

THE PEOPLE OF GOD

Part 1

Hosea 2:14-17

God made this promise to Abraham in **Genesis 22:17**. *“That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is upon the sea shore, and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies.”* In actuality God made two promises to Abraham. (1) To multiply his physical seed innumerable. Who can number the sand of the seashore or the stars of heaven? Before, in Genesis 17:5 God said, *“Abraham, a father of many nations have I made thee.”* Out of that number which no man can number, a remnant according to the election of grace *“shall possess the gate of his enemies.”* (2) The second promise was to remove the guilt and condemning power, (which he did by Calvary) and ultimately destroy the presence and influence of Satan over his people. God would multiply Abraham’s physical seed, (Jew and Arab) and his spiritual seed, (Jew and gentile in Christ) would possess the gate of his enemy (Satan). Christ would determine over whom Satan’s power and influence would reign based on his finished work to redeem a people. John 6:39, *“Of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing.”*

This promise is sure and certain because of Him who made it and him to whom the Father assigned its accomplishment. This promise is such that were it possible one of those promised this possession should fail to own it would undo everything said and done and promised yet to be done by God. Satan would possess his own gate, not Christ. Everything God is and will yet do pivots on the promise fulfilled he made to Christ. His glory, Christ’s pre eminence and our salvation is inseparably connected to his promise and every sinner for whom Christ died shall *“behold his glory in the face of Jesus Christ.”* (2 Corinthians 4:6)

In the second chapter of Hosea we see how this promise is executed in type. God truly does work in mysterious ways, his wonders to perform. The wonder of all wonders is how God can be just and justify the ungodly. How can an ungodly Gomer receive the benefits and blessings of a righteous and holy God? How; because *“God so loved the world, he gave his only begotten Son that she might have everlasting life and believe on him.”* (John 3:16) God’s love is such that it provides what his holiness and justice demands. He so loved Gomer he sent Christ who accomplished everything all the Gomers of this world need and will presently and individually reveal those needs met and satisfied by Christ to every Gomer for whom he died. *“I have manifested thy name unto the men thou gavest me.”* (John 17:6)

We see these truths unfolded in the life of Gomer, a type of the church redeemed. She experienced what all the *“remnant according to the election of grace”* experience. In her example, God shows us why election truly is of grace. **Hosea 2:23**; *“Thou art my people.”* Who are the people of God? What distinguishes the people of God from the world? Am I one of God’s people? How to know? I submit 3 evidences.

- 1. The people of God are exercised by the chastening of the Lord.**
- 2. The people of God are extended the comforts of the Lord.**
- 3. The people of God are engaged in covenant with the Lord.**

1. The people of God are exercised by the chastening of the Lord.

How can chastening, which, according to **Hebrews 12:11**, *“for the present seemeth not to be joyous, but grievous, be beneficial to God’s people? It always afterward yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby”* Chastening is an exercise which yields that peace established based on righteousness imputed. It identifies those who are sons of God, for *“whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth.” “If ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons.”*

The peaceable fruit of righteousness is an assurance of sonship with the Father based on our oneness with Christ. **Romans 5:5:** *“And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.”* The Holy Spirit’s presence in our lives is evidence that Christ, our Peace made satisfaction to law and justice. He came *“and made peace through the blood of his cross.”* (Colossians 1:20)

God uses Israel as a pattern of his exercise in chastening.

God chose the Hebrew nation and made a covenant with them to be their God and they his people. We know the story of their sojourn in Egypt and God’s miraculous delivery from that bondage and their forty year chastisement in the wilderness. Because of unbelief most of those who experienced the exodus perished in the wilderness and God raised up another generation who would possess the land he promised. But the story doesn’t change with those who entered the Promised Land. They were as rebellious as the generations before them and, though possessing the Promised Land, refused to enter into God’s rest, (Christ). They, being a part of that number of the seed of Abraham which no man can number, perished in unbelief as did their predecessors.

But, the people of his seed (Which is Christ, the church, Jew and Gentile) ; the remnant according to the election of grace, do own that rest, bought and paid for by the precious blood of God’s dear Son and freely given to all for whom he died. The problem is that by nature even God’s elect are ignorant of this possession and are actively engaged in trying to secure one of their own. They lack the wilderness experience all God’s sheep must experience to rest in Christ alone.

