

## A Betrothal of Grace

Hosea 2:14-23

June 18, 2023

### Congregational Reading

#### Matthew 20:1-7

20 "For the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. <sup>2</sup>After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius<sup>(a)</sup> a day, he sent them into his vineyard. <sup>3</sup>And going out about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, <sup>4</sup>and to them he said, 'You go into the vineyard too, and whatever is right I will give you.' <sup>5</sup>So they went. Going out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour, he did the same. <sup>6</sup>And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing. And he said to them, 'Why do you stand here idle all day?' <sup>7</sup>They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You go into the vineyard too.'

### Pray

Worship

Announcements

Worship

Grip and Grin

### Responsive reading

#### Question 1

What is our only hope in life and death?

#### Answer 1

That we are not our own but belong, body and soul, both in life and death, to God and to our Savior Jesus Christ.

#### Question 2

What is God?

#### Answer 2

God is the creator and sustainer of everyone and everything. He is eternal, infinite, and unchangeable in his power and perfection, goodness and glory, wisdom, justice, and truth. Nothing happens except through him and by his will.

#### Question 3

How many persons are there in God?

#### Answer 3

There are three persons in the one true and living God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. They are the same in substance, equal in power and glory.

Prayer for our mission team

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Well good morning everyone! We are taking a break from John this week to dive back into Hosea which has been a thread we have woven in between the book of John. This is our 3<sup>rd</sup> message in Hosea but the first one was just over a year ago. So we are going to do a quick recap to catch us up but if you want to go back and listen online to the first to messages it will definitely help give context to today's message in which I have titled "A Betrothal of Grace".

My plan today is to

1. Catch us up to speed on the background of Hosea leading up to today's text
2. To get us to see all of the ways that God has been speaking the same things to us as a church in this season
3. To dissect the main text
4. And give us some application throughout the message.

Something I want you to hold onto this morning is this idea that the Lord prunes, sanctifies and disciplines those He loves to restore them and glorify Him.

### **Lets Pray!**

The book of Hosea is referring to two different nations of Israel. Throughout the book you will see:

1. the nation, or house of Israel, and you will see
2. the nation, or house of Judah,

These names are used to refer to two kingdoms, one in the North and one in the South.

The prophet Hosea's ministry is taking place in the northern Kingdom at the same time as the prophet Isaiah's ministry is taking place in the southern kingdom.

Though the focus of Hosea, from a geographical standpoint is in the northern Kingdom, God is also warning the southern Kingdom simultaneously of some of the same wayward patterns.

Among many theologians Hosea is often referred to as "the deathbed prophet," because he was the last prophet sent to the northern 10 tribes of Israel before they ceased to be a functioning kingdom.

We were just talking about end times in our men's breakfast study last week and the question came up about when we will know we are in the end times. Though many prophecies still needed to be fulfilled, the sheer evil and waywardness from God probably led true believers to wonder if this would somehow be the end of time.

We see God however demonstrate these cyclical patterns of Sin, Judgement and Forgiving Love.

We see this same pattern take place throughout Hosea and throughout the Bible.

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Man sins

God Judges

God offers a forgiving love

We see this over and over in the Northern Kingdom where 10 different kings were appointed to rule over this kingdom.

John Calvin said when God wants to judge a nation he gives them wicked rulers. So over and over we see this cycle of rulers, some righteous and some evil. God sends kingdoms with evil rulers prophets, such as Hosea to warn them of their wayward paths.

There is a time however when the eternal destiny of our lives is judged and we don't know when that time will come.

Hosea is a prophet and he is warning the Northern Kingdom of how they have fallen away from God. God uses a storyline, that actually takes place of a husband and wife in the book of Hosea.

Hosea, the husband, marries Gomer, his wife, who is a prostitute. Despite this Hosea is in love with her and is faithful to her. She on the other hand is not very faithful to her husband.

When God spoke to Hosea and told him to take a wife "of harlotry" or "of whoredom" in chapter 1 verse 2 it suggests that there may have already been kids involved going into the marriage in which Hosea would have adopted into the family.

Hosea and Gomer get married in which Gomer has 3 more children. The first child was fathered by Hosea but the scripture suggests that Gomer's unfaithfulness began before the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> child and that the children were fathered not by Hosea but by her lover.

