

Finer Grounds

Hosea

Lesson 3: Chapter 2

Chapter 2 is probably my favorite in the entire book of Hosea. In it we see God's righteous judgment, but we also see in stark contrast his unconditional love and acceptance for those who repent. I have trouble reading through the last half of this chapter without tearing up. God is longing for us to turn to Him, not out of obligation but out of sincere and fervent love.

Before we start the verse by verse examination take some time to list all of the "I will" statements from God/Hosea found in this chapter in two groups, negative and positive.

Negative:

Positive:

Read Hosea 2:1-4

Keep in mind as you are reading through that while this is the story of Hosea and Gomer it is being used to represent the relationship between God and Israel. The things Hosea is saying here to Gomer are the same that God is telling his beloved nation so

throughout the chapter we will be interchanging their names. Remember, these warnings and blessings apply to both.

Think back to our study of chapter 1. What were the names of the children and their meanings?

The prefix "Lo" in Hebrew means "no" or "not." In Hosea 2:1, alludes to the names but is now taking away the negative aspect. "Ammi" would mean "my people" and "Ruhamah" would mean "has obtained compassion." This is most likely a reference to the faithful remnant left in Israel. God is asking them to plead with "their mother" or the nation as a whole to turn back to Him and away from their impure, adulterous ways. Likewise Gomer's children were to plead with her to change her ways.

Read 2 Corinthians 11:2-4. Paul is writing about the church being betrothed to Christ as a pure virgin. According to this passage what is it that can defile our purity?

How have you seen yourself or others in the church being led astray?

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How can you help keep the church pure as the bride of Christ?

Notice in Hosea 2:4 that even the faithful remnant does not escape the punishment of the nation as a whole. They are considered “children of harlotry” and will have to pay the consequences of the coming Assyrian captivity just as the rest of Israel.

Read Hosea 2:5-13

We now see Gomer actively pursuing her lovers. She does not simply succumb to temptation that happens upon her; she seeks it out.

According to Hosea 2:5, who did Gomer/Israel give credit to for their provisions?

Who was actually providing for them(Hosea 2:8)?

Imagine that faithful husband providing absolutely everything his wife needed, all the while she is attributing these things to the men she is cheating on him with. This goes so much farther than simple ungratefulness; it is laughing in the face of the man who loves her and would do absolutely anything for her.

Read Ezekiel 16:10-34 and answer the following questions.

- **What had God done for the Israelites (v. 10-14)?**

- **What did Israel do with the blessings they were given (v. 15-22)?**

- **List the three nations Israel engaged in “prostitution” with (v. 26-29).**

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Israel’s entanglements with these nations promised to give some satisfaction and comfort through treaties and alliances, but they should have known that the only true safety they could have was through the Lord. They were using what God had blessed them with to play the harlot with these other nations. They had fallen for the empty promises and would pay an extremely high price.

What are some things we are offered that are assured to satisfy by the world but in the end turn out to be empty promises?

How do we identify these false assurances in our own lives?

God would not stand for this disobedience and neglect. He would seek justice and bring Israel to her knees. This once great nation would remember, but too late, who it was that brought them out of Egypt and who was truly their provider.

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What are some ways God provides for you that you often overlook?

How can we show more appreciation for these blessings throughout our week?

Read Hosea 2:14-23

This section hits me hard each time I read it. Hosea just finished listing all of the horrible things that Gomer has done. If we were watching the movie version of this story, we would absolutely loathe Gomer and be rooting for Hosea to find someone better. He deserves it, right? How could anyone betray someone so wonderful and faithful?

I challenge you at this moment, instead of identifying with Hosea in this story and put yourself in Gomer's shoes. This might seem reprehensible, but sisters, we are all much more similar to Gomer than we will ever be to Hosea. We are constantly testing our boundaries and chasing after adulterous relationships with the world. Keep this in mind: We absolutely do not deserve any of the amazing blessings we have been granted!

What three things is God going to do to Israel in verse 14?

We see an extreme contrast from the previous section. Even after all of this repeated betrayal, God will court His people again.

Read Joshua 7:1-26 and describe what happened in the valley of Achor.

This reference to the valley of Achor in Hosea 2:15 would have been meaningful to them because of this story. The name "Achor" means "trouble," but to them it would have also been synonymous with judgment. God turns this idea around and tells them that through this judgment they would see a "door of hope." This door would come in the form of Jesus.

I told you earlier that this was my favorite chapter in the book of Hosea; well, my favorite verse is Hosea 2:16. The term "Ishi" is the term that Hebrew women would have referred to their husbands as in a loving way, just as we would say "my sweetheart" or "darling." "Baali" means master or lord. While God understands that at some point we will call Him master, He longs for the day when we can lovingly refer to Him as our Ishi! He desires to be the great love of our lives.

What are some ways we can turn our relationship with God from "Baali" service to an "Ishi" love?

Throughout the rest of the chapter, we see all of the blessings that God will lavish on the nation once they come to repentance. If we think in terms of being the undeserving harlot, this is huge! God will respond to our repentance with more blessings than we can possibly imagine. As you go throughout the week, reread the list of positive promises God makes in this chapter and dwell on His awesome forgiveness and mercy.