In Hosea 2:14, God begins to show his work, through chastening to reveal the children of the Seed, his church. How does he accomplish this transformation? **Hebrews 2:2-3.** *“Let her put away her whoredoms out of her sight, and her adulteries from between her breasts; lest I strip her naked as in the days she was born, and make her as a wilderness, and set her like a dry land, and slay her with thirst.”* God’s commandment to all is *“put away your whoredoms.”* For those who refuse, God leaves them to themselves to perish in their sin. He strips those who are the objects of his love of their want, (their whoredoms) for righteousness by deeds of the law. His procedure to accomplish this is spelled out in Hosea 2:9-13. Since we looked at this chastening in our last lesson we will not review it except to say God accompanies this chastisement with a wilderness experience.

Hosea 2:14. *“Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably to her.”*

God calls this experience a wilderness. A wilderness is a barren, desolate lifeless place. It is a place where life is unsustainable. It is a place void of anything of value. It is a place where death lurks. It is a place where those who insist on dwelling there shall die of thirst unless God supply. This is where God brought the Hebrew nation and every sinner he strips of whoredoms. They were left with nothing short of his mercy and grace for their justification before God. Our lives by nature are a spiritual wilderness. *“In my flesh dwelleth no good thing.”* (Romans 7:18) We are all *“dead in trespasses and sin.”*

Israel left Egypt with nothing but the clothes on their backs and what they borrowed from the Egyptians along with their animals for sacrifice to God. During the forty years in the wilderness their clothes did not give way to age. God supplied them with manna from heaven and water from the Rock. Though God provided their physical needs, most of them died a physical and spiritual death because their wilderness (their religion) made no provision for life. In their wilderness they were stripped of all but the physical necessities of life provided totally by God. Their spiritual necessities were pictured in the types within the Law of Moses. It was their schoolmaster to show them Christ. But they missed the show. They failed to see the types, pictures and shadows of Him who would come and put away sin by the sacrifice of himself for his people. They would not put away their whoredoms. They insisted on justification by works of the law, and God has plainly said in Romans 3:20, *“Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.”* The law can only reveal our sin and curse us in it. It cannot propitiate for it. That's the work of Christ alone.

That's what God does in chastisement. He takes away our whoredoms: those things which rival Christ and his righteousness imputed. He leaves his children with nothing of which to boast before him toward their salvation. **Hosea 2:3** describes the nation Israel which perished in the wilderness because she would not *“put away her whoredoms.”*

(1). She was stripped naked. All her works of the law she thought would recommend her to God were rejected by God and her house on the sand fell. (2). Israel was as a wilderness: without life and unable to produce or sustain life: She had nothing to recommend her to God and no way to produce it. A baby has nothing to offer any one, he can only receive. So Israel refused to receive what God had demanded and provided.

(4) Therefore, God set her forth as a dry land and slew her with thirst. He who was a *“well of water springing up into everlasting life”* left Israel to her whoredoms to reap the wages of sin which is eternal death.

But, **“Romans 11:5 say's,** *“Even so then at this present time also, (as there was in Israel's day), today there is a remnant according to the election of grace.”*

There is a people of God who shall escape the end of Israel. Though rebellious as was Israel, and deserving of God's wrath as was Israel, they are loved of the Lord and ordained unto eternal life.

They too were brought into the wilderness and stripped of their whoredoms: thinking their works of righteousness could recommend them to God. They were given a covering of God's choosing, made willing to receive it and thereby escaped the wrath of God. What is

chastening to the elect of God is a condemnation and judgment upon those who reject, and are rejected of God.

Wilderness experiences are never pleasant, but necessary to those whom the Lord loves. They are beneficial because they always strip the sinner of those legal desires he must let go and *“yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who are exercised thereby.”*

Chastisement always leads us to look and lean on Christ and his righteousness alone for our acceptance before God. It yields the righteous fruit of peace, the only real peace.

1. God’s people are exercised by the chastening of the Lord.

2. God’s people are extended the comforts of the Lord.

Hosea 2:14. *“Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably to her.”*

ōA lureö is an object that appeals to the senses of its intended victim and is sometimes detrimental to its victim. We are greatly influenced by these lures daily. The whole industry of advertising is devoted to this cause. Every commercial, every billboard, every news paper, every T V commercial is focused on encouraging us to use a specific product. Some of these products are inferior. How to tell the best from the worst becomes a priority; especially in spiritual matters. Even the elect of God are influenced by Satan’s lure and succumb to his advertising. Remember he is a liar and the father of all lies.

