

Christian student ministry workers in Sweden developed a series of questions to ask when reading a Bible passage. Called the “Swedish Method” because of its origins, these questions can be used when reading the Bible by yourself or with others.

The daily readings in this family worship guide have a few questions. However, we encourage you, as appropriate for your family, to ask the following general questions of the text each day.



Is there something that ‘shines’ from the passage—whatever impacts most, or draws attention?



Is there something you don’t understand, or a question the passage raises in your mind?



Is there a personal application to your life?



Is there something you plan to share with someone else – and who will you share it with?



How do ideas in the passage interrelate? Or with other passages in this book – or in the whole Bible?

Worshipping Together is part of the vision and is a ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Frankston, Victoria, Australia. frankstonrp.org.au bit.ly/WTrpcaf

The concept and layout draws heavily from *Let’s Worship God*, a ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Airdrie, Scotland. airdrierpcs.org

The readings are from Tim Chester’s 3-year weekly reading plan. bit.ly/WkBbl or bit.ly/3yrBbl

The quote on the cover is from the article *What Shampoo and Family Worship Have in Common*, Written by Randy Greenwald, (Quoted from *Tabletalk* magazine, Nov 1997.)

Notes this week are drawn in part from commentaries on Ezekiel by John Calvin, James Boice, Gordon Fee/James Stuart, and James Smith, and notes from the HCSB Study Bible, and the Reformation Study Bible

Worshipping Together



We love God because He first loved us.

And we love to tell God that we love Him.

Joyful and faithful worship together twice each Lord’s Day is the highlight of our week. We are glad that they said, “Let us go to the House of the Lord.” Corporate worship prepares us for the week and prepares us for Heaven.

In addition, we regularly worship God as families and as individuals.

One father put it this way:

The back of my shampoo bottle says, “Lather, rinse, repeat.” Simple enough that even I can do it. Though family worship may be a bit more complicated than shampooing hair, it ought not to be rated with “home dentistry” in the scale of difficulty.



If you could buy family worship in the store, it would come in the form of a Bible, and the directions would simply say, “Read, pray, repeat.” Men should gather their families at least once daily. They should read a portion of the Scriptures to them. And they should pray with them. There need be no fireworks or pizzazz to keep the kids interested. There needs to be only a father* with a heart-love for God – who desires to see that love appropriated by his children.*

Read, pray, repeat.

* Fathers leading their family in worship is always the goal. When, in the Lord’s providence, the father is absent or uninterested, a godly mother will lead her children

Reading Hosea 1:1 The word of the LORD that came to Hosea

Notes
(See back page for authors)

Hosea is the first of what we call The Minor Prophets – the last 12 books in the Old Testament of our English Bibles. They are not called minor because of value or importance – merely because of length. Hosea is both the first and the longest of the 12.

Hosea served some 40-60 years toward the end of the Northern Kingdom, Israel. His prophecy is directed primarily at Israel, although Fee/Stuart note that *even though Hosea seems to pay only passing attention to Judah in his oracles (see 1:7, 11; 4:15; 5:5, 10, 12–14; 6:4, 11; 8:14; 10:11; 11:12; 12:2), he will not expect his later Judean readers to do the same regarding Judah—nor should we who now read it from the hindsight of the fall of both kingdoms!*

Smith comments that *in the days of the great Jeroboam II God raised up another mighty prophet. Through personal tragedy in his own life Hosea son of Beerī learned the pain which Israel’s waywardness caused Yahweh. The first three chapters introduce the major themes of the entire book. Israel’s sin is grievous, like adultery. Israel’s punishment is certain. Yet beyond the judgment there was hope for a glorious future.*

Questions
(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. When did Hosea prophecy?
2. What are the themes of his prophecy?
3.     

