

Session 8 The Bridegroom God who Judges His People (Hosea 2)

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. The Lord commanded Hosea to take a wife of harlotry at the beginning of his prophetic ministry because Israel (the northern kingdom) was engaged in harlotry by departing from the Lord.
²When the LORD began to speak by Hosea, the LORD said to Hosea: “Go, take yourself a wife of harlotry and children of harlotry, for the land has committed great harlotry by departing from the LORD.”³So he went and took Gomer...and she conceived and bore him a son. (Hos. 1:2-3)
- B. God compared Hosea’s unfaithful wife, Gomer, to unfaithful Israel in her rebellion (Hos. 2:2-13). The Lord wanted Hosea’s pain-filled marriage to be a prophetic picture of how the Lord feels about His relationship to His people when they are unfaithful to Him. Hosea’s story is told in Hosea 1-3.
- C. This equipped him to be the first prophet to reveal the Bridegroom God (Hos. 2:16-20). This passage is very relevant in the generation Jesus returns **for** the Spirit will emphasize Him as the Bridegroom God and the spiritual identity of the body of Christ as His Bride (Rev. 22:17).
¹⁷And the Spirit and the bride say, “Come!”... ²⁰“Surely I [Jesus] am coming quickly.” Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus! (Rev. 22:17, 20)
- D. Jesus is revealed as the Bridegroom in context to judging the Antichrist’s empire (Rev. 19:6-21).
- E. The “Bride of Christ” message in Hosea was given in context to God disciplining His people.
- F. Jesus spoke of disciplining His people with “severe mercy” if they refused to repent of immorality.
***¹⁸“And to...the church in Thyatira write...¹⁹“I know your works, love, service, faith, and your patience...²⁰Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality...
²¹And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent. ²²Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds. ²³I will kill her children with death...I will give to each one of you according to your works...²⁶And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations...²⁷he shall rule them... (Rev. 2:18-27)***
- G. Only by understanding Jesus’ heart as a loving Bridegroom can we rightly interpret His judgments. He loves His people so much that He will release His judgments *to remove all that hinders love*. Many do not have a grid for the “severe mercy” that the Bridegroom God will release to discipline His people to wake them up to love. One of the greatest miracles in history is the transformation of the end-time church from a lukewarm spirit (Rev. 3:16) to being a fully prepared Bride (Rev. 19:7).
- H. James connected some of the conflicts in the body of Christ to refusing to repent of lustful desires.
⁴Adulterers and adulteresses!...Friendship with the world is enmity with God. Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God...⁹Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. (Jas. 4:4-9)

II. JUDGMENT ON ISRAEL AS A HARLOT (HOS. 2:2-13)

- A. The Lord instructed Hosea and the faithful remnant to contend with unfaithful Israel who was like an unfaithful wife to the Lord (Hos. 2:1-2). The Lord explained why the remnant must speak up—because the unique bond between Himself and their “mother” Israel had been put on hold.

²***“Bring charges against your mother [Israel]...for she is not My wife, nor am I her Husband! Let her put away her harlotries from her sight...”*** (Hos. 2:2)

1. Hosea was warning Israel that they should not count on the Lord to intervene to protect them against the coming Assyrian invasion (in 721 BC) for their “marriage bond” had been temporarily broken because the vast majority of the nation was living in spiritual harlotry.
 2. The Israelites wrongly believed that they were God’s people and He would protect them simply because they were born to a Jewish family and had a religious heritage.
 3. There are parallels to this in the body of Christ. Many people who confess Christ embrace the distorted grace message: they appeal to Jesus’s death and God’s free grace even as they intentionally live in compromise and cast off His leadership in their lives, trusting in the fact that they grew up in a Christian family, prayed the “sinner’s prayer,” and were baptized.
- B. The Lord warned that He would strip Israel naked and block her from her lovers (Hos. 2:3-7). He will frustrate her plans to continue in sin by setting a hedge of thorns and a stone wall around her.

³***“Lest I strip her naked and expose her...”***⁵***“For she said, ‘I will go after my lovers, who give me my bread...’***⁶***Therefore, behold, I will hedge up your way with thorns, and wall her in, so that she cannot find her paths.***⁷***She will chase her lovers...but not find them. Then she will say, ‘I will go and return to my first husband, for then it was better for me than now.’”*** (Hos. 2:3-7)

1. ***I will return to my husband:*** She will “come to her senses” like the prodigal son (Lk. 15:17).
¹⁷***“But when he [the prodigal son] came to himself, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have bread...and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father...’***¹⁸***But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him...”***²²***But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring out the best robe ...’***²³***And bring the fatted calf...and let us eat and be merry...”*** (Lk. 15:17-23)
2. God’s messengers are to speak **His** comfort to Jerusalem (Isa. 40:1-2).
¹***“Comfort, yes, comfort My people!”*** Says your God. ²***“Speak comfort to Jerusalem, and cry out to her, that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned...”*** (Isa. 40:1-2)

- C. Jesus will show His great mercy and generosity to any believer who repents of lukewarmness.
- ¹⁴***“And to the...church of the Laodiceans write...”***¹⁵***‘I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot...’***¹⁶***because you are lukewarm...I will vomit you out of My mouth.***¹⁷***Because you say, ‘I am rich...and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—***¹⁸***I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich ...’***¹⁹***As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent...’***²⁰***I stand at the door and knock. If anyone...opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him...***²¹***To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne...”*** (Rev. 3:14-21)