All of this is significant to the storyline because God gave names to Hosea specific to each of the children which were Jezreel, Lo-ruhamah and Lo-ammi which respectively mean God Scatters, No Mercy and Not My People.

What is the point of the book of Hosea? I want to refer you to chapter 6. First in verse 1 where it says "Come, let us return to the Lord" and in verse 3 where it says "So let us know, let us press on to know the Lord". The book of Hosea is all about a wayward soul returning back to his Maker. This is essentially a microcosm of the relationship between man and God throughout the Bible.

Hosea Chapter 1 sets the table with unique marriage situation but ultimately highlights an unfaithful wife to her faithful husband

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The first half of Hosea Chapter 2 is the allegory of Hosea and Gomer's situation to Israel's unfaithfulness to God.

We covered the first half of chapter 2 last winter and now we are picking back up with the second half where the Lord demonstrates his mercy on Israel.

Turn with me to Hosea chapter 2:14-23 as we read the word of the Lord.

### Main Text

<sup>14</sup> "Therefore, behold, I will allure her,  
and bring her into the wilderness,  
and speak tenderly to her.

<sup>15</sup> And there I will give her her vineyards  
and make the Valley of Achor a door of hope.

And there she shall answer as in the days of her youth,  
as at the time when she came out of the land of Egypt.

<sup>16</sup> "And in that day, declares the LORD, you will call me 'My Husband,' and no longer will you call me 'My Baal.' <sup>17</sup> For I will remove the names of the Baals from her mouth, and they shall be remembered by name no more. <sup>18</sup> And I will make for them a covenant on that day with the beasts of the field, the birds of the heavens, and the creeping things of the ground. And I will abolish the bow, the sword, and war from the land, and I will make you lie down in safety. <sup>19</sup> And I will betroth you to me forever. I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love and in mercy. <sup>20</sup> I will betroth you to me in faithfulness. And you shall know the LORD.

<sup>21</sup> "And in that day I will answer, declares the LORD,  
I will answer the heavens,  
and they shall answer the earth,

<sup>22</sup> and the earth shall answer the grain, the wine, and the oil,  
and they shall answer Jezreel,

<sup>23</sup> and I will sow her for myself in the land.

And I will have mercy on No Mercy,  
and I will say to Not My People, 'You are my people';  
and he shall say, 'You are my God.'"

I can remember my wedding day like it was yesterday. I think about how Amaris and I first met and started dating, the courtship that took place over the course of that year before I proposed to her. The amount of time I put into the planning of the proposal to get it just right because at this point she was expecting me to pop the question at any time. I had to catch her off guard when it wasn't expected. Many times, we would pass by a jewelry store and we would go in to look at rings as if we were still "ring shopping" when in fact I had already purchased the ring. One of the times while we were "ring shopping", I had the already purchased ring in my pocket.

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Our engagement wasn't that difficult. It progressed well toward our wedding day as smooth as it could have gone.

I always knew that one day I would get married I never really doubted this but it wasn't until I was 27 that Amaris and I met and we married when I was 28.

I did have some friends of mine who were married right after they graduated high school. I had others who were well into their 40s and 50s before getting married.

Several of my friends in their early 20s made a pact that we would remain a tight knit group as long as we could as single men, which in fact we all really desired to be married. We even named this group and called it "Bachelor til the Rapture". And though the group was fun, the group got smaller and smaller and one by one we were all picked off into marriage.

Though the anticipation to get married for Amaris and I was definitely there, we didn't have THAT long of a wait. As I said, I had friends who waited decades and decades and decades into their adult years before getting married. They thought this day may NEVER come, but by God's grace he blessed them with a wife.

Why do I share all of this? Because the scripture we have before us today is one of great anticipation. Anticipation of a great wedding day. This wedding day is not according to plan. It is a wedding that seems impossible.

- There is too much relational strain,
- too much unfaithfulness,
- too much brokenness,
- too much sin.
- Too much waiting,
- too much time.

We are not talking decades here we are talking centuries.

This is a wedding that we say,  
"how can this be?"  
"When will this wedding come?"

So, who's wedding are we talking about? Well, if you are a believer this morning, we are talking about your wedding, we are talking about mine. We are talking about the marriage of the people of God, to the Lord, the heavenly bridegroom.

