

BIBLE TEACHING AND WORSHIP GUIDE



FOR THE HOME-BASED CHURCH

Produced Weekly

Trouble in the Family
Hosea 1:1-9

Copy this sheet for the Gathering Time, Bible Study, and Worship Experience leaders for the next meeting of the church.

Leaders' Responsibilities:

Important: Each person who will be leading one of the three parts of a session during a series of sessions needs to have access to the "Introduction" article found at the beginning of each series (Bible Teaching #....). The weekly session "Background" located in the Teacher Preparation is much more specific to that day's study.

1. **The Gathering Time Leader** will gather all of the people together and help them prepare their minds and hearts for a wonderful worship experience before God. His/her responsibility is to introduce the congregation to the theme (content) and the Scripture that will be central to their worship experience for the day.

2. **The Bible Study Leader** will then help the people understand what the Scriptures have to say and teach us about the content of the study for the day. He/she will guide the people to make a general application of the study (ie: How does this Bible study apply to people today?)

3. **The Worship Time Leader** has the responsibility to use the theme and Scriptures to guide the congregation to make personal commitments to God's will for each one in regard to the study for the day. He/she will use others to lead in the music, taking the offering, ministry moment comments, and other activities and parts of the **Worship Time** that can aid in participatory worship.

Prior to this Coming Session:

Gathering Time Leader:

Bible Study Leader:

Worship Time Leader:

Music Sources:

Glorious is Thy Name, *The Worship Hymnal* # 308, CCLI#25187

His Name is Wonderful, *The Worship Hymnal* # 315, CCLI#1122230

Praise the Name of Jesus, *The Worship Hymnal* # 322; CCLI#12712

In the Name of the Lord, *The Worship Hymnal* # 325; CCLI#16828

Gathering Time: (Suggested time: 15 minutes)***Trouble in the Family*****Focal Text**

Hosea 1:1-9

Background Text

Hosea 1:1-9

Main Idea

Unfaithfulness to God leads to rejection by God.

Question to Explore

Does God really punish sin?

Teaching Aim

To lead the church to understand how Hosea's family relationships conveyed God's message of judgement to Israel and offers us implications for life today.

Gathering together:

Sing **Glorious is Thy Name**, *The Worship Hymnal* # 308, CCLI#25187.

First thoughts:

Hosea's book is a bittersweet story of unfaithfulness and undying love. It involves two similar relationships: the prophet Hosea and his adulterous wife Gomer; God and his faithless covenant people. Gomer forsakes Hosea for other lovers; Israel forsakes God by worshipping pagan idols. But perfect love keeps on loving even after being spurned. In Hosea's case, that means buying back his wayward wife from the slave market; for Israel, purifying punishment will be followed by restoration. (LifeWalk, Volume 3, Number 9, September, 2010).

Closing the Gathering Time:

Take time at this point to mention items of prayer concern for the church, announcements of ministry or activities, and anything else that needs to be shared with or by the congregation. Pray for these needs. Remember to praise God in prayer.

Break time! Take five minutes between sessions. Encourage children to use the washroom so that they won't need to leave during the Bible Study time.

Distribute youth/adult Bible study outlines or paper for note-taking, if available.

Also hand out the activity sheets for preschool and younger children to use during Bible Study and/or worship.

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Copy this section for the Bible Study leader.

Note to the Bible Study Leader: Suggested teaching time for the Bible study should be about 35 minutes. Use the “Teacher Preparation” for your personal study during the week before the session. Use the “Bible Study Plan” for the actual session.

Teacher Preparation

Trouble in the Family

Focal Text

Hosea 1:1-9

Background Text

Hosea 1:1-9

Main Idea

Unfaithfulness to God leads to rejection by God.

Question to Explore

Does God really punish sin?

Teaching Aim

To lead the church to understand how Hosea's family relationships conveyed God's message of judgement to Israel and offers us implications for life today.

Introduction to your personal study:

Hosea's book is a bittersweet story of unfaithfulness and undying love. It involves two similar relationships: the prophet Hosea and his adulterous wife Gomer; God and his faithless covenant people. Gomer forsakes Hosea for other lovers; Israel forsakes God by worshipping pagan idols. But perfect love keeps on loving even after being spurned. In Hosea's case, that means buying back his wayward wife from the slave market; for Israel, purifying punishment will be followed by restoration. (*LifeWalk*, Volume 3, Number 9, September, 2010).

