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God, through His Son Jesus, provides eternal grace for our failures and human limitations.

Hosea 2.

(2014)

The Bible not only reveals God's eternal plans purposes and promises

But also shows how you can know God for yourself.

Teach it, don't demand it.

Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man. As to such I neither claim special knowledge or perfect understanding.

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Hosea 2.

Topics.

- Israel is not the LORD'S wife, and the LORD is not her husband.
- Lest I strip Israel naked and make her as in the day she was born
- Israel's mother played the whore and has conceived shameful children.
- Israel will seek after her lovers, but not find them.
- The LORD will withdraw his blessings and uncover Israel's nakedness.
- God will uncover Israel's lewdness in the sight of her lovers.
- Israel will call God, "my husband," and no longer call him, "my Baal."
- God will betroth Israel in righteousness to him forever.
- On No Mercy, God will have mercy and call, Not My People, his people.
- The Commonwealth of Israel.
- The glory of the spiritual temple God is building in Christ.

INTRODUCTION: Hosea has been called the "death-bed prophet of Israel" because he was the last to prophesy before the Northern Kingdom fell to Assyria (about 722 B.C.). His ministry followed a golden age in the Northern Kingdom, with a peace and prosperity not seen since the days of Solomon. Unfortunately, this prosperity led to moral decay, and Israel forsook God to worship idols. So God instructed Hosea to marry a prostitute, whose unfaithfulness to her husband would serve as an example of Israel's unfaithfulness to God. Hosea then explained God's complaint against Israel and warned of the punishment that would come unless the people returned to the LORD and remained faithful to him. The book shows the depth of God's love for his people, a love that tolerates no rivals.

FOR INFORMATION: concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

Israel is Not the LORD'S Wife, and the LORD is Not Her Husband.

Hosea 2:1-3 ----- ¹Say to your (Hosea's) brothers, "You are my people," and to your sisters, "You have received mercy." ²"Plead with your mother plead for she is not my (the LORD'S) wife, and I am not her husband that she put away her whoring from her face, and her adultery from between her breasts; ³lest I strip her naked and make her as in the day she was born, and make her like a wilderness, and make her like a parched land, and kill her with thirst.

You are my people: in (Hosea 1:8-9) God refers to the ten tribes of Israel in the land of Samaria (the Northern Kingdom) as, "Not my people," which means that the statement, "You are my people," refers to Israel.

Your sisters: refers to the two tribes of Judah that remained at Jerusalem (the Southern Kingdom). The ten tribes are seen as their big brothers.

Your mother: refers to the ten tribes of Israel in the land of Samaria (the Northern Kingdom). They are seen as the mother of the two tribes of Judah at Jerusalem.

The LORD tells Hosea to say the following three things: -

1. Tell Israel that they are not God's people.
2. Say to Judah they have received mercy.
3. Tell Judah to go and earnestly appeal to Israel their brothers and urge them to forsake their idols and pagan gods and return to the LORD because at this moment in time they are not the LORD'S wife and He is not their husband and if they do not turn from their gross wickedness God will destroy them.

Lest I strip her naked and make her as in the day she was born: refers to the day of Israel's Exodus when a nation was born. When the children of Israel were in the wilderness the Bible pictures them as a baby lying in the desert with no one to care for it, and it pictures God sitting high above looking down and upon seeing the helpless baby reaching down to take it for his own. Under God's nurturing care Israel as a helpless baby grew up in the wilderness totally dependent on God for their survival. Now hundreds of years later Israel has grown up and forsaken the LORD so he warns them that if they do not repent He will make them like the baby they were in the wilderness. The following shows that Israel has always been God's special and unique people

God said: -

- Israel was his son who he called out of Egypt and he loved them when they were a child (Hosea 11:1).
- He gave birth to Israel and carried them from the womb even to their old age (Isaiah 46:3-4).
- Israel is his allotted heritage (Deut. 32:9) and the apple of his eye (Deut. 32:10).
- Israel is a people holy to him (Deut. 7:6) and his treasured possession (Deut. 14:2).

The LORD has not spoken this way with any other nation, but God has not only spoken of Israel differently, but always dealt with them differently to any other nation: -

- To Israel God gave the Ten Commandments and showed his great power.
- To Israel God declared his word, statutes and his rules.
- To Israel God gave the prophets, the worship and the promises.
- To Israel belonged the covenant, the adoption, the patriarchs and the glory.
- To Israel the oracles of God were entrusted.
- The people of Israel are the offspring of Abraham the father of faith.
- From Israel's race came the Christ the Saviour of the world.

