

# Guided

# Bible

# Study

Salendine Nook Baptist Church

Hosea 13 v. 1 - 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 11 -

## The Sign

## Of Love

'I'm doing this for your own good'. 'This hurts me more than it hurts you'. As children we often have trouble believing those words. Now we realise that balanced discipline is evidence of love. Even a puppy wants to know the rules and is more secure when its owner clearly enforces the lines of discipline.

**PERSONAL REFLECTION.** *Recall a time from your childhood when you were disciplined fairly and with love. How did the discipline help you? What did it teach you about yourself and about the person who disciplined you?*

God's chosen people were rescued from slavery, given a special revelation of his law, and miraculously brought into a land of milk and honey! What better beginning could a nation have? Sadly, Israel chose to forget what God had done for them.

## QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT:

### Read Hosea 13 v. 1 – 16

- Trace the stages of Israel's spiritual decline in this chapter.
- Where do you discern warnings for yourself in this passage?
- **Hosea 13 v. 1** says that Israel fell into Baal worship and 'died'. They did not physically die as a nation; in fact **Hosea 13 v. 2** says that they continued to increase in idolatry. In what sense then did their idol worship result in death?
- Through Hosea, the Lord used powerful images to express the consequences of Israel's idolatry (**Hosea 13 v. 3, 7 – 8**). What do the images of Israel's destiny (**Hosea 13 v. 3**) have in common?
- What elements are shared by the images of what God will do to Israel (**Hosea 13 v. 7 – 8**)?
- In spite of Israel's idolatry and other sins, what purpose does the Lord still hold for them (**Hosea 13 v. 4**)?
- How does God's purpose for his people explain the severity of his judgment throughout this passage (and all the book of Hosea)?
- What encouragement do you gain from God's continuing purpose for his people, including yourself?
- Hosea 13 v. 9 is a particularly tragic declaration of the reason for Israel's decline. Why would a nation – or a person – turn against the divine Helper?
- When has God's loving discipline brought you back to him?
- Where do you believe God is disciplining you right now, and what will you do to yield to his discipline?

# ENDURING FAITH

Hebrews 12:1-13

Now

or

Later

Consider specific ways to put into practice each of the commands from **Hosea 12 v. 6**: *Return to your God, maintain love and justice and wait for your God always.*

Write out prayers to the Lord about each of those three commitments (no doubt they will overlap). Resolve to read the prayers again at least weekly.

# To help you in your study

**The studies purpose is: To see God's discipline as evidence of his love.**

Note Israel declined into pride after God had delivered them from Egypt and made them prosper in Canaan. God had warned them of such decline (**Deuteronomy 8 v. 10 – 20**).

Try and identify some idols which control people's lives today. Consider how devotion to each one 'kills' the worshipper because it negates the worshipper's life as it was meant to be lived. In some cases the idol could even bring physical death (*such as drugs, inordinate risk – taking, crime*), but more typically the idol deals death to the worshipper's spirit. Throughout the book of Hosea, you have read about the spiritual death of Israel – separation from God – even while they lived in apparent power and prosperity. Eventually they were taken into captivity from which they never returned (*Judah returned but not Israel*).

Assyria would be the instrument of God's wrath, but the Lord would be the actual attacker. 2 Kings 17 tells the story of Assyria's conquest of the northern kingdom of Israel, along with a lengthy explanation of why God allowed it to happen.

The Lord's purpose is that Israel – and all people – will acknowledge

him as the only God. This is the first commandment: *'You shall have no other gods before me'* (Exodus 20 v. 3).

God wills life for his people, and therefore, he disciplines in unpleasant ways. **Hebrews 12 v. 4 – 13** is a New Testament statement of the same principle.

Human pride makes it difficult for people to accept help from the one they are rebelling against, and the help is unlikely to fulfil the desires that caused the rebellion in the first place.

# Contact

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