It is interesting how God works through all things to bring him glory. Before we start looking at the details of the text I want to draw some clear analogies to topics we have been covering in

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church. I wish we could have said that we sat down and tried to tie all these topics and scripture together so that it lined up perfectly but, that wasn't it at all.

The text we are looking at today is specifically tied into the topic of

1. Gender Roles that we addressed at our last Truth Town Hall a few weeks ago.
2. It is tied to the Vinedresser Discourse in John 15
3. It is also directly tied into the topic of sanctification that we addressed at our youth retreat this past week.

I am going to show you how these different topics in scripture cross with our message in Hosea.

Collectively we have to look at all of this and understand what God is trying to tell us. What is he teaching us as a church in this season? What is he pruning? How is he sanctifying us? If you have been taking notes I encourage you to draw out these conclusions on how God is connecting these dots.

### **Gender Roles**

Hosea's name means "Yahweh is salvation". The relationship that God intended between Hosea and Gomer was meant to protect Gomer. The direct metaphor that God is using in this relationship is related to the headship that he has over his people to protect them from their waywardness. If Hosea is being obedient and faithful to the Lord, he is going to be submissive to the Lord. Therefore, if Gomer is going to be obedient and faithful to the Lord she is going to fall under the headship of her husband.

Today is Father's Day! We want to honor and recognize our dads and husbands who strive to lead their families in a godly way! We live in a culture today that wants to tell wives that they should be leading their families, fathers to take a backseat and imply that fathers are not really even needed. The deadbeat, self-centered, absentee father has taken the place of the God fearing, selfless, involved father.

We need more than ever for our fathers to rise up to be strong and courageous men in our families and communities.

- This strength won't come from your own doing.
- This strength won't be rooted in our culture.
- We need fathers, husbands, men to find their strength in the Lord and

- take back our families,
- take back our communities
- and take back the responsibilities that we have to

"lay down our lives for our wives and train up our children in the way they should go and when they are old, they will not depart from it as it says in Proverbs 22:6.

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Here is what is completely ironic today about Father's Day. Did you know that the nation's first Father's Day was celebrated 113 years ago tomorrow in no other than the state of Washington. The holiday wasn't even nationally recognized until 1972. Our state that once led the nation in celebrating what God has made good is now a leading state in tearing it down. How do we change this? We take a stand and don't accept the waywardness of Fatherhood and this starts in our families.

You have probably heard of and used the saying, "there are too many cooks in the kitchen". This is basically another way of saying we have too many people trying to all lead and nothing is being done

1. effectively,
2. efficiently
3. or properly.

Chaos typically ensues and all of the sudden you have cooks quitting left and right and the last standing cook is now bitter and understaffed to get the job done.

God has designed a marriage to work

1. effectively,
2. efficiently
3. and properly by the husband leading the wife. If the husband is truly following after Christ this is never a problem.

Ephesians 5:32-33 says, "This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband."

The book of Hosea spends a lot of time using the marriage as explanation for what is going on here. So, what is the mystery that Ephesians is referring to and why is this so profound?

In the New Testament this word "mystery" identifies some reality hidden in the past and revealed in the New Testament age to be written in scripture. Marriage is a sacred reflection of the magnificent and beautiful mystery of union between the Messiah and his church, completely unknown until the New Testament.

The Apostle Paul was realizing this in his letters that the spiritual knowledge must precede the practical application. What is not properly understood cannot be properly applied.

Gomer was not properly understanding the spiritual impacts of running from her husband and embracing her lovers.

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Just as the Northern Kingdom was not properly understanding the spiritual impacts of running to idols and forgetting who their True God was.

The Lord prunes, sanctifies and disciplines those he loves to restore them and glorify Him.

### **Vinedresser**

In the Vinedresser discourse, John 15 uses the vine as a metaphor. The scripture stresses that there is a genuine vine stock.

The fruit can be no greater than the vine that produces it.

Jesus says, "I am the true vine". Unless the believer is vitally connected with him, the quality of his fruitfulness will be unacceptable. There may be many branches but if they are to bear the right kind of fruit, they must be connect to the real vine.

We saw in the last message I gave in the first part of Hosea chapter 2 the righteous anger that the Lord communicated because of Israel's unfaithfulness to God. In verse 12 God spoke of the pruning that took place when he said...