Praise Pray

- Psalm 134b²
1. Commit in prayer to know and follow God, by God’s help
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

¹ You will notice we only have a printed guide for 6 days. We recommend each Lord’s Day you review the previous week’s readings and/or the previous or current week’s sermons and pray together

² Psalm selections are taken from the *Book of Psalms for Worship*. We encourage our congregation to sing the same selection each day for a week to gain familiarity with the selection

Reading Hosea 3:4-5 They will come with awe to the LORD

Notes
(See back page for authors)

Just in case Hosea’s readers didn’t get the picture he explains it. Israel will be disciplined by God for their waywardness. As this woman was back with Hosea, but would not enjoy the intimacy of the marriage relationship (3b), so Israel would have to endure many “days” of exile. In these days, God would still be with them, but they would be deprived, for a time. The RSB notes that *Israel’s basic political and religious institutions, both legitimate (sacrifice and ephod, Ex. 28:31) and illegitimate (sacred stones or pillars, Deut. 16:21–22; idols or teraphim, Zech. 10:2), were going to be removed as punishment.*

Yet there is hope to hold on to. As the implication is that Hosea’s bought back wife would come to love Hosea and desire again to be intimate with him, so Israel would desire to again be close to God. They will return (repent) and seek God again – with awe at His goodness!

The RSB continues noting *that many Israelites repented with a full desire for intimacy with God at Pentecost (Acts 2:38–41). This reference [to David as King] points to Jesus Christ, Son of David (1:11 note; 2 Sam. 7:12–16; Matt. 1:1; Rom. 1:3).*

Questions
(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. What would Israel lost in the time of discipline?
2. What would mark their return to the Lord?
3. How are we to be like repentant Israel?
4.     

Praise Pray

- Psalm 134b
1. Pray that you will seek the Lord with awe at His goodness
 2. Pray for your family
 3. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member
 4. Pray for the reading and preaching of God’s word tomorrow

Reading Hosea 3:2-3 So I bought her...

Notes (See back page for authors)
Hosea obeys God. "So I bought her," his account states. Smith notes that *the price of a slave in the Old Testament world was thirty pieces of silver. Apparently Hosea paid half the price in silver and half in kind (barley).*

The picture seems to be of a slave auction. Boice suggests this picture: *At last a beautiful woman is put up for sale...One man started the bidding: "Twelve pieces of silver!" "Thirteen!" says Hosea. "Fourteen pieces of silver!" Hosea's bid was "Fifteen!" The low bidders were beginning to drop out, but one man continued bidding: "Fifteen pieces of silver and a bushel of barley!" Hosea said, "Fifteen pieces of silver and a bushel and a half of barley!"³ The auctioneer looked around and, seeing no more bids, said, "Sold to Hosea for Fifteen pieces of silver and a bushel and a half of barley.*

Boice continues, *when all seemed lost, God sent the Lord Jesus Christ, His Son, into the marketplace to buy us...Jesus said, "I bid the price of my blood." The Father said, "Sold to the Lord Jesus Christ for the price of His blood." There was no greater bid than that. So we became His, ...and He says to you today if you are a believer, "You are to live with me many days...and I will live with You.*

Questions (see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. Why did Hosea buy back this adulterous wife?
2. Why did Jesus buy sinners?
3. What does He call us to as His people?

4.     

Praise Pray Psalm 134b

1. Commit in prayer to live faithfully with Jesus, with God's help
2. Pray for a member of your church
3. Pray for your family
4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

Reading Hosea 1:2-9 promiscuity by abandoning the LORD

Notes (Today's notes are all from the Reformation Study Bible)
The question of how to interpret the personal events of Hosea's life that symbolically parallel his prophetic message has long perplexed readers of the Book of Hosea. Are the details given in chs. 1 and 3 about Hosea's family life to be understood literally or allegorically? Because of the moral perplexity posed by the holy God's command that Hosea marry a prostitute, throughout the ages there always have been interpreters who have understood the details of Hosea's married life allegorically. Others, arguing that 1:2 refers to the future, reason that Gomer became a prostitute only after the birth of their first child. Still others, advocating a modified literal reading, argue that Gomer was not a common prostitute but rather a woman involved in cultic prostitution related to the fertility religion of Baal. However, the prophet's actual marriage to an unfaithful wife would make the analogy with the Lord's relationship to Israel most vivid, and this seems to be what the text intends.

