

Punishment And Restoration

Hosea 1:10 – Hosea 2

¹⁰ “Yet the Israelites will be like the sand on the seashore, which cannot be measured or counted. In the place where it was said to them, ‘You are not my people,’ they will be called ‘children of the living God.’ ¹¹ The people of Judah and the people of Israel will come together; they will appoint one leader and will come up out of the land, for great will be the day of Jezreel.”^[c]

As we learned last week God looked upon Israel like an adulterous wife. Israel was constantly worshipping idols or giving themselves to other gods, in the same way and adulterer gives himself or herself to other lovers. But as for Judah, He showed mercy. Not because they were perfect and doing everything right but because they were doing their best to follow God. Here we begin to see that God is going to restore Israel and bring them together with Judah and will then be called the “children of the living God”. However, before that can happen there has to be an atonement for what they have done.

¹ Say of your brothers, ‘My people,’ and of your sisters, ‘My loved one.’ ² “Rebuke your mother, rebuke her, for she is not my wife, and I am not her husband. Let her remove the adulterous look from her face and the unfaithfulness from between her breasts. ³ Otherwise I will strip her naked and make her as bare as on the day she was born; I will make her like a desert, turn her into a parched land, and slay her with thirst.

Here Hosea is speaking to one of his sons. We don't know which but most likely the oldest as that would have been the custom. He says, “go and tell your brothers and sisters that Gomer is no longer my wife, and I am not her husband”. In other words, I am divorcing her. But he also tells them to go and rebuke her. Basically, tell her that she is nothing more than a slut. Tell her to stop being unfaithful from between her breasts, possibly meaning that she often exposed her breasts to get clients. Otherwise, I will kick her out on the streets naked with not even any water to drink.

I would say that he is pretty upset at this point and done with her. Wouldn't you? Also, what happened to honor thy father and thy mother here? Well first we have

to look at Matthew 5:32 where it says, *“³² But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, makes her the victim of adultery, and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.”*

Now this is a little off subject, but I want to clear this up now. When this scripture says do not marry a divorced woman it means that in those days the only way a divorce was granted was if the woman was promiscuous. And you should not marry a promiscuous woman.

Secondly, honor went out the window because of her unfaithfulness. Jeremiah 3:8 says, *“⁸ I gave faithless Israel her certificate of divorce and sent her away because of all her adulteries. Yet I saw that her unfaithful sister Judah had no fear; she also went out and committed adultery.”* God took away their place of honor and protection because of their adultery.

Now, let's put this in the context of Israel, as I will be doing throughout this study, because if you remember God wanted Hosea to feel the same way He did towards His people.

- **For she is not my wife:** Like the marriage between Hosea and Gomer the marriage between God and Israel was broken by unfaithfulness. God viewed Israel as a promiscuous wife that no longer is worthy to be called a wife. The relationship was broken however, God sought reconciliation and not divorce.
- **From between her breasts:** Israel constantly worshipped other gods, in the same way that Gomer offered herself to other lovers. In the same way it is believed that she exposed herself, Israel exposed themselves.
- **Strip her naked, bare and kick her out:** Hosea supplied all her needs including the clothing that she wore. By stripping her naked, bare and kicking her out he was exposing her unfaithfulness. She would be like Israel was when God found her in Egypt, with nothing. God is warning Israel that if she doesn't change her ways she will be judged. God's blessings will be taken away from them. He will stop supplying their needs.

⁴ I will not show my love to her children, because they are the children of adultery.

⁵ Their mother has been unfaithful and has conceived them in disgrace. She said, 'I

will go after my lovers, who give me my food and my water, my wool and my linen, my olive oil and my drink.'

Wow, this would indicate that Hosea wasn't sure these kids are even his. They might be the product of Gomer's unfaithfulness and she conceived them in disgrace because of it. Gomer tells Hosea and her children that she doesn't care what they say or do to her. I will go and get all I need from my lovers.

- **I will not show my love to her children:** If Israel is like a promiscuous wife, then the children represent the individual people. If they do not change their ways then God will not only judge them as a group but individually.
- **My lovers will supply my needs:** She was justifying her adultery because her lovers would supply her needs. In the same way Israel justified their sin. They saw all that they could get out of it. Just like Gomer they didn't understand the passing pleasures of sin. Hebrews 11:25 says, *"²⁵ He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin."*

Does any of this sound familiar or apply to today so far? Let's keep going.

⁶Therefore I will block her path with thornbushes; I will wall her in so that she cannot find her way. ⁷She will chase after her lovers but not catch them; she will look for them but not find them. Then she will say, 'I will go back to my husband as at first, for then I was better off than now.' ⁸She has not acknowledged that I was the one who gave her the grain, the new wine and oil, who lavished on her the silver and gold—which they used for Baal.