Background:

Please ask for and read the information contained in the “**Introduction**” article found at the beginning of this series of Bible Study and Worship sessions (Bible Teaching #.....). The person who downloaded this session should have that material for you, as well.

If you have children in your group, you may want to consider the appropriateness of this study for them. You may want to leave the unit on Hosea out of the studies you use. If you use the study, be aware of the need for preliminary explanation which parents may want to have with their children.

Focusing on the Meaning:

The first verses of the book of Hosea are powerful indicators of the sad story of both Hosea and of God’s relationship to the Israelite people.

Like the other prophets, the book begins with the words “The word of the Lord came”. This starting point indicates that this is no interesting tale of a strange relationship of a man and his unfaithful wife. When the Lord speaks to individuals it most often is because He desires that individual to give a message to his people as a whole. Thus, the story of Hosea is from the first a message from God to His people.

Hosea was a real person living in a point of time in history. He was the son of Beerī and although we know no more about Beerī, it is certain that those living in the time of Hosea did know him. This detail authenticates Hosea as a real person.

He lived during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah and during the reign of Jeroboam, King of Israel.

Uzziah, also known as Azariah, began to reign when he was sixteen years old and he reigned in Jerusalem fifty-two years. “He did right in the eyes of the Lord, just as his father Amaziah had done. The high places, however, were not removed; the people continued to offer sacrifices and burn incense there” (2 Kings 15:3-4).

Uzziah’s son, Jotham, began to reign at the age of twenty-five and he reigned in Jerusalem for sixteen years. He also did right in the eyes of the Lord, but did not remove the false altars of worship (2 Kings 15:34-35).

Jotham’s son, Ahaz, succeeded him and began to reign at the age of twenty. He reigned sixteen years. “Unlike David his father, he did not do right in the eyes of the Lord his God. He walked in the ways of the kings of Israel and even sacrificed his son in the fire, following the detestable ways of the nations the Lord had driven out before the Israelites. He offered sacrifices and burned incense at the high places, on the hilltops and under every spreading tree” (2 Kings 16:2-4).

Ahaz made agreements with Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria to ask for help in fighting Israel. He took silver and gold from the temple of the Lord and sent it as a gift to Tiglath-Pileser. Later, he built a new altar which contained some of the elements of the

traditional worship of the Israelites, but was actually done to please the king of Assyria and was, in fact, a false altar.

However, his son, Hezekiah, began to rule at age twenty-five and reigned for twenty-nine years. “He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, just as his father David had done. He removed the high places, smashed the sacred stones and cut down the Asherah poles. Hezekiah trusted in the Lord, the God of Israel. There was no one like him among all the kings of Judah, either before or after him” (2 Kings 18: 3-4; 5). It was this faithfulness that led to a defeat of the Philistines and the breaking of ties with the king of Assyria. This stayed the Lord’s judgement on the people of Judah until a later time when they returned to idol worship and evil practices.

During the rule of these kings in the southern kingdom of Judah, Jeroboam II ruled as king of Israel for forty-one years. “He did evil in the eyes of the Lords and did not turn away from any of the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he had caused Israel to commit” (2 Kings 14: 24).

Jeroboam I was the first king of Israel after the kingdom was divided during the reign of Rehoboam, Solomon’s son. He had a twenty-two year reign. He was chosen by God to rule over the ten tribes of Israel. But he made golden calves for the people to worship.

There were eleven kings between Jeroboam I and Jeroboam II. The most evil of those was Ahab, who ruled for twenty-two years. All however were evil. The evil begun by Jeroboam I in making golden calves for the people to worship was continued down through the years and eventually led to the destruction of Israel as a nation.

It is into this long-lasting evil environment that the prophets enter.

Hosea was a younger contemporary of Amos and the Jeroboam to which he refers was Jeroboam II who had a long and prosperous reign. His dominion was extended, but toward the end of his reign, the sins attendant upon prosperity exhibited themselves as was clearly indicated in the book of Amos.

The first three chapters of Hosea probably date from the last years of Jeroboam II. Then came a period of anarchy and lawlessness. Zechariah was slain after a reign of six months, Shallum after only one month. A dozen years later Pekahiah is assassinated by Pekah, who meets the same fate at the hands of Hoshea. All of these were ungodly rulers; the morals of the nation had sunk to the lowest ebb. This collapse of the nation, the prophet traces to the fundamental evil of idolatry and apostasy from God.