The LORD has not given any other nations such great privileges.

(Exod. 19:5) (Deut. 7:6) (Deut. 14:2) (Deut. 26:18) (Deut. 32:9) (Isa. 46:3-4) (Hos. 11:1).

These are the many reasons the Jews (especially the religious leaders of Jesus generation) considered themselves to be the holy and righteous race with God and the Gentile nations to be the unclean race without God.

The thermometer of God's prophecy: it is true that Israel has been and still is a special nation to God, but since Christ death and resurrection salvation for both Jews and Gentiles is in the Lord Jesus Christ. Nevertheless Israel remains a clear sign of where we are in prophecy concerning Christ's return. It could be said that they are the thermometer of God's prophecy much like the mercury on a natural thermometer measures the heat of the day and moves up the vertical red line warning us of impending danger when the heat of the sun is reaching temperatures that are dangerous for the good health of the skin and our well-being.

Likewise Israel can be seen as the mercury of Bible prophecy in the sense that world events that come upon the nation of Israel (especially Jerusalem) are signs that give us some insight as to how close we are to that glorious breathtaking and world changing day when the Lord Jesus Christ returns in glory. But God's focus during our present age for eternal salvation is upon creating a new nation in Christ made up of Jews and Gentiles. This new nation is also called a new creation in Christ, the body of Christ, the Bride of Christ, the church and the Kingdom of God. For further information concerning this new nation God is building in Christ see the title: "The Commonwealth of Israel," at the end of this chapter.

Israel's Mother Played the Whore and has Conceived Shameful Children.

Hosea 2:4-6 ----- ⁴Upon her (Israel's) children also I will have no mercy, because they are children of whoredom. ⁵For their mother has played the whore she who conceived them has acted shamefully. ⁶Therefore I will hedge up her way with thorns, and I will build a wall against her so that she cannot find her paths.

Their mother has played the whore: means Israel has committed spiritual adultery against God. This is because God is the husband of Israel and they are His wife, whoredom in this context is not about single people having sex with each other, but about a wife (being Israel) betraying her husband (God) by worshipping other gods and in this act of betrayal they are committing spiritual adultery. Israel is personified as a mother who has played the whore with idols and pagan gods giving birth to children and future generations who sadly are going to follow in their mothers' footsteps and because of this God will destroy whatever they attempt to do.

The words, "I will hedge up her way with thorns, and I will build a wall against her so that she cannot find her paths" (v6) not only means that whatever Israel attempts to do will be faced with troubles and great difficulties and will not prosper, but also that their lives will be in such terminal and confusion they will not be able to make a right decision.

NOTICE: how the religious corruptions of the previous generation are carried through their children to the next generation. The truth of this can be clearly seen by looking at the growth of the Catholic and Moslem faith from generation to generation. During Israel's generation the only way this was broken was when a godly king arose and destroyed all the idols and pagan gods in the land.

When Israel had a faithful and godly king they generally did the right thing, but as soon as a corrupt king arose the people likewise followed. The global religious corruptions that exist in the world today will continue until God's perfect King returns in glory as King of kings and Lord of lords to establish God's Kingdom of righteousness, justice, joy and peace on earth.

Israel will Seek after her Lovers, but Not find Them.

Hosea 2:7-8 ----- ⁷She (Israel) shall pursue her lovers, but not overtake them and she shall seek them but shall not find them. ⁸And she (Israel) did not know that it was I who gave her the grain, the wine, and the oil, and who lavished on her silver and gold, which they (Israel) used for Baal.

Israel will seek after her lovers, refers to their pagan gods and idols, because Israel has forsaken the LORD, He has withdrawn His hand of blessing so they seek counsel from their idols and pagan gods and pray to them for blessing, prosperity and riches, but to no avail, because the LORD their God is bringing everything they do to nothing.

Israel did not know that it was the LORD their God who controls their blessings. When Israel was prosperous they did not credit God for their blessings, but used their gold and silver to make idols and offerings to the Baal's, because they believed their success was coming from the pagan gods, but it was God all the time. Now their sins have become so great God is about to withdraw his favour and judge them without mercy.