Similarly, questions have been asked about Hosea's children. Their names, like that of the child born to Isaiah and the prophetess in Is. 8:1-4, are intended to have symbolic significance (cf. Is. 7:3; Ezek. 23). The names given to Hosea's children (Jezreel, Lo-ruhama, and Lo-ammi; 1:4, 6, 9 and notes) purposely illustrate Hosea's message about God's increasing displeasure with wayward Israel, but also convey the message of hope, renewal, love, and restoration (2:21-23 notes).

Questions (see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. What did Hosea's wife represent?
2. What did Hosea's children's names mean?

3.     

Praise Pray Psalm 134b

1. Confess to God your own unfaithfulness asking His forgiveness
2. Pray for a member of your church
3. Pray for your family
4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

³ Translators don't all agree on the equivalent English measures to the Hebrew

Reading Hosea 1:10-2:1 they will be called: Sons of the living God.

Notes (See back page for authors)
Here the horrible mess God’s people have put themselves in is resolved. But not by them. “But I (God) v7. “Yet...” v9. God will do something to fix the mess. V7 hints at this and these 3 verses give more details.

God demonstrates this by reversing the meaning of the names He had Hosea give his three children. The little boy named “Not My People” would instead be called “My People” (2:1) and “Sons of the living God.” Young “No Compassion” would be called “Compassion.” And, young “God Scatters” would now be known as “God sows.” Smith notes that *God’s scattering in judgment now becomes God’s sowing for growth.*

All this will be done by God because of His mercy. And it will be completed in the work of Christ. As the RSB notes *“one head” reveals the completeness of reconciliation between both kingdoms and the Lord. Ultimately, this reunion takes place under Christ, the son of David (Matt. 1:23; 2:6, 15).*

- Questions** (see back page for explanation of symbols)
1. How are each of the three children’s names reversed in these verses?
 2. What has caused God to fix the mess of His people’s rebellion?
 3. How will Christ complete this work?
 4.     

- Praise Pray** Psalm 134b
1. Rejoice in prayer at the compassionate mercy of God
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

Reading Hosea 3:1 the LORD loves the Israelites though they turn

Notes (See back page for authors)
Chapter 3 gives another dramatic account of Israel’s unfaithfulness and God’s compassionate mercy. Not all Bible students agree on the relationship of chapters 1 and 3. Some regard them as retelling the same story in 2 accounts. Some believe the unnamed woman of chapter 3 is different from Gomer in chapter 1. Yet, it seems the generally accepted view that the stories are sequential, continuing the story of Hosea’s painful marriage reflecting God’s pain with unfaithful Israel.

Boice calls the third chapter of Hosea *the greatest chapter in the Bible, because it portrays the greatest story in the Bible – the death of the Lord Jesus Christ for His people – in the most concise and poignant form to be found anywhere.*

Here at the start Hosea is told to again show love to an adulteress woman (likely Gomer who has strayed again from him) in order to reflect to Israel God’s compassionate love to them even though they turn to other gods. And, they love raisin cakes. The RSB notes that *these delicacies, made from raisins pressed together, were associated with special occasions (2 Sam. 6:19), and may have been used in Baal worship as an aphrodisiac (cf. Song 2:5).* These straying people, seeking sweetness in all the wrong places, will be loved again by God.

- Questions** (see back page for explanation of symbols)
1. What are the possible relationships between chapters 1 and 3?
 2. Why does Boice call this the greatest chapter in the Bible?
 3. Why is God going to again love His rebellious people?
 4.     

- Praise Pray** Psalm 134b
1. Rejoice that God is a forgiving and loving God
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member