In verses 2 and 3 we read ***“When the Lord began to speak through Hosea, the Lord said to him, ‘Go, take to yourself an adulterous wife and children of unfaithfulness, because the land is guilty of the vilest adultery in departing from***

the Lord'. So he married Gomer daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bore him a son."

There are three main views with many minor variations concerning the marriage of Hosea.

1. Some believe that the whole is an allegory or parable. This is the view of John Calvin, who objected to an actual marriage of the prophet with an unchaste woman on the ground that it would discredit him with the very people whom he wished to influence.

2. Some think that Hosea married a woman who was already leading an unchaste life; that she bore three children to Hosea, and then lapsed into her old life once more, sinking into a condition of slavery from which she was bought by Hosea and restored to his home, though not at first to the full intimacy of married life. Like Hosea, Gomer is identified by association with her father. She was a daughter of Diblaim.

3. Others hold that Hosea was directed to marry a woman given to idolatry – an idolatry which was often associated with licentiousness, although his bride was not actually an unchaste woman at first, but only a spiritual adulteress. She bore to the prophet three children, to whom symbolical names were given. Later on the idolatry led her into actual adultery. Now Hosea could understand why Jehovah was grieved with unfaithful Israel to the point of casting her off. The unspeakable love and compassion of God for His unfaithful spouse (Israel) prepared Hosea in some measure to obey the divine command to recover his own unfaithful wife and restore her to his home.

(Sampey, J. R. *Syllabus for Old Testament Study*. New York: George H. Doran Company, 1922, p. 173.)

The traditional understanding of the story has been that Gomer was a prostitute. Hosea marries her and has three children by her. Gomer continues to be sexually promiscuous, even being sold as a prostitute. Hosea buys her back to live as his wife again. This is the story which verses 2-3 tell and it is wise to let the story say what it says even though we find it difficult to understand.

Garrett felt that Hosea's experience with the promiscuous Gomer has legitimated his call to be Yahweh's prophet. (Garrett, Duane A. *The New American Commentary: Hosea, Joel*. Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1997)

This would be in accord with verse 2 ***"When the Lord began to speak through Hosea, the Lord said to him, "Go, take..."*** The Lord speaking through Hosea involved Hosea's intimate knowledge of the pain involved in having an adulterous wife.

The first child borne by Gomer was a son. ***"Then the Lord said to Hosea, 'Call him Jezreel, because I will soon punish the house of Jehu for the massacre at Jezreel, and I will put an end to the kingdom of Isreal. In that day I will break Israel's bow in the Valley of Jezreel'"***.

We may be tempted at this point to view this story as illustrative rather than factual. Each child's name carries a message. Jezreel means "God scatters". It was at Jezreel that the house of Jehu had been established upon the throne of Israel by bloodshed (II Kings 10:11). Elisha had apparently commended the deed (II Kings 9:7) as a fit punishment of the house of Ahab for the blood shed by Jezebel. But Hosea condemns Jehu and declares that his house – and with it the kingdom of Israel – will be destroyed at Jezreel. The name, Jezreel as borne by Hosea's child, was at once a reminder of the blood shed for which punishment was about to come and a prophecy of the fact that it was to be at Jezreel that the punishment would fall.

The prophecy was not literally fulfilled. It is true that Jeroboam's son, Zechariah, was murdered in the Plain of Jezreel (II Kings 15:10), but the **bow of Israel**, i.e. Israel's strength, was not broken then; the Northern Kingdom lasted for twenty years more. That Hosea's prophecy was not fulfilled exactly was not of concern to Hosea. He knew that ultimately punishment was in store for the rebellious kingdom and in due time it would come.

The name of Hosea's second child was Lo-Ruhamah or "Not pitied" which seems to go further in its implications for Israel than the first. The first speaks of judgment to come; this affirms that God's pity is now exhausted and that nothing can turn away that judgment. We are reminded on Amos 8:2, where, after speaking of the neglected disciplinary judgments of God, Amos adds this word from Yahweh: "I will forgive them no more."

The name of Hosea's third child is Lo-Ammi, meaning "Not my people", which affirms the solemn fact that the bond between Yahweh and his people has been broken. Israel has now forfeited the privileges which it had so flagrantly neglected. We should note that in Hosea's message to his contemporaries, as evidence by the names of his children, there is no hope for the future; there is but the intimation of judgment moving to finality.

After the birth of Lo-Ammi the Lord said, ***"Call him Lo-Ammi, for you are not my people, and I am not your God"*** Hosea 1:9.