The LORD will withdraw His Blessings and Uncover Israel's Nakedness.

Hosea 2:9 ----- ⁹Therefore I will take back my grain in its time, and my wine in its season, and I will take away my wool and my flax, which were to cover her nakedness.

Naked: in this context means Israel have no blessings, of silver, gold, grain, wine, and the oil because it is the LORD that provides them, they are left in famine and total poverty so it is obvious to all that the LORD has forsaken them. It is in this sense they are seen to be naked. God's blessing upon Israel covered their nakedness, not in the sense of covering it with righteousness, but in the sense that their sin was not evident because they were still being blessed. Normally when Israel lived in such rampant sin they would not be blest, but God is long-suffering and sent prophet after prophet warning them to turn from their wickedness until their cup of iniquity overflowed and He withdrew His hand and their land was stripped bare and their homes and farms destroyed and in this manner their sin was uncovered and they were left naked (i.e., without blessing).

God will Uncover Israel's Lewdness in the Sight of her Lovers.

Hosea 2:10-13 ----- ¹⁰Now I will uncover her (Israel's) lewdness in the sight of her lovers and no one shall rescue her out of my hand. ¹¹And I will put an end to all her mirth, her feasts, her new moons, her Sabbath's, and all her appointed feasts. ¹²And 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.' ¹³And I will punish her for the feast days of the Baals when she burned offerings to them and adorned herself with her ring and jewellery, and went after her lovers (gods of Egypt) and forgot me, declares the LORD.

Israel's lovers: refers to pagan gods and the Baal's they were worshipping. Israel at this time was keeping the LORD'S holy days, the Sabbath's and all God's appointed feasts, but they were giving their praise to the Baal's and idols and thanking them for multiplying their cattle and their crops and because of this God used Assyria to lay the land of Israel (in Samaria) waste and destroy their temples and places of worship.

I will make their farms a forest and beasts of the field will devour them: happened after the fierce and cruel armies of Assyria took Israel captive. Wild animals ate what was left of their crops and weeds and bushes grew up in their place.

Israel will call God, "My husband," and no longer call Him, "My Baal."

Hosea 2:14-18 ----- ¹⁴"therefore, behold, I (the LORD) will allure her (Israel), and bring her into the wilderness and speak tenderly to her. ¹⁵and 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. ¹⁶and in that day, declares the LORD, you will call me 'my husband,' and no longer will you call me 'my Baal.' ¹⁷for I will remove the names of the baals from her mouth, and they shall be remembered by name no more. ¹⁸and 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.

Achor: (means trouble) the valley is a large wilderness area in the Judean desert.

God's first promise has the following two aspects: -

1. The LORD will betroth Israel to Him in faithfulness.
2. Israel will know the LORD and call Him their husband.

The LORD says, He will be tender to Israel and give them hope while they are taken from their land. Israel will respond to the LORD'S message and reject all forms of idol and Baal worship and call the LORD their only God and then the LORD will abolish all forms of war and the people of Israel will dwell in safety.

God will Betroth Israel in Righteousness to Him Forever.

Hosea 2:19-21 ----- ¹⁹and I will betroth you to me forever. I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love and in mercy. ²⁰I will betroth you to me in faithfulness. And you shall know the LORD. ²¹"and in that day I will answer, declares the LORD, I will answer the heavens, and they shall answer the earth,

God's second promise is that He will betroth Israel to Himself forever in: -

- Righteousness, meaning they will do what is good and right.
- Justice, meaning they will treat everyone with fairness.
- Love, meaning they will treat people with compassion, kindness, mercy, grace, forgiveness and treat all people with respect and decency.
- Merciful, meaning they will show mercy to those who make mistakes.

On No Mercy, God will have Mercy and call, Not My people, His People.

Hosea 2:22-23 ----- ²²and the earth shall answer the grain, the wine, and the oil, and they shall answer Jezreel, ²³and 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.'

The third promise God made to Israel has the following three parts: -

1. He would have mercy on "No Mercy" the name "No Mercy" refers to Israel (Hosea 1:6-7).
2. He would call "Not My People," His people, the name "Not My People," also refers to Israel (Hosea 1:8-9).
3. Israel and Judah as one united nation will proclaim the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is their God and forsake all other gods.