ōAllureö in the Hebrew is to persuade by conclusive facts of truth.

God will allure his people with the truth. **2 Thessalonians 2:13** *“But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.”* God has set apart a people unto the truth. This truth is specific. We will never know all truth but one truth all who are God’s will know. It is the one truth no sinner by nature knows. It is the one truth that brings real comfort to sinners. The Psalmist knew it. **Psalms 85:10.** *“Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.”* How can this be so? The answer is the most profound, the most important, the least known and understood, and yet the most comforting to those to whom it is revealed.

Read with me Isaiah 40:1-2. *“I ¶ Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.2 Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the LORD'S hand double for all her sins.”*

These are three ways God confronts and comforts his people. He shows how:

(1) *“Their warfare is accomplished.”* Their struggle to be acceptable in God’s sight is finished. Their unchangeable standing of justification is fixed in Christ. God has justified them based on the union of mercy and truth by the cross. **John 1:17,** *“For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.”* The law demands death where the least transgression is charged. Mercy satisfies that demand in the Person of the God-Man, who, according to **1 Peter 2:24** *ōWho his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.”* Righteousness and peace with God kissed at the cross where both were established by

Christ's death which made it right for God to justify sinners. Mercy and truth meet only in Christ. He is our Mercy Seat, (propitiation): He is the Way, the Truth and the Light. He is the LORD our RIGHTEOUSNESS. He is our peace. HE accomplished our warfare. Is your warfare accomplished?

I remember as an eight year old boy, the time of day and what I was doing when the Japanese surrendered to the Allied forces on August 15th 1945. This is so vivid to me because we didn't know if or when the Japanese might invade our homeland. But greater news came to me one day that Christ has defeated Satan and my warfare is over. I, as Paul admonishes us in Ephesians 6:11, *put on the whole armor of God that I might be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.* Though the warfare is accomplished, we fight the good fight of faith. We fight from victory, not for victory. That belongs to Christ. The cry from this pulpit is; **Isaiah 40: 2**, *"Tell Jerusalem, (the church) that her warfare is accomplished."* How is it accomplished? **Read Luke 9:30-31.** *30. "And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias: 31 who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem."* Jesus would, as Daniel 9:24 prophesies, *"finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy."*

(1) Tell Jerusalem her warfare is accomplished. This is comforting news as it was that to the Japanese soldier twenty nine years after World War Two was over. I lived 50 years of my life ignorant of this accomplishment by Christ.

(2). Tell Jerusalem her iniquity is pardoned.

Based on the satisfaction Christ made to law and justice by his death on the cross, righteousness is established and peace is made between God and man. God's people are comforted when they learn of this accomplishment for them. This is accomplished in us when we see how God is both just and justifier of ungodly sinners such as are we. We have peace with God when we see our iniquity pardoned by the blood of Christ. It is here righteousness and peace have kissed each other. A kiss consummates the union of a couple in marriage. Righteousness and peace have kissed **each other**. This is not a one way transaction. You can't have righteousness without peace; or vice-verse. Christ's life and death established both simultaneously. Based on his accomplishing righteousness and peace, Christ's Bride, the church who is, **Hosea 2:19**, *"betrothed to Christ forever in righteousness,"* will according to **Psalms 2:12**, *"Kiss the Son, (embrace) lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him."* Our iniquity is pardoned and we see it in our engagement to Christ, our Bridegroom.

(3). Tell Jerusalem she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins. Not only is her sin pardoned, it is put away. So complete is the sinner's forgiveness by the embrace of righteousness and peace that no one *"can lay anything to the charge of God's elect."* What is the DOUBLE God's people have received? Christ's death so put away sin that Pardon from the penalty of and purification from the pollution of sin is complete in Christ. We cannot be charged with either. Christ has already satisfied both.

Illustration: When Jesus washed the feet of the disciples, Peter refused Christ's offer. Jesus said to him; *"if I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me."* Peter said; *"Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and head."* Jesus answered in John 13:10, *"He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all."* Pardon from the penalty of sin is a onetime transaction. It was given those in Christ Jesus before the world began. Purification from the pollution of sin is an ongoing cleansing. We need daily to be washed in the water of the word, not for salvation but fellowship. *"Rock of ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in thee, let the Water and the Blood, from thy wounded side which flowed, be of sin the double cure, save from wrath and make me pure."* *The blood to save, the water wash away the pollution.*

What a comfort to know my warfare is accomplished, my iniquity is pardoned and I have received, from the Lord's hand pardon and purification. These are not the benefits of the lost religionist.