What chilling words. "You are not my people and I am not your God."

During the reigns of Saul, David and Solomon, each of which lasted for 40 years, God was worshipped. Each of these leaders were imperfect, but they lead their people to worship God. In the 137 years which followed these 120 years, 11 rulers failed to lead their people in true worship. Jeroboam II and the six kings which followed him in the next seventy years continued this pattern of idolatry.

Abraham is thought to have lived between 2200-1550 B.C.; the exodus from Egypt and the conquest of the Promised Land occurred between 1550-1200 B.C. At least seven hundred years of Jewish history had passed since God confirmed His call of Abram recorded in Genesis 12: 1-3

The Lord had said to Abram,

***“Leave your country, your people and your father’s household
and go to the land I will show you.
I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you;
I will make your name great,
and you will be a blessing.
I will bless those who bless you,
and whoever curses you I will curse;
and all the peoples on earth
will be blessed through you.”***

We must contrast that promise given to Abram with the judgement of God given in Hosea 1:9

“Call him Lo-Ammi, for you are not my people, and I am not your God”.

“The NIV (New International Version) has slightly supplemented the text in its translation “And I am not your God” in this verse. The Hebrew only says ‘And I am not yours’ and omits the word ‘God’. But the addition of the Word “God” here is justifiable (Garrett, p. 70).

How could the people of God so completely have forgotten their unique place of privilege and responsibility in human history. God had said that all the peoples of the earth would be blessed through Abram and his descendants. Now these descendants had prostituted themselves to worship other Gods.

Why does God continue to put up with an unfaithful people. Unfaithfulness was Israel's besetting sin. The people of the land had fallen for the tempting promises of the Baal cult. Their attraction to the fertility rites associated with Baal worship began even before they occupied the land of Canaan (Hosea 9:10 Numbers 25:1:18).

The appeal of Baal worship to the base lusts of sexual immorality and greed for gain may explain Israel's eager involvement in it. Then again, the lure of Baal worship may have been its promise of reward in the form of fertile flocks, fields and families. Perhaps the Israelites observed the farming methods of the original inhabitants of the land of Canaan, especially their rituals of seeking productivity for their herds and crops through magic. Influenced by their ‘successful’ neighbours, Israelites flocked to the Baal shrines and engaged in the immoral fertility rites. They left believing Baal would give them needed rain, bountiful harvests, productive herds and many children.

In doing this they turned away from their covenant God. They committed spiritual adultery, pursuing pagan deities as ‘lovers’ in the place of God. Could God's covenant election be detoured or destroyed by the people's sin?” Hosea dealt with this question

as he spoke to the people. (*NIV Disciple's Study Bible*, Nashville: Tennessee: Holman Bible Publishers, 1988. Introduction to the book of Hosea, page 1062.)

In *The Disciple's Study Bible* the outline for the study of Hosea calls the passage for today's study – Hosea 1: 1-9- God's forgiveness has its limits.

In further study of the book of Hosea we will see that the love of God is the foundational doctrine for the book. But in today's passage we are reminded that God's forgiveness has its limits. The following theological conclusions are given in *The Disciple's Study Bible*, p. 1064. We will consider these in the lessons to follow.

1. God's love prompts Him to enter into a covenant relationship with His people.
2. God's love for His people is consistent in spite of their unfaithfulness.
3. God's love leads Him to discipline and to judge His unfaithful people.
4. God's love for His people causes Him to expect them to love Him consistently.
5. Genuine repentance on the part of God's people results in divine forgiveness, love and blessing.

Your Goal as the Leader of this Bible Study:

Your goal as leaders is clearly defined in the teaching aim:

To lead the church to understand how Hosea's family relationships conveyed God's message of judgement to Israel and offers us implications for life today.

For Personal Reflection:

What have I learned from this study?

What personal experience does this lesson bring to mind?

What is one action I will take this week to apply this Scripture passage to my life?

Bible Study Plan (Suggested time: 35 minutes)

Trouble in the Family

Regroup the church after the Gathering Time and break by singing a chorus that young children can relate to—or another praise chorus if your congregation does not have children. Children who go to their own Bible teaching session should stay with the group until after this song. Have the preschoolers and children accompany the hymn with rhythm sticks, maracas, bells, etc.

Begin by helping the group locate the **Focal Text** in their Bibles. Also, share with them the **Main Idea** to be learned from the Scriptures, and the **Questions to be Explored** by the group.