Jezreel: comes from the Hebrew word (Yizr^ee'l) and means, "God will sow." It was also two places in Palestine and the names of two Israelites. In the context of these two verses it refers to Israel (the ten tribes in the land of Samaria) who constantly rebelled against God and carries the idea of God sowing Israel (Judah and Israel) in their own land.

Great will be the day of Jezreel: means great will be the day when God sows Israel in their own land and they turn to God and He turns to them.

The promises fulfilled: in a limited sense God's promise that He will have mercy on Israel and betroth them to Him in faithfulness, righteousness, justice and love and they will know the LORD and call Him their husband and He will call them His wife and His people were fulfilled after Israel's seventy year Babylonian captivity. During this seventy years God moulded Judah and Israel like a master potter moulds a beautiful clay jar, Israel and Judah went into Babylon as two unfaithful nations that had turned away from the LORD to idols and other gods. Seventy years later, Cyrus (King of Persia) who the LORD called His anointed shepherd (Isaiah 44:28) and took by His right hand (Isaiah 45:1) to conquer the Empire of Babylon gave written permission for Israel to return to Jerusalem. Under Ezra and Nehemiah God brought Israel and Judah back to their beloved city Jerusalem as one united nation.

They rebuilt their homes, the city and the Temple and declared the LORD the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob their God and never again turned to idols or pagan Gods and a golden age of peace and prosperity for Israel followed, but the promises cannot be contained to the Babylonian era only. Hosea's prophetic words rest there for a moment then take up wings and transcend through time and history until they arrive at their ultimate destination and perfect fulfilment which is when the following words of Zechariah are fulfilled: -

- God will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn (Zech. 12:10-14).

This breathtaking and world changing moment will of course take place at the return of the Lord Jesus Christ in glory as, King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:11-16) to rule and reign from God's Holy City Jerusalem (on Mount Zion God's Holy Mountain) to establish God's Kingdom on earth during his glorious millennial reign. The dead in Christ (Old and New Testament) and the faithful, who are alive, will be gathered together in the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-6) to rule and reign as kings and priests with the Lord over those nations who are left outside the Holy City of God. Christ the King united with his people will not only bring peace to the Middle East, but establish God's Kingdom of steadfast love, faithfulness, righteousness, joy and peace throughout the world and the glory of God will cover the earth.

Jesus will do justice to the poor and oppressed, he will be a faithful and compassionate King forever. He will not allow anyone to strike terror in the earth or use lies and deception to enlarge their own wealth and power. The land will abundantly produce and even the deserts will flourish. The animals will not feed on each other and even the lamb will be able to lie down with the wolf and everyone will eat of their own hands because all that they plant will produce. All nations the LORD has made will come and worship before the Lord Jesus Christ. They will glorify God's Name, proclaiming the LORD is great and does wondrous things and that He alone is God.

The book of Revelation states: -

- Jesus Christ, the faithful witness who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father is coming in glory and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him and all kindreds of the earth (Revelation 1:5-7).

And in Revelation chapter five we are told that: -

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he redeemed a people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation and made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Revelation 5:9-10).

At the end of this glorious Kingdom age God descends to earth on a Great White Throne the sea, death and hades (the grave) give up the dead. They stand before God and are judged according to what is written in certain heavenly books according to what they have done. Death and those counted unworthy are cast into the Lake of Fire a symbol of eternal destruction (i.e., total extinction) (also called the, Second Death) (Rev. 20:11-15). Christ hands the Kingdom over to his heavenly Father and God is ALL in ALL and ETERNITY begins in all its fullness and majestic royal glory.

For further information see titles: -

- Kingdom of God (ON WEBSITE MENU).
- The Second Resurrection or Great White Throne Judgment.

In, Resurrection (ON WEBSITE MENU).

The Commonwealth of Israel.

It is important to understand that the promised seed of Abraham and David is Christ, all the promises to Israel are now fulfilled in Christ therefore they are not limited to Israel only, but extend and embrace all those who belong to Christ. This is because God is now creating one new nation in Christ made up of both Jew and Gentiles. (Gentiles are everyone who is not a Hebrew or Jew).

This means that Jews and Gentiles become one new nation in Christ (also called, a new man, a new creation, the church, the body of Christ and the Kingdom of God).