Hosea 2:12

"And I will lay waste her vines and her fig trees, of which she said, 'These are my wages, which my lovers have given me.' I will make them a forest and the beasts of the field shall devour them."

The "vines" and the "fig trees" represent the finest of the land's products; God would destroy them because Israel had regarded them as "payment for her lovers." These would now become merely "thickets" for wild beasts to roam and eat in. In other words, the protective hedges would be taken away and cultivation stopped. These were fulfilled during Israel's last days. Her land was devastated by Assyrian forces; then, in 722 B.C., it was totally subjugated by them. God's warnings are never to be taken lightly.

John 15:4 says "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.

Jumping to verse 9 and 10 "As the father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.

Israel had stopped abiding in the Father. Israel was no longer producing any fruit and so the Lord lay waste her vines. He pruned off what was no longer fruitful.

God does this in our lives. He will prune off what is no longer producing fruit. Often, we find ourselves clinging to our unfruitful vine because we have made it an idol. It gives us comfort



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rather than finding our comfort in the Lord. We even find ourselves getting angry with God or casting the blame on someone else for pruning off our circumstances when really it is for our own good.

The Lord prunes, sanctifies and disciplines those he loves to restore them and glorify Him.

### **Sanctification**

On our youth retreat this past week we focused in on sanctification. On the last day we looked at how God sanctifies us.

Sanctification is another way of saying how God is actively shaping us to be more like Christ.

God has many means that he uses to sanctify us. Most of them are through typical circumstances and relationships that have been a part of our design.

He also uses creative and drastic ways to get our attention. We saw this when God was sanctifying Jonah. In fact, God used many ways to sanctify Jonah in order for God to be glorified. He used the ships sailors, he used the characteristics of the sea, he used a large fish, he used Nineveh and He used a fig tree.

For most of us however God is going to use the everyday situations and relationships rooted in the truth of his word to make us more like Him.

If you think back to when you were single you did anything you wanted to do for the most part, within reason...maybe for some not within reason.

You didn't really have any other human to answer to once living on your own.

You could:

- come home late,
- you could eat whatever you want,
- you could leave the gas tank on empty with just enough gas to get to the gas station in morning,
- you could leave your wet towel on the bed and toothpaste splatters on the mirror
- and you could leave the house wearing clothes that don't match and that have wrinkles on them.

When you are married you are accountable to another person because you are making decisions together as a couple for your family.

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Spiritually speaking this is also true. The sanctification that takes place in a marriage is something that God actively uses to shape us to be more like him. In order for a marriage to function well you have to grow in

- humility,
- selflessness,
- empathy,
- forgiveness
- and gratitude to name a few.

These characteristics shape us to be more like Christ.

Mothers and fathers: God has given you children as a blessing AND as a means of testing...I mean sanctifying you.

God prunes, sanctifies and disciplines those he loves by restoring them and glorifying Him.

Let's break down the text in the second half of Hosea 2.

At the beginning of Chapter 2 we see the harsh words of God as He declares Israel a spiritual whore.

He will no longer show mercy, he will no longer consider Israel to be his people.

- In love he has pleaded with her,
- in love he has warned her
- and now in JEALOUS LOVE he will punish and discipline Israel to her absolute breaking point.

He will take away all of her:

- Economic, political and military security
- He will destroy the nation of Israel as a kingdom before him.

Early in Chapter 2 we see this word "therefore" in verse 6 with all of the subsequent words of discipline and judgement. Again we see the word "therefore" in verse 9 with subsequent words of harsh judgement.

This seems to be a bad, bad breakup with no hopes of reconciliation.

We then see what seems to be a shocking shift in Hosea 2:14-23 as the Lord continues on. We continue to see the full character of God come forth in the development of the sanctification that is taking place here.

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After such bold language from God in the first half of chapter 2 we dive into what we think is going to go from bad to worse. This word “therefore” is present again and just as you would expect the Lord’s judgement to be laid down once again, his posture completely changes as he seeks to restore his broken people.

You see, God prunes, sanctifies and disciplines those he loves by restoring them and glorifying Him.

The text starts out with this word therefore telling us that what is about to happen is a result of what just took place previously. We know that God demonstrated his righteous anger and firm linguistics and now he tenderly draws his people back.

Hosea 2:14

14 “Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak tenderly to her.”

