? while the person who was 'it' counted to one hundred, you ran and found a place to hide. No matter how well you concealed yourself, you held your breath when 'it' said out, 'ready or not, here I come'! Were you really as well hidden as you hoped? Or would you have to sheepishly come out of hiding because 'it' found you right away?

God does not have to play hide-and-seek to find out where we are. He sees us all the time and knows us inside and out. 'Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account'. (**Hebrews 4 v. 13**).

**PERSONAL REFLECTION.** *As a child (or maybe even as an adult), were you ever warned: 'God sees everything you do'? If so, what effect did it have on you?*

Mirrors tell the truth, but we can lie to ourselves about what the mirror tells us. God tried to tell the Israelites that their character was sliding downhill. They preferred to believe the best about themselves.

**Read Hosea 6 v. 11 – 7 v. 16**

### QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT:

- Throughout this passage, notice the things to which God compares Israel (**Hosea 7 v. 4 – 8, 11 – 12, 16**). What element of Israel's character does each comparison point out?
- How might one of those comparisons apply to you?
- How did Israel (**also called Samaria and Ephraim**) imagine they were fooling God (**Hosea 7 v. 1 – 2**)?
- How were they actually deceiving themselves (**Hosea 7 v. 2, 9 – 10, 14**)?
- In spite of everything, what did the Lord continue to desire to do for Israel (**Hosea 7 v. 1, 13, 15**)?
- What does God's persistence tell you about his love?
- **Hosea 7** is a message where 'God sees everything'. It does not come across as infantile. How would you state the great truth of God's omniscience to someone who needs to hear and believe it?
- What are some of the ways that people today imagine they can get away with things God does not see?
- How will you plan to live more transparently before God this week?

# Now or Later

*Thank the lord that he is always honest with you. Pray for the courage to abandon all deception toward God, yourself and one another.*

God used comparisons (metaphors and similes) to show the Israelites how they had wandered from him and to try to turn them back to himself. An example of a metaphor is **Hosea 7 v. 8**: 'Ephraim is a flat cake not turned over'. An example of a simile is **Hosea 7 v. 11**: 'Ephraim is like a dove' or Hosea 7 v. 16: 'They are like a faulty bow'.

Draw some comparisons to describe your own spiritual life and your relationship with God. Use this pattern:

'I used to be . . .'      'Now I am . . .'      'I hope to become . . .'  
'I used to be like . . .'      'Now I am like . . .'      'I hope to become like . . .'  
,

## Examples:

I used to be a wilted flower. Now I am a newly sprouted seed. I hope to become a towering oak.

I used to be like a junk car. Now I am like a minivan that needs a tune – up. I hope to become like a Formula 1 race car.

# To help you in your study

**The studies purpose is: To determine to be honest with the Lord and with ourselves.**

The diverse images share the qualities of instability and unreliability. The images of heat show the intensity of Israel's pursuit of wickedness.

*The oven depicted here was made of clay and was cylindrical in shape, it may have been embedded into the floor or lay on it. The domed roof had a large hole covered by a door through which the baker would first add fuel (wood, dried grass, dung or cakes made from olive residue). Flames would escape through the hole until a hot bed of coals remained. The heat would be captured as the door was closed and would remain for many hours (enough for the bread to be kneaded and allowed to rise). Then the baker would place the slightly raised flat bread on the inner walls of the oven or amongst the coals. The metaphor plays on these mundane tasks and well – known images. (IVP Bible Background Commentary)*

As a nation Israel was literally 'half – baked'!

*The imagery abruptly changes from a baker's oven to a not very bright bird that flits back and forth in indecision. 'Clearly, Israel's kings have been snared in the net of political ambitions cast both of the ancient super powers, Egypt and Assyria'. (IVP Bible Background Commentary)*

*Finally, God compares Israel to a bow that is likely to break in the archer's hands. 'the composite bow, made from a combination of wood, horn and animal tendons, was subject to changes in weather and humidity. If it was not kept in a case, it could lose its strength and be*

*described as unreliable or slack (See Psalm 78 v. 57)' (IVP Bible Background Commentary)*

To heal, redeem, train and strengthen are the desires of one who has at heart only what is best of the one being helped. There is no hint of revenge or vindictiveness by God towards his people.

Since our attempts to deceive the Lord also involve self-deception, answers may not spring to mind for you at the moment. These latter questions deserve further thought and prayer throughout the coming week.

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