

The Good News of the Future Restoration of Israel

Hosea 2:14-23

Hosea 2:14-23 - *“Therefore, behold, I will allure her, will bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfort to her. ¹⁵ I will give her her vineyards from there, and the Valley of Achor as a door of hope. She shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, as in the day when she came up from the land of Egypt. ¹⁶ “And it shall be, in that day,” says the Lord, “that you will call Me ‘My Husband,’ and no longer call Me ‘My Master.’ ¹⁷ For I will take from her mouth the names of the Baals, and they shall be remembered by their name no more.*

¹⁸ In that day I will make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, with the birds of the air, and with the creeping things of the ground. Bow and sword of battle I will shatter from the earth, to make them lie down safely. ¹⁹ “I will betroth you to Me forever. Yes, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and justice, in lovingkindness and mercy. ²⁰ I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness, and you shall know the Lord. 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. ²² The earth shall answer with grain, with new wine, and with oil, they shall answer Jezreel.

²³ Then I will sow her for Myself in the earth, and I will have mercy on her who had not obtained mercy. Then I will say to those who were not My people, ‘You are My people!’ And they shall say, ‘You are my God!’”

Background Notes

In both the Old Testament and New Testament, marriage is used to demonstrate God’s love relationship with His people. This is certainly demonstrated in the marriage of the prophet Hosea and his wife, Gomer. Gomer turned away from Hosea’s love and care, ran off and became a prostitute slave. Her departure was not a “one night stand” – it was a *life* of adultery!

All this was part of the object lesson that God was giving to the northern kingdom of Israel through Hosea’s domestic life. The people of Israel had turned away from the Lord. They had committed spiritual adultery by chasing after foreign gods and participating in the sinful practices and rituals of those pagan religions. Because of these sins, God would have to judge His people.

The prophecies of judgment in the first half of Hosea 2 would literally be fulfilled when the Assyrian Empire conquered the nation of Israel. And the consequences of God’s judgment on the nation of Israel for her spiritual adultery continue even to this day.

But - now comes the good news! There will be a future restoration of Israel - a spiritual restoration of her people, and a physical or material restoration of her land. This good news is what the second half of Hosea 2 is all about, and it was

illustrated in Hosea's marriage. God directed Hosea buy his wife out of her condition as a prostitute slave, bring her back to their home, and continue to love her (Hosea 3). What a picture of God's love for His wayward people! Thus the theme of Hosea is "redeeming love."

God asked Hosea to do a very unpleasant thing, and Hosea submitted to God's will - even though it must have been very difficult. Would you be willing to do what Hosea did? Is God calling you to do something for Him that is unpleasant? We all enjoy doing the pleasant things - but God may call us to do that which is unpleasant. Like Hosea, He may ask you to forgive and to reconcile in a broken marriage relationship. Are you willing to do something that, for you, is unpleasant?

Doctrinal Points

1. The nation of Israel will be forgiven and restored.

Verses 16-17 - *"And it shall be, in that day," says the Lord, "that you will call Me 'My Husband,' and no longer call Me 'My Master.' ¹⁷ For I will take from her mouth the names of the Baals, and they shall be remembered by their name no more."*

And verses 19-20 - *"I will betroth you to Me forever. Yes, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and justice, in lovingkindness and mercy. ²⁰ I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness, and you shall know the Lord."*

And verse 23 - *"I will sow her for Myself in the earth, and I will have mercy on her who had not obtained mercy. Then I will say to those who were not My people, 'You are My people!' And they shall say, 'You are my God!'"*

The idea in the use of the word "betroth" (v19-20) is the idea of a **new beginning**. The sin of spiritual adultery has been forgiven. It's back to the honeymoon days. The same idea is at the end of verse 15: *"She shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, as in the day when she came up from the land of Egypt."* Those were the days of Israel's "honeymoon period" with God. The word translated "love" or "lovingkindness" (v19) is the Hebrew word *chesed*. *Chesed* means strong, steadfast, loyal love and kindness. In this context, the word implies **complete forgiveness** and **full restoration**.

Now the big questions: To whom was this promise given, and when will it be fulfilled? In the context, the promise was made to the nation of Israel. And notice - this promise was made **after** Israel had broken the covenant - when Israel had **already** forsaken the Lord. Some Christians teach that because Israel forsook the Lord and broke the covenant, this promise is now to be applied as a spiritual promise to the Church, the New Testament bride of Christ. But this idea does not make sense, because this promise was made **after Israel had already forsaken the Lord and broken the covenant**. This promise was made with the Jewish people - and it will be kept with the Jewish people in the future.

