

“THE GOD WHO SPEAKS TO THE HEART”

Hosea 2:14-17

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INTRODUCTION

Yes, for Israel, the days of the Baalim had become The Day of the Lord. She had forgotten the Lord; she had not recognized nor appreciated all that the Lord had given her and done for her; instead, she either took the credit herself, or worse gave the credit to false gods—Baalim. Therefore, the Lord systematically had taken away all His blessings. Severe judgment rained down upon His people so that they were no longer His people, they no longer had compassion.

But, God had not finally rejected Israel. He would once again save them and renew with them His covenant. In this passage we see Israel’s conversion; in 2:18-23 we see Israel’s being renewed in the covenant.

The Lord does not give up on His people—even when He must discipline us. His heart desires our restoration and joy and fulfillment!

As we examine God’s way of saving Israel, we see also how He saves us.

I. YAHWEH’S REDEMPTION (14,17)

- Salvation is of the Lord (Eph. 2:8-9), not of you.
 - Notice the startling word “therefore.”
 - The emphasis in vv. 14-23 is on Yahweh’s activity—the 1st person is used **16 times!**
- A. Enticing (14a—“I will allure her.”)
- Contrast the previous *enticements* of her lovers.
 - God is our “Lover” who draws us with His tender love.
 - He “courts” us, “woos” us as a lover.
 - Notice the emphatic “I, Myself.”
 - He gives us a taste of His love, beauty, joy, etc.
- B. Separating (14)—“Bring her into the wilderness”
- This is not talking about her judgment; such is now ended! Contrast v. 3.
 - God wishes to get her alone where He can deal with her!
 - This is a reenactment of the original wilderness wandering.
 - Training her by deprivation to see her need of help
 - Training her by miraculous deliverance to trust His omnipotence.
 - For a similar passage see Ezek. 20:34-36.

So God deals with our souls; He gets us alone so that He can deal with us; He courts us and woos us. Look at how many times in the Bible God gets people alone.

Compare contemporary ways He gets us alone.

- C. Speaking to the Heart (14) “Upon the heart”—Refers to *loving, comforting words*. See Ezek. 36:24-27. God *reaches our hearts, softens them, comforts them*. He warns, reproves, pierces, penetrates them.
- D. Removing the Baals (17) from our mouths.

II. Our Responses (15b; 16)

- A. Sing (or “give answer”) as in the days of her youth—redemption from Egypt and at Sinai
Respond to His wooing; say “yes” to His courtship. As in the joy of betrothal and as newlyweds!
- B. Marriage to God (16)
 - 1. Call Him “Ishi”=“my Husband”
This is an expression of *affection, intimacy, love, reverence*.
 - 2. No longer call Him “Baali”=“My master” or even “my Baal”
 - a. Religious sense=name of Baal, false gods
 - Worshiping other gods along with Yahweh
 - Losing the essential distinction between Yahweh and the Baals.
 - Idolatry is effectively removed from God’s people.
 - b. Social sense: Baal=“master, lord, owner” (another word for “husband”
God won’t seem to you merely as an owner, a lord to His subjects; a God who “lords” it over you, one who **must be obeyed by coercion**. This was the kind of burdensome yoke of slavery such as we tried to escape when we played the harlot! We thought to find “love” and “liberty” with our lovers.

III. THE RESULTS (15a)

- A. God gives the wedding present—“vineyards from there”
- B. “The Valley of Achor as a Door of Hope” (See Joshua 7:24-26)
 - A scene of trouble due to Achan’s sin and punishment
 - Now becomes a victory and a door of entrance into the Promised Land.

CONCLUSION God is so good at turning our “valleys of Achor” into doors of hope”! Respond to Him as He entices you, separates you, speaks to your heart, and removes the false gods from your life. **1) Let Him save you from your sins; 2) Let Him restore you from backsliding.**