III. THE END-TIME REVELATION OF THE BRIDEGROOM GOD (HOS. 2:14-20)

- A. The Lord will remain faithful to His promises even after His people are unfaithful (Hos. 2:14-16).
¹⁴“...I will allure her, will bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfort to her. ¹⁵I will give her vineyards...and the Valley of Achor as a door of hope; she shall sing there... ¹⁶It shall be, in that day, that you will call Me ‘My Husband’ and no longer call Me ‘My Master’” (Hos. 2:14-16)
- B. **My husband:** Israel will accept Jesus as they see Him as their Husband and see God’s severe mercy was to awaken them to love Him as a Bridegroom. They will no longer call Him “My taskmaster.” When our view of God changes, we gain new confidence and love in our relationship with Him.
- C. **Allure:** God uses kindness and beauty to motivate His people to repent from their sin (Rom. 2:4). The Lord will graciously wow and woo Israel after a season of severe mercy.
⁴Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? (Rom. 2:4)
1. **Speak comfort:** God’s messengers are to speak God’s comfort to Jerusalem (Isa. 40:1-2).
¹“Comfort, yes, comfort My people!” Says your God. ²“Speak comfort to Jerusalem, and cry out to her, that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned...” (Isa. 40:1-2)
 2. **The wilderness:** Ezekiel described Israel’s restoration in the wilderness (Ezek. 20:33-38). In the wilderness, He will plead His case with them, bringing them into the bond of covenant.
³⁵And I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there I will plead My case with you face to face. ³⁶Just as I pleaded My case with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt... ³⁷I will bring you into the bond of the covenant...” (Ezek. 20:35-37)
 3. **She shall sing there:** God awakens her with new songs, even in her wilderness struggles.
- D. **Valley of Achor:** The valley of Achor was the place of Achan’s sin and judgment (Josh. 7:24-26).
1. Achor literally means “trouble.”
 2. Israel marked the place where Achan was stoned to death in the Valley of Achor.
 3. That valley reminded Israel of the seriousness of rejecting the Lord’s leadership. The Valley of Achor will be a “door” where Israel will experience great blessing (Isa. 65:10).
- E. The Lord will make a covenant for them with the beasts and birds and cause war to cease (2:18). The garden of Eden conditions will be restored, affecting the beasts and birds. Jesus’ “bridal gift” to His people includes supernaturally restoring the atmosphere, agriculture, and animals, etc.
¹⁸“In that day I will make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, with the birds of the air ...Bow and sword of battle I will shatter from the earth...” (Hos. 2:18)

F. The Lord defines His relationship with His people as a marriage (2:19-20).

¹⁹I will betroth you to Me forever; yes, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and justice, in lovingkindness and mercy; ²⁰I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness... (Hos. 2:19-20)

1. ***Betroth***: He wants to marry His people, not just forgive them and use them.
2. ***You***: Weak and broken people with the spirit of harlotry will be betrothed to the Lord.
3. ***In righteousness***: This includes freedom from the tyranny of sin and empowering God's people to enjoy emotional transformation with godly character and a radiant heart.
4. ***In justice***: The Lord will establish a society where everyone is safe and treated with honor.
5. ***In lovingkindness***: He has many good plans to express His affection for His people.
6. ***In mercy***: He is so gracious with the failures of His people who sincerely repent.
7. ***In faithfulness***: He is true to everything He says about Himself and to us (Rev. 19:11).

IV. THE BRIDEGROOM GOD WILL RESTORE THE LAND (HOS. 2:21-23)

A. The Lord promises to answer His people by blessing the agriculture and restoring it to the conditions of the garden of Eden (Hos. 2:21-23). The heavens are personified and described as crying to Him to send rain. God will answer the prayers of His people for rain (Zech. 10:1).

²¹“It shall come to pass in that day that I will answer,” says the LORD; “I will answer the heavens, and they shall answer the earth. ²²The earth shall answer with grain, with new wine, and with oil; they shall answer Jezreel. ²³Then I will sow her for Myself in the earth, and I will have mercy on her...then I will say... ‘You are My people!’” (Hos. 2:21-23)

B. ***Jezreel***: Jezreel means “God’s sows”—it has a double meaning in Hosea’s book. Initially, the name Jezreel pointed to God’s judgment when He “sowed” Israel into captivity (Hos. 1:4-5), but here it speaks of salvation—when the Lord “sows” or “plants” Israel back in her land in the end times.

C. ***You are My people***: He will show mercy and established Israel in covenant with Him (Hos. 3:4-5).
⁵Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the LORD...and David their king. They shall fear the LORD and His goodness in the latter days. (Hos. 3:5)

D. The Lord deeply desires to restore Israel (Hos. 11:8-11). Admah and Zeboiim were two cities totally destroyed along with Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 10:19; 14:2, 8; Deut. 29:23). The Lord cannot “give up” or “hand over” Israel to permanent destruction like He did with Admah and Zeboiim.

⁸“How can I give you up...How can I hand you over, Israel? How can I make you like Admah? How can I set you like Zeboiim? My heart churns within Me; My sympathy is stirred. (Hos. 11:8)

E. The Lord promised that He would respond to their repentance with love and mercy (Hos. 14:4-7).

⁴“I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely, for My anger has turned away from him. ⁵I will be like the dew to Israel; He shall grow like the lily and lengthen his roots like Lebanon. ⁶His branches shall spread; his beauty shall be like an olive tree and his fragrance like Lebanon. (Hos. 14:4-6)