Neither are the gifts God bestows upon all he chastens.

Read Hosea 2:15.

"And I will give her her vineyards from thence." God took everything from Gomer. (Israel) **He gave her HER vineyards.** V-15 **Vineyards** (Plural, abundance) are the source of wine. Wine is typical of the Holy Spirit. *"Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess but be filled with the Holy Ghost."* (Ephesians 5:18) Christ called the Holy Spirit the Comforter in John 14:6, which he gives to every sinner he strips. *You don't put new wine (Holy Ghost) in old wineskins, only those in Christ who are new creatures receive his Spirit.* God first visits his people with the Holy Spirit who guides into all truth.

He gave her the valley of Achor. Achor was the place where God brought judgment upon Israel for the disobedience of Achan. He took of the spoils of war and hid them in his tent. God had Joshua destroy Achan's whole family in retribution for his idolatry. By the offense of one (Achan), judgment came upon all Israel to condemnation. Therefore by the obedience of one (Joshua) (in executing judgment upon Achan,) many (Israel) were spared.

Gomer (the church) is guilty of the sin of Achan. God's elect have taken the spoils of war Christ conquered by his death and hid them in our tents. (heart) We desire and hold on to those things God has excluded toward salvation. These are stripped from us by his chastening. What was potentially for Israel a valley of death became a valley with a door, an escape from God's wrath when law and justice were satisfied by the obedience of Joshua. Likewise, God laid on Christ the penalty of our taking of the spoils of Ai and satisfied law and justice for his sheep. *The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."*

He gave Gomer a **"Door"** A door has two functions; it shuts in and it shuts out. It opens the way to God. *"I am the door of the sheep,"* and it shuts the sinner in to God. *"Of all that thou gavest me I should lose nothing."* Christ is both. John 10:9: *"I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture."*

He gave her hope. V-15 Not a wish for, a prayer for, not a vain presumption but a certain expectation of, and a firm belief in final glory in heaven based on his righteousness imputed and received by faith. Our hope is built on nothing less.

He gave her a song. V-15 He gave her the song of the redeemed. Revelation 5:9 “*And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy.*”

He gave her a husband. V 16-17

16 “*And it shall be at that day, saith the LORD, that thou shalt call me Ishi; (husband) and shalt call me no more Baali.* 17 *for I will take away the names of Baalim out of her mouth, and they shall no more be remembered by their name.*” In ignorance we called God Baal.

Every blessing God bestowed upon Gomer (Israel) she attributed to other lovers. (Hosea 2:5) “*For their mother hath played the harlot: she that conceived them hath done shamefully: for she said, I will go after my lovers, that give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, mine oil and my drink.*” Ignorant of the God who is both just and justifier, and his love and provision for his people, Gomer automatically attributed God’s blessing upon her to idols of her imagination, whatever name she might call them. SO DID WE. In regeneration and conversion, God takes away the names of Baalim (our lovers) and our remembrance of them, and gives us a husband, someone who loves us in spite of our idolatry. In the day of his power, God makes us willing to acknowledge, confess and repent of forsaking him for our lovers. (other Gods) The truly justified sinner “*shalt have no other gods before Him,*” who is the husband of his church. When God visits his Spirit upon the sinner, he literally and truly does change gods. It is this absolute conviction that Christ’s righteousness imputed is the sum and substance of our justification before God, and our willingness to give him all the praise and glory for that glorious work of redemption he accomplished for us. It is here we find comfort and nowhere else. **2Corinthians 1:3-4** “*Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;:4 Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.*” Where do you find your comfort? In a finished work or a fruitless, fatal walk?

To the people of God alone, he extends his comfort. To them alone is the gospel comforting. Only those stripped, need or want free grace.

Read Isaiah 65:10. *And Sharon shall be a fold of flocks, and the Valley of Achor a place for the herds to lie down in, for my people that have sought me.*”

My prayer for us is that we might lie down in the Valley of Achor, where law and justice was satisfied, being comforted with the comfort whereby God’s people are comforted.

The people of God are exercised by the chastening of the Lord

The people of God are extended the comforts of the Lord.

May the Lord enable us to see and receive his chastening and comfort as gifts from a loving Father upon his people.

By Winston Pannell