Hosea tells Gomer, "If you think the grass is greener on the other side of the street then go for it". However, understand that I am going to make it difficult for you. You are going to search for your lovers and not find any of them. Do you know why? Because none of them want to be exposed as being with a prostitute. Then you're going to want to come running back to me where you had everything you needed and more.

- **Block her path with thorns:** This doesn't mean literally thorns but rather isolation. Hosea is going to hurt her business so to speak. I am going to go to your lovers and tell them that I will expose them if they are caught with

you. In the same way God isolated Israel, or put thorns in her path, whenever she went down the wrong path to bring her back to repentance.

- **Return to my first husband:** In the original Hebrew the word return is replaced with seek. The word seek often refers to repentance or forgiveness. Gomer will go back home and beg Hosea for forgiveness. In the same way God is telling Israel to turn back to her first husband, God, and seek repentance and forgiveness.
- **I supplied all her needs:** Gomer didn't understand just how good she had it and how much more Hosea did for her than her lovers could ever do. Just like Israel didn't understand that all their needs were being met by God.
- **Which they used for Baal:** Baal was a Canaanite god that was seen in thunderstorms, and they believed he provided fertility. Gomer was taking things that Hosea had given her and offering them to other gods. Israel often took what God provided for them and offered it to other gods. I think this shows just how God sees and feels about people's idolatry towards Him.

⁹ *"Therefore I will take away my grain when it ripens, and my new wine when it is ready. I will take back my wool and my linen, intended to cover her naked body. ¹⁰ So now I will expose her lewdness before the eyes of her lovers; no one will take her out of my hands. ¹¹ I will stop all her celebrations: her yearly festivals, her New Moons, her Sabbath days—all her appointed festivals. ¹² I will ruin her vines and her fig trees, which she said were her pay from her lovers; I will make them a thicket, and wild animals will devour them. ¹³ I will punish her for the days she burned incense to the Baals; she decked herself with rings and jewelry, and went after her lovers, but me she forgot," declares the LORD.*

Hosea says, "I am going to take away all her food, her drink and her clothes". I am going to expose her to her lovers for what she really is and then no-one will want her. I am going to make it so she can't even have any of the things she enjoys. I am even going to destroy everything that her lovers have ever given her. Then I am going to punish her for worshipping other gods. Why? Because she has forgotten just how good I have been to her.

- **Take away:** Just as Hosea is taking everything from Gomer, God takes away the fruits of the field and the flock from Israel to make it known the true source of blessings.
- **Expose her lewdness:** As it was for Gomer, Israel will be exposed to public shame, and no-one will accept her. Sound familiar?
- **Stop her celebrations:** Just like when Israel was in the wilderness, always seeking out other gods, God took away all their festivals. He put them into isolation or exile. This is what Hosea is doing to Gomer.
- **Destroy things from lovers:** Gomer attributed everything she had was because of her lovers. In the same way, Israel was prostituting itself to false gods and attributing all that she had to them.
- **She forgot:** Israel found prosperity during this time and enjoyed many sinful pleasures just like Gomer. But God would take away Israel's prosperity just like Hosea is going to take away hers.

¹⁴ "Therefore I am now going to allure her; I will lead her into the wilderness and speak tenderly to her. ¹⁵ There I will give her back her vineyards, and will make the Valley of Achor^[b] a door of hope. There she will respond^[c] as in the days of her youth, as in the day she came up out of Egypt.

Here comes the restoration. Now that Gomer is at the lowest point in her life I am going to go and win her back. I am going to take her out and speak sweet nothings to her. I am going to give her back everything I have taken from her and give her back hope. There she will feel like a schoolgirl, falling in love for the first time.

- **Allure her:** Once Israel has felt the discomfort of her deprivation, then she will listen to the voice of God once again, and He will allure her back to Himself. Take Israel back.
Spurgeon said that allure is a singular kind of power. It doesn't say here that I will drive her, I will drag her, or I will force her. It says I will allure her. This is a remarkable word, and it teaches us that the allurements of love surpasses in power all other forces in the world.
- **Valley of Achor:** Achor means trouble, so this refers to the valley of trouble. Here Hosea is going to restore Gomer unto himself. God's restoration is so great that He will transform the "Valley of Trouble" into a door of hope for Israel.

- **As in the days of her youth:** When Israel is restored, she will be restored to joy. The passing pleasures of sin are forgotten, and the true pleasures of God are restored. Is this not what Hosea is doing for Gomer?