Focal Text

Hosea 1:1-9

Background Text

Hosea 1:1-9

Main Idea

Unfaithfulness to God leads to rejection by God.

Question to Explore

Does God really punish sin?

Teaching Aim

To lead the church to understand how Hosea's family relationships conveyed God's message of judgement to Israel and offers us implications for life today.

If the following commentary has not been made clear yet to the group, it should be dealt with before you begin this series of studies in Hosea.

Note to Bible study and worship leaders: The subject matter of the Book of Hosea includes explicit references to sexual unfaithfulness in marriage and “addiction” to a life of prostitution. If children are included in your group that will study this Unit, the Home Church Online staff strongly urges you to consider either skipping this five session Unit of study or limiting it to a group of adults only.

Connect with Life:

Present this to the group to open the session: Think of your own name. Why is it special to you? Were you named for a family member and have a special tie with that person because of your name? Do you have a nick-name? Have you ever thought of changing your name or have you ever wished you had another name? Names are an important part of our identity. When people forget our names, we feel that we have less worth to them. We like people who always call us by name. Today our study considers three children whose names were a symbol of Israel's disobedience to God. It was a huge burden for them to bear and we have difficulty understanding God's purpose in it. For some commentators, Hosea's family was not a real family at all, but merely a symbolic story which demonstrated God's pain over Israel's disobedience. But Old Testament names often were a demonstration of God at work in the world. I Ask God to help you understand the story and teach it so that it has meaning to others.

Guide the Study:

Introduce the study of Hosea by giving a brief summary of the material included as "Teacher Preparation" material. Indicate that the book of Hosea includes both judgement and love.

Tell the participants: Session one in our studies in Hosea is titled "Trouble in the Family." It considers God's message in Hosea's troubled family situation (Hosea 1:1-9). Session two, "Restoring the Relationship," is a study of Hosea 1:10—3:5, and treats God's desire to restore the relationship with Israel in spite of Israel's disobedience to him. Session three, "God's Charges," provides a summary of God's charges against Israel in Hosea 4—8. Session four, "God's Yearning Heart," focuses on Hosea 11:1-11, in which God expresses loving concern for Israel and promises restoration. Session five, "Return to the Lord," focuses on God's call in Hosea chapter 14 for Israel to repent.

Have someone read the background text which is Hosea1:1-9.

Ask: With what words does the book begin and why is that significant? ("The word of the Lord that came to Hosea" gives credence to a story that would otherwise be very hard to understand).

Comment: Verse 1 sets the historical setting for the writing. Use the information given in the preparation material as is appropriate for your group. Some groups will be interested in a more complete study of the kings involved. At the very least, mention that the Jeroboam referred to is Jeroboam II who continues to allow the worship of false Gods (Baal) which was initiated by Jeroboam I some 137 years earlier.

Continue by saying: "Judah also had kings (Uzziah, Jothan and Ahaz) who allowed idol worship. But Hezekiah returned to worshipping the God of the Covenant and led his people to return to a true worship in his long reign of 29 years. For that reason he was able to defeat the Assyrian invasion and the destruction of Judah was delayed."

Have someone reread verse 2-3 of Chapter 1.

Urge ideas on this question: How does verse 2 reinforce the truth that God is behind all that happens in this book?

Now raise this question: From the text what can you say about the woman Hosea married? (She was or would become adulterous. Her name was Gomer and she was the daughter of Diblaim).

Mention the three explanations of the text most often given:

1. Some believe that the whole is an allegory or parable. This is the view of John Calvin, who objected to an actual marriage of the prophet with an unchaste woman on the ground that it would discredit him with the very people whom he wished to influence.

2. Some think that Hosea married a woman who was already leading an unchaste life; that she bore three children to Hosea, and then lapsed into her old life once more, sinking into a condition of slavery from which she was bought by Hosea and restored to his home, though not at first to the full intimacy of married life. Like Hosea, Gomer is identified by association with her father. She was a daughter of Diblaim.

3. Others hold that Hosea was directed to marry a woman given to idolatry – an idolatry which was often associated with licentiousness, although his bride was not actually an unchaste woman at first, but only a spiritual adulteress. She bore to the prophet three children, to whom symbolical names were given. Later on the idolatry led her into actual adultery and prostitution. Now Hosea could understand why Jehovah was grieved with unfaithful Israel to the point of casting her off. The unspeakable love and compassion of God for His unfaithful spouse (Israel) prepared Hosea in some measure to obey the divine command to recover his own unfaithful wife and restore her to his home.

