

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

HOSEA REVEALS GOD'S FORGIVING LOVE

International Sunday School Lesson for May 14, 1950

Memory Selection: "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely."—Hosea 14: 4.

Lesson Text: Hosea 11: 1-4, 8-11; 14: 4-9.

As our lesson for last week brought out, Hosea was a native of the Northern Kingdom, Israel, the only one of the prophetic writers from that section. While the Prophet Amos used the figures of the shepherd, Hosea used those of agricultural life. Amos looked upon the evidence of Jehovah's might and justice; Hosea upon fertile fields and tree-clad hills, which spoke to him of Jehovah's love and his gracious provision for his people's needs.

As pointed out last week, Hosea's message was inspired by his own personal tragedy.

"The first division of the Book narrates this sad experience, and illustrates one social ideal of Hosea, his conception of the sanctity of the marriage relation," says President William Bennett Bizzell.

"We are told that he was married to a young woman by the name of Gomer, the daughter of a certain Diblaim. He probably procured his wife by purchase which was in conformity to established custom. It is not improbable that the young wife possessed all the attributes that a high-minded young man would expect to find in the woman of his choice. But Hosea had not yet measured the seductive charm and the licentious practices that had gained headway in the religious ceremonies of the day, and he little dreamed how these rites were to fascinate his wife, and cause her to neglect her home and forget the obligations of her domestic ties."

"The wife abandoned her home. Her descent to degeneration and infamy was rapid," continues President Bizzell. "Her complete humiliation finally came—she was to be sold in the slave market. While she had sacrificed all right to his protection, still this man could not forget that she was his wife, and he went into the slave market and bought back this woman for fifteen pieces of silver and a homer and a half of barley. In defiance of established custom and public opinion, he restored her to his home and placed her under his loving protection."

Hosea was the prophet of salvation. He indorsed the protest of his predecessor, Amos, against mere formality in religion and one of his verses has been described as the greatest utterance of the Old Testament, namely, 'I desire goodness and not sacrifice and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.'

Concerning the Book of Hosea, Dr. George L. Petrie says, "Many of the more familiar verses of the Bible, verses that are like household words, often quoted and well known, are flowers culled from the charming garden of Hosea. Yet Hosea, as a book, is perhaps one of the least read of all the Bible Books. Hosea's pages are not among the cleanest, and Hosea's leaves among the least worn with thumbing of them all. For this there is a reason. Hosea is perhaps the obscurest Book of all the Bible Books."

Notwithstanding Hosea's condemnation of the sins of Israel, he preaches divine mercy. "For I am God and not man, and I will not come in wrath." And this golden close of the denunciations, this pointing to the resplendent arc of the rainbow of mercy amid the darkest bursts of storm, is the most marked characteristic not of Hosea only, but of Joel, Isaiah, Micah, and all the greatest of the true prophets. They say that in the nature of things there are irreconcilable antinomies—that is, laws apparently conflicting, apparently contradictory, which are equally true thoroughly irreconcilable because their ultimate unity and reconciliation runs up into regions of infinitude beyond our feeble grasp," says F. W. Farrer.

As the poet Whittier says: I dimly guess from blessings known Of greater out of night, And, with the chartered Psalmist,

own
His judgments, too, are right,
I know not what the future hath
Of marvel or surprise,
Assured alone, that life and death
His mercy underlies.
I know not where his islands lift,
Their fringed palms in air;
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond his love and care.

GO TO SOME CHURCH NEXT SUNDAY

LIGHT OF LIFE



THE CHURCH FOR ALL . . . ALL FOR THE CHURCH

The Church is the greatest factor on earth for the building of character and good citizenship. It is a storehouse of spiritual values. Without a strong Church, neither democracy nor civilization can survive. There are four sound reasons why every person should attend services regularly and support the Church. They are: (1) For his own sake. (2) For his children's sake. (3) For the sake of his community and nation. (4) For the sake of the Church itself, which needs his moral and material support. Plan to go to church regularly and read your Bible daily.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Proverbs 31	Exodus 2	Matthew 13	Matthew 19	I Kings 3	I Thessal'n's 5	Exodus 13
10-31	1-10	1-9	1-9	16-22	16-22	17-22

The light that shines in a proud mother's eyes is more beautiful than the gleam of the rarest jewel or the radiance of the brightest star. It mirrors the mystery and glory of life, the hopes and faith and dreams of parenthood. It suffuses her face with the joy of possession and the consciousness of being part of the great unbroken chain of human existence. All true parents want their children to make the best of life; to avoid its pitfalls, to master its obstacles, to achieve its successes. They want them to be good citizens and just and honorable men and women. The little baby boy in the picture will be reared with the tenderest care, and will be taught knowledge and skills as he grows in years and in understanding. But the great truths of religion and spiritual living must be made the groundwork of his training if he is to attain life's highest possibilities. So this beautiful mother must turn to God and the Church and the Scriptures, for guidance in training her child to live.