¹⁶ “In that day,” declares the LORD, “you will call me ‘my husband’; you will no longer call me ‘my master.’^[d] ¹⁷ I will remove the names of the Baals from her lips; no longer will their names be invoked. ¹⁸ In that day I will make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, the birds in the sky and the creatures that move along the ground. Bow and sword and battle I will abolish from the land, so that all may lie down in safety. ¹⁹ I will betroth you to me forever; I will betroth you in^[e] righteousness and justice, in^[f] love and compassion. ²⁰ I will betroth you in^[g] faithfulness, and you will acknowledge the LORD.

Hosea has restored her and taken her back into his house and tells her she will now refer to him as her husband. He is saying that He is going to love her despite her unfaithfulness. He is going to keep her from worshipping other gods, and he won't even allow her to speak their names. If you agree to those terms, then I will protect you and keep you from harm. We will not even quarrel. I will take you back as my wife forever, in righteousness, justice, love, compassion, and in faithfulness, and you will acknowledge me.

- **My husband:** With great anticipation, God looked forward to the day when the relationship would be genuinely restored with His people. He wanted an intimate love-relationship with His people, and longed for the day when His people would have a marriage-like love and commitment to their God.
- **My master:** God was not satisfied with a fear-based, obedience-focused relationship with His people where they thought of Him primarily as Master. He wanted a relationship where they thought of Him primarily as Husband.
- **Remove the names of Baal from her lips:** In Hebrew, the name “Baal” comes from the word “Master”. But God wants a love-based, commitment-based relationship with His people. Not one of master-slave like with idols or sin.
- **Bow and sword of battle:** War is over! God is going to bring peace to the land. Everything will be transformed.
- **Betroth you forever:** When a relationship with the LORD is ultimately restored, it cannot be broken unless we break it. When you have a

relationship with God it is built on a solid foundation in righteousness, justice, lovingkindness, and mercy, and will result in a deeper and deeper relationship with Him. You shall know the LORD.

²¹ *"In that day I will respond, "declares the LORD— "I will respond to the skies, and they will respond to the earth; ²² and the earth will respond to the grain, the new wine and the olive oil, and they will respond to Jezreel. ²³ I will plant her for myself in the land; I will show my love to the one I called 'Not my loved one. [i]' I will say to those called 'Not my people, [ii]' 'You are my people'; and they will say, 'You are my God.'"*

I think that this is where God is speaking to us more than Hosea is speaking to Gomer. I am going to break this down with more scripture. You know me. But I promise we will be done soon.

- **In that day:** On the day we fall to our knees to worship and praise the Lord the way we are supposed to He will heal our land. 2 Chronicles 7:14 says; *"⁴ if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land."*
- **I will respond:** This is a great blessing of a real, vibrant relationship with God. Our hearts beat in rhythm to His, and so we want what He wants. So when we ask God to do things, we are asking Him to do what He wants to do for us – so He will respond. John 15:7 says; *⁷ If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.*
- **The earth will respond:** When our relationship with God is where it needs to be then He will provide abundantly. Matthew 6:33 says; *³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*
- **They will respond to Jezreel:** In chapter 1 the word Jezreel was used to describe the scattering of God's people. However, this word was also used for the scattering of seed or planting. This is why it says in chapter 1 verse 10 that they will be called "my children" and here it says "I will plant her for myself in the land". Luke 8:15 says; *¹⁵ But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop.*

- **You are my people:** They have turned from their wicked ways and have been restored. Jeremiah 7:23 says; ²³ *but I gave them this command: Obey me, and I will be your God and you will be my people. Walk in obedience to all I command you, that it may go well with you.*
- **You are my God:** Restoration is complete! Isaiah 25:1 says; *LORD, you are my God; I will exalt you and praise your name, for in perfect faithfulness you have done wonderful things, things planned long ago.*

For my fellow believers, sometimes God puts hedges of thorns in our way and we really don't like it. We may even think that God is against us because those thorns hurt so bad. But let me tell you that it is one of the sweetest expressions of His love to hedge our way with thorns and wall us in. To make it hard for us to find the wrong way. To protect us from ourselves.

We need to fall to our knees and give Him all the praise and the glory He deserves. He will answer our prayers and give us the desires of our hearts. If He is our God and we are His children, then we must produce a crop.

For those that do not know the Lord, Satan runs around tempting us with tender words, sweet nothings, and promises of the grass being greener on the other side. He baits us with worldly pleasure. However, when the passing pleasure of sin is gone, and they are exposed what are you left with? The promise of restoration if you only turn to Him.

Jesus is waiting to allure you unto Himself. To have a relationship with you that is built on the kind of love that you have never felt before. If you don't know Him then today is the day.