Encourage the group to not focus on deciding which view to adopt.

Suggest: At this point it is most important to realize that Hosea is following God's command and that God's purpose will be demonstrated.

Have someone read verse 4.

Comment: The people to whom Hosea was preaching and writing would understand Hosea's reference to Jezreel. The meaning of the word is "God scatters". It was at Jezreel that the house of Jehu had been established upon the throne of Israel by bloodshed (II Kings 10:11). Elisha had apparently commended the deed (II Kings 9:7) as a fit punishment of the house of Ahab for the blood shed by Jezebel. But Hosea condemns Jehu and declares that his house – and with it the kingdom of Israel – will be destroyed at Jezreel. The name, Jezreel as borne by Hosea's child, was at once a

reminder of the blood shed for which punishment was about to come and a prophecy of the fact that it was to be at Jezreel that the punishment would fall.

Ask: What is meant by “break Israel’s bow in the Valley of Jezreel”?

You may need to contribute this explanation: It refers to the military strength of the nation. Israel was surrounded by stronger nations and constantly tried to make alliances or win their favour. God wanted them to understand that their protection lay in their faithfulness to him. He was powerful enough to defeat their enemies.

Have someone read verses 6-7.

Ask: What is the name of the daughter born to Gomer and Hosea?

Add: What did it mean? (Lo-Ruhamah meant Not pitied. This indicates that God’s pity is now exhausted and nothing can turn away his judgment.

Comment: The passage says that Judah will be spared judgement at this time. Their king, Hezekiah, returned to the worship of God and led his people back into the covenant relationship with God.

Recall for the group the story of Abram’s (later to be called Abraham) calling by God in Genesis 12: 1-3. Also see Genesis 17:7-9.

Have someone read Hosea 1: 8-9.

Question: What is the name of this son? (Lo-Ruhamah. God is saying “You are not my people, and I am not your God).

Discuss with your group the chilling implications of those words for the covenant people of Israel. (In spite of their unfaithfulness, many would have expected God to have continued to bless them. God’s intervention the lives of their nation was a part of their national and cultural identity.)

On a large piece of paper or whiteboard, write responses which the group feels might have been given if the people had taken seriously Hosea’s warning. (You can’t do this, God; We have always been your chosen people; We aren’t all that bad)

Comment: The naming of the three children was to provide a living and constant reminder to the people of God’s judgment.

Encourage Application:

If you have two or more youth, this is the time to give them the **Youth!!! Take Ten** page and allow them to move away from the adults and apply the lesson by and for themselves.

State: We really cannot imagine how we would feel if God said “You are not my people and I am not your God”. Fortunately, as believing Christians we will never experience that individually and personally. However, we can imagine what it would be like to live in a nation and a world where God’s blessing has been removed.

The question to explore for today’s lesson is “Does God really punish sin?” We would probably quickly answer, “Of course he does.” Hosea was speaking to an entire nation. Within that nation there must have been some who were faithful to God. Yet they would eventually suffer the punishment of the nation. We must ask ourselves what actions we are doing which would prevent the punishment of the nation within which we live. This is a sobering thought. Hosea is a sobering book.

Take a five minute break to separate the Bible Study and Worship Time. Children may need to use the washroom again before worship.

Youth!!! Take Ten

Bible Study Application for Youth

You may wish to move away from the adults for the final five to ten minutes of the Bible study and help each other as youth to apply the lesson to your own needs.

Trouble in the Family

Hosea 1:1-9

A youth will lead the following activity and comments. No adults need to be present. If possible, teens should take turns in leading the application time.

How Important Is a Name???

In many cultures throughout the ages, the name of a child reflected the hopes and dreams or expectations of the parents for the child. To name a child for a parent or grandparent may be a loving thing to do or it may represent expectations that the child will be like the parent even perhaps having the same profession or occupation.

Today's parents are more likely to choose a name which is popular or appeals to them because of its association with a person they like. Often children are named for current entertainment idols. That is probably not wise as those idols change very quickly.

Hosea's children had a heavy burden placed on them. They were to be a constant reminder to the people of God's judgment. That seems very strange to us today. But the naming of children in Old Testament times was often a reminder of God's care. In this case it is a reminder of his coming judgment.