The promise that those who are not God's people will become God's people can certainly be applied and extended to all Christians, as it is when it was quoted in the New Testament in Romans 9:25 and 1 Peter 2:10. But just because the

promise can be extended to us as believers, this does not mean that the promise should be taken away from Israel! That would make God a promise-breaker!

The same promise of forgiveness and restoration of Israel is found in Deuteronomy 30: *“Now it shall come to pass, when all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call them to mind among all the nations where the Lord your God drives you, and you return to the Lord your God and obey His voice, according to all that I command you today, you and your children, with all your heart and with all your soul, that the Lord your God will bring you back from captivity, and have compassion on you, and gather you again from all the nations where the Lord your God has scattered you”(v1-3). “And you will again obey the voice of the Lord and do all His commandments which I command you today”(v8). Notice - all the promises in Deuteronomy 30 were made to Israel **after** the predictions in Deuteronomy 29 that Israel would forsake the Lord.*

The promises here in Hosea 2 were definitely made to Israel, **not** to the Church!

The Jewish people are already returning to the land. The secular state of Israel has been established. The spiritual revival is yet to come, but it will come - read Romans 11. The increasing number of Jewish believers in Israel today is only a foretaste of what's to come in the future! The nation of Israel will be forgiven and restored.

2. The land of Israel will be safe and blessed.

Verse 18: *“In that day I will make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, with the birds of the air, and with the creeping things of the ground. Bow and sword of battle I will shatter from the earth, to make them lie down safely.”* What a difference from the devastation of the land that we read about in the first half of the chapter! And what a difference from what the land is today. The nation of Israel today is certainly not free from weapons!

Verses 21-22 - *“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. ²² The earth shall answer with grain, with new wine, and with oil. In a coming day, God will send material blessings on land of Israel. Again, this promise of blessing on the land was also made in Deuteronomy 30:9: “The Lord your God will make you abound in all the work of your hand, in the fruit of your body, in the increase of your livestock, and in the produce of your land for good.”*

When you travel in the land of Israel today, already you will clearly see how productive the land is. Many areas that were formerly wilderness are now tremendously productive farms. And this is only a foretaste of what's to come in the future, when Israel returns to the Lord! The land of Israel will be safe and blessed.

Practical Application

Your “Valley of Achor” can become a “door of hope!”

Verses 14-15 - *“Therefore, behold, I will allure her, will bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfort to her. ¹⁵ I will give her her vineyards from there, and the Valley of Achor as a door of hope. She shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, as in the day when she came up from the land of Egypt.”*

What a beautiful picture of the Lord's loving relationship with His people. The wilderness is no longer a desert place, but a place of comfort - because the Lord is there. Let me ask you a question. Are you facing any deserts right now – places in your life that seem barren and lifeless? That desert time in your life may be a place of blessing in disguise! There the Lord can speak to you and love you, without any outside distractions.

Why is the Valley of Achor mentioned here? In Joshua 7, the Valley of Achor was the place where Israel had to stone Achan, the man who had sinned by stealing items from Jericho. His sin caused Israel to be defeated and held back in the conquest of the Promised Land. It was a place of judgment and sorrow. In fact, the name “Valley of Achor” means the “*valley of trouble*.” But the good news is that the *valley of trouble* will become a *door of hope!* The time of judgment is over. The time of blessing is ahead.

Have you had to face a Valley of Achor in your life? Has God had to discipline you for some sin in your life? The Valley of Achor can become a door of hope! God loves to bring us back and bless us in the very areas in which we have failed.

Here's an example. Let's say that you've sinned by refusing to submit to the authority structures that God has placed in your life - in the home or in the church. In this example, a rebellious spirit is your “Valley of Achor.” God wants to bless your life, but He cannot bless your life until you get that rebellious spirit straightened out before Him. However, when you realize your sin, learn the lesson that God has for you in your “valley of trouble,” and begin to submit to authority – you'll find that's exactly where the Lord will begin to bless your life - and make you a blessing to others!

What is your Valley of Achor? Where is God is dealing with you? The good news is that *your Valley of Achor can become your door of hope!*