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Perquimans Church Services

HERTFORD BAPTIST CHURCH
C. W. Duling, Pastor
Sunday School, 9:45 A. M.
Morning Worship, 11:00 o'clock.
Evening Worship, 8 o'clock.
Mid-week Services, Wednesday at 8 P. M.

BETHLEHEM CHURCH OF CHRIST
Harold C. Turner, Pastor
Church services at 3:00 P. M.
Christian Union, 7:30 P. M.

BURGESS BAPTIST CHURCH
Rev. J. R. Byerly, Pastor
Church services first and third Sundays at 11 A. M.
Sunday School at 10:00 A. M.
Church service 7:45 P. M. second and fourth Sundays.

PERQUIMANS CHARGE CHURCHES
E. B. Edwards, Pastor
First Sunday:
New Hope Church, 11:00 A. M.
Oak Grove Church, 7:30 P. M.

Second Sunday
Winfall Church, 11:00 A. M.
Cedar Grove Church, 10 A. M.
Woodland Church, 7:30 P. M.

Third Sunday
Oak Grove Church, 11:00 A. M.
New Hope Church, 7:30 P. M.

Fourth Sunday
Cedar Grove Church, 11:00 A. M.
Woodland Church, 10 A. M.
Winfall Church, 7:30 P. M.

Fifth Sunday
Woodland Church, 11:00 A. M.
Prayer Meeting each Wednesday at Winfall Church at 7:30 P. M.

ANDERSON'S METHODIST CHURCH
E. R. Meekins, Pastor
Church School, 11:00 O. M.
Morning Worship, 11:00 A. M., second and fourth Sundays.

WHITEVILLE GROVE BAPTIST CHURCH
Rev. Carl Bjork, Pastor
Sunday School, 11 A. M. every Sunday except third Sunday.
Church services every third Sunday at 3 P. M.

UP RIVER FRIENDS CHURCH
Elizabeth White, Pastor
Sunday School, 9:45 A. M.
Church Services, 11 A. M.
Christian Endeavor, 6:30 P. M.

BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH
Rev. E. G. Willis, Pastor
Sunday School, 10 A. M.
Preaching first and third Sundays at 11 A. M.
Preaching second and fourth Sunday evening at 7:30.

PINEY WOODS FRIENDS CHURCH
Carl J. Yow, Pastor
Sunday School, 10 A. M.
Morning worship—11:00 A. M.
Youth Fellowship, 6:30 P. M.

WOODVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH
G. M. Singletary, Pastor
Sunday School, 10:30 A. M. on first and third Sundays and 2:00 P. M. on second and fourth Sundays.
Church services, 3:00 P. M. on second and fourth Sundays.

HERTFORD METHODIST CHURCH
Ben O. Merritt, Pastor
Church School, 9:45 A. M.
Morning Worship, 11:00 o'clock.
Youth Fellowship, 6:45 P. M.
Evening Worship, 7:30 P. M.
Mid-week Fellowship, Wednesday at 7:30 P. M.

BAGLEY SWAMP PILGRIM
Coy S. Saunders, Pastor
Sunday School, 10:00 A. M.
Morning Worship, 11:00 o'clock.
Young People's Meeting, 6:30 P. M.
Evening Worship, 7:30 o'clock.
Mid-week Services, Thursday at 7:30 P. M.

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH
E. T. Jilson, Rector
Holy Communion, 9:00 A. M.
Every Sunday except first Sunday at 9:00 A. M.
Church School, 10:00 A. M.
Morning Prayer and Sermon, 11:00 o'clock.
Holy Communion first Sunday at 11 A. M.

BEREA CHURCH OF CHRIST
Walker Perry, Pastor
Bible School 10:30 A. M., except first Sunday, at 10 A. M.
Morning worship on first Sunday at 11 A. M.
Evening worship first Sunday at 7 P. M.

CHAPPELL HILL BAPTIST CHURCH
A. H. Outlaw, Pastor
Sunday School, 2 P. M. every first Sunday.
Church Service 3 P. M. every first Sunday.
Sunday School at 11 A. M. every second, third and fourth Sunday.

Go To Church Your Church Any Church But Go