We see the adjectives used in God’s shift of language of harsh judgement to a voice of gentleness. This display of dialect demonstrates the full character of God.

Just in the first 2 chapters of Hosea we see

- God’s plan for his people,
- his patience,
- his judgment
- and his grace and mercy upon his people.

The adjectives used in verse 14;

- allure,
- bring,
- tenderly is a posture of courtship and persuasion.

The wilderness signifies Israel’s early years after the Exodus, remembered here, in terms of the marital honeymoon metaphor. The wilderness can also be a place of judgement but in both cases, the wilderness is a place of transformation.

15 “And there I will give her her vineyards and make the Valley of Achor a door of hope. And there she shall answer as in the days of her youth, as at the time she came out of the land of Egypt.”

The exodus is simultaneously the escape of the people of God, the Israelites from Egypt, the land of slavery — they exit out of slavery into the Promised Land: it is the exodus — and, at the same time, it is a one-word way of referring to the events surrounding the exodus that includes, therefore, the judgment of God on the Egyptians, the plagues. It also eventually includes the

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giving of the Law, the years of wilderness wanderings, and eventually entrance into the Promised Land.

God is reminding Israel of what He took them through over 500 years earlier.

Jeremiah 2:2-3 says,  
“...I remember the devotion of your youth,  
how as a bride you loved me  
and followed me through the desert,  
through a land not sown.  
Israel was holy to the Lord,  
the first fruits of his harvest;  
all who devoured her were held guilty  
and disaster overtook them.

If you want to go back and read more in Exodus chapter 2 and into chapter 3 it will help you to grasp what God is communicating to Israel in the book of Hosea as He uses these reminders from the past to justify what is currently going on with them in this time.

We always appreciate a friend who remains true to his or her commitment, and we are disappointed with someone who fails to keep a promise. God was pleased when his people obeyed initially but he became angry with them when they refused to keep their commitment. Temptations distract us from God.

Think about your original commitment to obey God and ask yourself if you are remaining truly devoted to him.

The Valley of Achor means “trouble”. This was a location just north of the Dead Sea where Israel got into trouble soon after leaving the wilderness. You can get more of the back story on this location and the crime and punishment of Achan (Ache-anne) that took place here in Joshua 7:22-26. This gives more context to what is being said in Hosea.

So, when God is referring to the Valley of Achor as a door of hope He is saying to them that in the future when they return though this land is now desolate, a place where no one lives, it will become a place that is lush and plentiful. It will be a place of hope.

As Isaiah 65:10 says, ...”the Valley of Achor will be a place for herds to lie down.”

16 “On that day, says the Lord, you will call me, ‘My husband,’ and no longer will you call me, ‘My Baal’. 17 For I will remove the names of the Baals from her mouth, and they shall be mentioned by name no more.”

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God is setting the record straight with who is really Israel's God. The process of sanctification is taking place. God is pruning the vineyard right now of all of the empty devotion to the false idol worship.

It is interesting that we often get distracted and enticed away from the Lord. The Lord as Paul talks about in Acts 17 is the God of all gods...He doesn't compare. God encompasses all things. He is the beginning and the end, the alpha and omega.

Look at this...

Acts 17:24-31

24 "The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, 25 nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. 26 From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live. 27 So that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him—though indeed he is not far from each one of us. 28 For 'In him we live and move and have our being'; as even some of your own poets have said, 'for we too are his offspring.' 29 Since we are God's offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. 30 While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, 31 because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."

Spoiler alert: His name is Jesus Christ

### **WORSHIP TEAM BACK UP**

So why do we get so distracted with these false little 'g' gods who by the way, claim to only be god over a few elements anyway. So you have to load up on the little g's just get what you want...oh and by the way...they're false so you don't get anything out of it anyway except for your selfish desires pampered.

If you look into the assembly of the Canaanite gods...there are many gods.

Asherah is the matriarch of the gods, we talked about the Asherah poles back when we went through the Jonah series. Temple prostitutes were offered as fertility gods and goddesses.

El, on the other hand is the patriarch of the gods. There are 70 different sons of El. One of these sons is Baal who is the god of fertility, storm and thunder.

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So, you can see why people's sin and greed start to lead them astray. People heavily relied on the growth of their family to pass on their name and to become heirs of what was owned. These families depended on livestock and farming to supply their needs.

