

Bible Study, Series 3, Week 3

Personal Bible Study

Day: 1

Read: Hosea 3

Read: Hosea 4: 1-3

Even though the promise of salvation has already been given in the previous part, the sin of the people is once again looked at here.

Verse 1: "faithful" loyalty and affection toward all people.

"No one knows the first thing about God" the will of God is unknown amongst the people.

Verse 2: "All this cussing" The use of God's name in cussing and the cursing of their neighbors. It is against the 3rd commandment and does not show love to your brother and neighbor.

Questions for personal study:

1. What are the three elements of the accusation against Israel (and us?)
2. To which sins do these lead?
3. Is there any connection between our sin and the rest of the creation? Pay special attention to the "because of all this" in verse 3. Think about the fall into sin in Genesis.

Personal application:

1. What struck you in a special way today?
2. How are you going to answer God on it today in a practical way? Give yourself only one target.
3. Ask God to help you and give you the strength to do it.

For the evening:

1. Were you successful in your target for the day?
2. If so, thank God.
3. If not, try and pinpoint the problem and ask God for forgiveness and strength to succeed.
4. Read Psalm 19 and pray.

Day: 2

Read: Hosea 4: 4-10

Verse 5: "mother" It happened often that an accused's family was punished with him or her. The family was seen as a unit. (Compare Isaiah 22: 26). It can be taken as figuratively for the whole nation)

Verse 6: "Because you've turned your back on knowledge" The knowledge needs to be backed by faith and dedication of your whole life. Compare Psalm 3: 6. Without it simple knowledge of the word is no good.

Verse 7: The priests loved it when the people sinned, because if they sinned more they had to bring more sacrifices they had to bring and the more meat there were for the priests.

Verse 8: "They pig out on my people's sins"

Verse 10: All the blessings will be kept from them.

Questions for personal study

1. What were the sins of the priests?
2. Can it still happen today that preachers and ministers and priests can be in it for the wrong reasons? Motivate.
3. Why is a lack of knowledge, about God's will, so dangerous?
4. What was God's punishment for the priests?

Personal application

1. What really struck you today?
2. How can you answer God in a practical way in your life today?
3. Pray for the leaders in the church of today. Pray that all will be filled with the Holy Spirit in all their work.

For the evening

1. How did it go with living a godly life today?
2. Give all the glory to God for all your successes and confess your failures.
3. Read Mathew 18: 6-9

Day: 3

Read: Hosea 4: 11-14

Verse 11: "Fornication" a sexual cult practiced in the temples of Baal. It was practiced to gain fertility and fruitfulness. They believed it insured a good harvest. It was part of their religion. Although it was literal harlotry it was also figurative harlotry as it exchanged God for idols.

Verse 12: "wooden idols"

"Their rod declares to them" prognostication or forecasting.

Verse 14: "I will not punish your daughters when they fornicate, nor your wives when they commit adultery." God does not punish the women in this case as He sees the men as the real culprits in this case.

Questions for personal Bible Study:

1. Why do the people not seek counsel from God? (Verse 12)
2. Why do you think this "sex" cult was so popular?
3. What is the role of "sex" in today's life? You can, for instance, think of the world of advertising.
4. What is the danger in that? (Think of verse 12 especially)

Personal Application:

1. What spoke to you today?
2. How are you going to answer God in a practical way?
3. Pray that God will make you obedient to Him.

For the evening:

1. Read Ephesians 5; 1-21
2. Did you succeed in your goal for the day?
3. If you were successful, thank God. If you failed pray for forgiveness and strength to succeed in reaching your goal.

Day: 4

Read: Hosea 4: 15-19

Verse 15: "Israel" & "Judah" Hosea comes to Judah with a word of warning. Israel (the 10 clans in the North) is already on the wrong path and has left God already. Judah is still following God.

"Gilgal" A holy place of Israel in the valley of Jordan that became a center of idolatry.
"Beth-aven" Points to Beth-El (home of God) Israel made God's home a home of sin.
Beth-El was a very important holy place as was Dan.

Verse 17: "Ephraim" One of the 10 clans of Israel. Here name means all of Israel.

Verse 19: As a storm wind pushes one on without you being able to stop it, so the harlotry with the idols is sending them to complete ruin.

Question for personal Bible Study:

1. Read Isaiah 59: 1-2 in conjunction with this and find out what was Israel's problem or reason why they could not experience God's lead.
2. What is the danger of stubbornness?
3. Why does God say in verse 17 that it is best to simply leave Ephraim? How would you treat a stubborn person?

Personal application:

1. Which thought struck you the most today?
2. How can you answer God in a practical way?
3. Pray for guidance for the day.

For the evening:

1. Read Luke 13: 34-35
2. Were you successful with your task for the day? If so, thank God.
3. If you failed, ask for strength once again.

Day: 5

Read: Hosea 5: 1-7

Verse 1: "house of Israel" means the leaders of Israel in this verse.

"A snare" We all know this.

"A net spread" Placed next to paths in the woods.

Mizpah.....Tabor Holy places

Verse 7: "a new moon" points to a short period.

Questions for personal study:

1. What does this piece say about those who say: "A merciful God will forgive my sins and look the other way."
2. What is the role of my position and status in society when God judges my sin?
Read 1 Peter 1: 17 after you have answered the question.
3. Take note of the meaning of verse 1. What very important responsibility is placed on you as a Christian leader?

Personal application:

1. What is it that really touched you today?
2. What can you do in a positive way to have a positive influence on others?
3. Ask god to help you with it

For the evening:

1. Could you be a positive influence on others today?
2. If you had a negative influence on someone today, try and find out why and ask God to help you with it.
3. Read 1 Timothy 1: 12-17

Day: 6

Read: Psalm 20 and Psalm 122

There is no specific study for today, Think about what you have done in the week and do revision. If you are like me you may be feeling a little despondent because you do not complete all your tasks successfully. Do not get disheartened, try and think of the reason for each failure. Try to concentrate on your successes and make work of the reasons of your failures.

Try and attend a church service in this week and try to formulate practical targets, that you can actually, do for the week.

Group Bible Study:

Read Hosea: 5: 1-7

Read the explanations again in the week's studies if you cannot remember them any more.

1. Take note of the interesting structure of verse 1-2: three groups are addressed, three holy places are mentioned and three conventions of hunting are mentioned.
2. What is the actual task of each of the different leaders mentioned, amongst the nation?
3. What did these leaders mean to the nation in actuality in the light of chapter 4 and Hosea 5: 1-2?
4. What are the 3 reasons given in verse 4 why they cannot return to God?
5. What was the reaction of Israel's sin on their neighbor Judah?
6. What does this piece say to someone that argues as follows: "I, as a Christian, can live as I like - no one will care about it?" Have a look at Mathew 7: 15-20 as well.
7. Why did God not let Himself be impressed by the sacrifices the nation brought to Him in verse 6? (Compare Psalm 51: 18-19)
8. Let each person in the group say what struck them the most in today's piece?
9. What can we, as Christians, do to prevent our leaders from leading in the wrong way on all different terrains of life?