Jezreel was a place where a massacre occurred which put a man, Jehu, in power. His descendants continued the evil practices which he condoned even though God had ordained his kingship.

Lo-Ruhamah was Hosea's daughter and second child. Her name meant "Not pitied" indicating that God would no longer have pity on Israel.

The third child, a son, was named Lo-Ammi. This chilling name means "You are not my people and I am not your God."

Discuss how these words make you feel.

Worship Time (Suggested time: 30 minutes)***Trouble in the Family***
Hosea 1:1-9**Beginning the Service:**

Sing one or both of the following:

His Name is Wonderful, *The Worship Hymnal* # 315, CCLI#1122230

Praise the Name of Jesus, *The Worship Hymnal* # 322; CCLI#12712

Offering:**Praying for the World:**

In February of 2011 there began a great unrest in various countries of the Mideast. It is interesting to realize that these countries surround or form the modern day countries of the Old Testament times we are studying. The people who live there today need to know Jesus as Saviour. Pray that these changes may open the door to the spreading of the Good News of the gospel.

Sharing Guide:

This sharing guide is written to assist the person who directs the worship time to reemphasize the teaching for the day and help guide the congregation to respond to God's call and will for their lives in regard to the scripture studied. The leader may choose to follow the guide closely. Or, he or she may wish to only use it to give direction and a concept for preparing an original message. The leader is free to choose other ways to communicate and share the concepts presented here.

You are my people – God's Covenant with Israel

In many countries of the world there are legal documents for many reasons. We make sure everything is in order before we sign a mortgage. We have a will so that the

disposition of our earthly possessions will be made according to our wishes upon our death. We may even have a special clause in that will which indicates how much or how little medical attention we want to receive at the end of our life.

A covenant is not a legal document. Although some marriages do involve legal pre-marital agreements, a marriage is generally a covenant agreement. Both partners agree to love, honour, bless, and grow old with the person they have chosen to marry. The writer recently looked at the beautiful wedding album prepared almost fourteen years ago by her daughter-in-law. Included with the pictures and other memorabilia were the words of the covenant "I commit myself to your happiness and your self-fulfillment as a person, and to your purpose in God's Kingdom; and I promise to love, honour, trust and serve you in sickness and in health, in adversity and prosperity, and to be true and loyal to you, so long as we both shall live."

That many do not keep marriage covenants is a sad fact. But most marriages begin with the hope that this covenant will be permanent. There is a two-way agreement. Both will give to the marriage and take from it.

God's covenant with Israel was different, however. The scope and implications of this call were of great significance.

The Lord had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you.

***I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you;
I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.
I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse;
and all peoples on earth will be blessed by you."***

Genesis 12:1-3

This was both a command and a promise. The promise extended into the long centuries ahead. He was to be the founder of a new race, the father of a new faith which was based on a close and intimate relation with God. This new people was to receive special revelations from God and to pass them on to others. They were to be a blessing to all the people of the earth.

Years passed and no child was born to Abraham and Sarah. What a disappointment made more difficult by the very promise of God. Abraham had to continue to hope and to have faith in God. The Covenant was renewed in Genesis 15:18 ***On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram and said, "To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates."***

God had kept the covenant and the long history of the Israelite people was evidence of his providential care. They lived in the land promised and enjoyed the abundance of it. But they forgot that they were to be a blessing to all the people of the earth. They lived only for themselves.

And the time came when God said through Hosea ***“You are not my people and I am not your God.”***

These are surely some of the most chilling words in all of Scripture. We ask ourselves how during Hosea’s long ministry of sixty years people failed to listen to him and consider what it would mean to no longer be God’s people.

Hosea also preached forgiveness when repentance occurred. But the people did not repent and eventually went into bondage.

Many years later Jesus came and once more the Israelite people largely rejected God’s good offer of redemption.

In Hebrews 8:8-13 a new covenant is described.

“The time is coming, declares the Lord when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they did not remain faithful to my covenant, and I turned away from them, declares the Lord.

This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God and they will be my people.

No longer will a man teach his neighbour or a man his brother saying ‘Know the Lord’, because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”

Call to Commitment:

We rejoice today for the covenant which God made with Abraham, but we rejoice even more abundantly for the new covenant put in place by the death and resurrection of Jesus. We can say “You are our God and we are your people,” May the teachings written in our minds and hearts cause us to remember that today.

Concluding the Service:

Sing **In the Name of the Lord**, *The Worship Hymnal* # 325; CCLI#16828.