Instead of trusting in the Lord, they would get desperate and start trusting in false gods that they believed brought fertility and rain.

Baal worship was huge throughout the old testament. This idolatry worship persisted. Every now and then you would have a king who would come in and demand these idols and shrines be removed and would get a hand on clearing out the idolatry worship, but they always seem to rear their heads again.

It is no different today. We see this in our culture now...it has a different dress on but is still wooing people away from what is Truth.

So how do we protect ourselves from falling victim to the schemes of Satan and his false gods? We have to know the truth. Once we grasp the truth the imposter becomes easy to spot.

18 "I will make for you a covenant on that day with the wild animals, the birds of the air, and the creeping things of the ground; and I will abolish the bow, the sword, and war from the land; and I will make you lie down in safety."

God again is recalling to a time in the beginning of His creation when he is referring to a covenant with the animals.

Genesis 1:27-31 says, 27 "So God created man in his own image in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. 28 And God blessed them. And God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.' 29 And God said "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. 30 And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.' And it was so. 31 And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

So God is restoring His people back to the original perfection, a state of blessing. It is the sin that is causing the deterioration and the curse.

God prunes, sanctifies and disciplines those he loves to restore them and glorify Him.

19 "And I will take you for my wife forever; I will take you for my wife in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love, and in mercy."

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God promises Israel that she will be betrothed to Him forever. This betrothal involves several qualitative relationships, four being mentioned here:

1. Righteousness
2. Justice

\*Which indicate all legal standards will be met in the betrothal

3. Love
4. Compassion

\*Denote God's emotional concern for the new bride

20 "I will take you for my wife in faithfulness; and you shall know the Lord."

A fifth relationship is brought up in verse 20. Faithfulness is also promised. The emphasis here is most likely on Israel's faithfulness to God, though God's faithfulness is also very present. This new relationship connotes that "you Israel will acknowledge the Lord."

21 "On that day I will answer, says the Lord, I will answer the heavens and they shall answer the earth;" 22 and the earth shall answer the grain, the wine, and the oil, and they shall answer Jezreel; 23 and I will sow him for myself in the land. And I will have pity on Lo-ruhamah, and I will say to Lo-ammi, 'You are my people'; and he shall say, 'You are my God.'

As a result of this beautiful coming relationship between the Lord and Israel, God will respond to the needs of the people.

The heavens are seen as pleading with God to send rain on the earth, to which God responds favorably and the earth is seen as asking the heavens to send rain and the heavens respond favorably.

The grain, the new wine and the oil are provisions from the earth which are blessing from God on this reunion.

Jezreel is referring to "all Israel" and means "God Plants".

The Valley of Jezreel was a center for production of food. Israel, planted bountifully, will bring forth a large population.

In contrast to Hosea's time when the names, "not loved", and "not my people" were appropriate, the future day will find the opposite true.

Love will be shown toward "Not my loved one" and "Not my people" will be called "You are my people". The Israelites in return will respond with "You are my God".

## A Betrothal of Grace

Hosea 2:14-23

June 18, 2023

This is a conclusion to the first two chapters of Hosea. The renaming of the children follow the rebetrothal of the Lord and Israel.

And so we also see the completed cycle as we complete chapters 1 and 2:

1. Man sins
2. God Judges
3. God offers his forgiving love

The Lord prunes, sanctifies and disciplines those he loves to restore them and glorify him.

As we collectively examine ourselves we have to see these roads cross not by chance but by the God's sovereign will over our lives. It is by no coincidence that the topic of Gender Roles, the section of the book of John, the topic of sanctification that was planned many months ago and Father's Day all land on the same day.

We have talked about how God communicates in the scripture to get our attention through repetitions. We also look at how he brings past lessons together for a future example in this second half of Hosea.

God loves you so much that He doesn't want you to remain the same. He doesn't want you to spiritually become a 15 year old 70 year old.

It is through the obedience to the Lord that God sanctifies us. If you have one of our church mugs or bookmarks you will see the verse John 17:17 written on it.

"Sanctify them in the truth. Your word is truth."

As you are pruned, sanctified and disciplined more and more, your life will begin to look like the image of Christ. You will wonder why some are drawn to this and others will reject it completely. You can remember that "if the world hates you, be aware that it hated Him before it hated you."