The Apostle Paul said: -

- Remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called "the uncircumcision" by what is called the circumcision (Jews), which is made in the flesh by hands—¹²remember that you (Gentiles) were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the *COMMONWEALTH OF ISRAEL* and *STRANGERS* to the *COVENANTS* of *PROMISE*, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³But now in Christ Jesus you (Gentiles) who once were far off (from God) have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴For he himself is our (Jews and Gentiles) peace, who has made us both *ONE* and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility ¹⁵by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances, that he (Jesus) might create in himself *ONE NEW MAN* (or Nation) in place of the two (Jews and Gentiles), so making peace, ¹⁶and might reconcile us (Jews and Gentiles) both to God in *ONE BODY* through the cross, thereby killing the hostility (between the Jews and Gentiles). ¹⁷And he (Jesus) came and preached peace to you (Gentiles) who were far off (from God) and peace to those who were near (Jews). ¹⁸For through him (Jesus) we both (Jews and Gentiles) have access in *ONE SPIRIT* to the Father. ¹⁹So then you (Gentiles) are *NO LONGER* strangers and aliens, but you are *FELLOW CITIZENS* with the *SAINTS* (the Jews) and members of the *HOUSEHOLD* of God, ²⁰built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone ²¹in whom the *WHOLE STRUCTURE* being joined together (Jews and Gentiles) grows into a holy temple in the Lord. ²²In him you (Jews and Gentiles) also are being built together into a *DWELLING PLACE* for *GOD* by the Spirit (Ephes. 2:11-22).

Gentiles were separated from Christ, alienated from the, Commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus they have been brought to God by the blood of Christ. Jesus has made Jews and Gentiles both one by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances so that Jesus might create in himself one new man (Nation) in place of the two (Jews and Gentiles).

In Jesus both Jews and Gentiles are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. Christ is the head of this new nation and its Jewish and Gentile citizens are now equal in status before God since in Christ we are all brothers and sisters in the same eternal family that God is now establishing in the Lord Jesus Christ throughout all nations of the world. The practical application of what this means to those who belong to Christ is that all the future and eternal promises God made to Israel also apply to them. The book of Revelation states: -

- When Christ returns in glory every eye will see him, even those who pierced him and all the tribes of the earth (Rev. 1:7).

And in Revelation chapter five we are told that: -

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation (i.e., Jews and Gentiles) and he has made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Rev. 5:9-10).

The Glory of the Spiritual Temple God is Building in Christ.

Jews and Gentiles are being united together as one body in Christ to be a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. Believing Jews and Gentiles are being prepared by the prophets and apostles teachings and by the influence of Christ and the Holy Spirit to become a majestic and glorious sacred temple in which God dwells for all eternity. When this majestic building is completed there will be nothing so worthy of reverence since God dwells in it; so ancient since the patriarchs and prophets laboured in building it; so solid since love cements it together; so closely united and indivisible since Christ is the corner stone; so exalted since it reaches as high as

heaven and to God himself; so full of wisdom since its specifications are the word of God; so full of light since the Holy Spirit dispels every dark corner; so spacious since it is spread over the whole earth; so invincible and indestructible since it is being built by God, by Christ, by the Holy Spirit and by the influence of God's eternal word; so divine since it is a living, vibrant, dynamic temple inhabited by the Holy Spirit, and so universal since all its unique stones though spread throughout the world are compacted together in Christ.

God is the master builder of this majestic and glorious temple; Christ is the corner stone; faithful believers are the proper materials; the prophets and apostles are its foundation and the Gospel and love its pillars. Christ is the door and faith is the entrance into it. It is a spiritual building and through, faith and grace this living building is growing into an eternal house fit for the most Holy God to dwell in. Its beauty and radiance will surpass all temples that have ever gone before it since it will be adorned with a vast variety of rich colour made up of Jews and Gentiles of every age, country, sex, and condition: the mightiest of kings, the most renowned lawgivers, the most profound philosophers, the most eminent scholars and all those of whom the world was not worthy have formed this building.

Peter wrote: -

- Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame (1 Pet. 2:6).

Every faithful brother and sister in Christ are represented as living stones that God is using to build this spiritual, majestic temple of eternal glory which will be manifested in splendour for all to see when: -

- The Lord himself descends from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ are raised then we who are alive are caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thess. 4:15-18).

End.