

## The people of God

### Part 3

#### Hosea 2: 19-23

In our last study from Hosea we were shown how God's people, "*in the day of his power*" (Psalm 110:3), engage with a covenant God who is already, and has always been engaged for them. Since their election of grace in Christ from eternity, and that by God's sovereign choice alone has God been engaged on the elect's behalf. "*In the day of his power*" the elect's senses are awakened to the reality of God's engagement for them and their entry into covenant with him.

In Hosea 2:19 we were shown how the people of God engage with him in covenant when **He Breaks the Battle in the earth**. This he accomplishes by breaking their bow and sword. These carnal weapons are no match for those in God's arsenal. **2 Corinthians 10:5**, "*the weapons of those in God's warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down strongholds, casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.*" This battle is for the hearts (mind, affections and will) of God's elect.

The sinner's weapons by nature are a carnal mind that is enmity against God, the affections of a carnal heart that is only evil continually and the will in bondage to carnality. "*What we would, that do we not.*" Evidence of this is our natural tendency to interpret scripture in a legal, mercenary light. **Read 2 Corinthians 10:5 again.** Instead of bringing our every thought into captivity to what Christ has accomplished in his obedience, the legal mind always looks to its own obedience for acceptance before God. That's all it can do. If all we learn from **Hosea 2:19-23** is to focus on our obedience to God's law it will profit us nothing. But if we see how his obedience unto death secured our participation in the marriage supper of the Lamb, then we have the mind of Christ. We promote his obedience, not ours. "*Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.*" These are our bow and sword.

God breaks these weapons by **(1) Driving out our idols, (2) drawing out our affections and (3) delivering us daily from evil**. Then, **(V19...)** "*will we lie down safely.*" **God's people engage with him in covenant when He breaks the battle in the earth.**

Today we see **God's people engage with him in covenant when:**

**He betroths his Bride in marriage. Hosea 2:19-23**

We have all heard the expression; "theirs was a marriage made in heaven," alluding to the compatibility of the couple involved. The choice of each for the other seems perfect. Their

interests in politics, religion, sports and the arts are mutual. Their ability and willingness to compromise and adapt where differences are present solidify their union. From the time of their engagement to the date of the wedding, all of the particulars of its planning and execution involve both parties to ensure a perfect marriage.

But, by the statistics on marriage, the odds of success are not favorable. Man, all too often has ōput asunderö what God ōhas joined together.ö

There is a marriage truly made in heaven. There is no chance of failure for this marriage. It was purposed, planned and perfected by the Triune God-Head in eternity past, with this distinguishing factor; every attention to the details of this marriage was taken care of by the Bridegroom without contribution from the bride. Even the Bride's unfaithfulness to her Husband could not destroy this union. We'll see this demonstrated again in the lives of Hosea, a type of Christ and Gomer, a type of unfaithful Israel, (the church).

The Prophet Hosea gives us several reasons for its success.

### **Hosea 2:19-20.**

19 *“And I will betroth thee unto me forever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies.”*

20 *“I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the LORD.”*

Three times does God say, *“I will betroth.”* As with breaking the battle in the earth was totally of God's initiative and execution, so is the betrothal of his bride to himself. It is all based on and owing to the intention of the Father and the intervention of the Son by his death on Calvary that this covenant was fulfilled. What about this marriage guarantees its success? Why is it sure to last?

#### **1. It is the Lord's. V-19. “I will betroth.”**

The word ōbetrothö means to commit to marry. It also means to consummate the marriage, meaning that which God purposes he shall perform. What our faithful God has committed himself to do shall surely come to pass. Here God commits himself to betroth a bride. The ōI willö and ōthey shallö leave no uncertainty as to who does the betrothing or the outcome thereof. It is the Lord's betrothal.

#### **2. It is liberating. Hosea 2:19.**

*“I will betroth thee.”* In this marriage the Bridegroom sovereignty chooses and takes the full responsibility of the bride to himself. Think about this union. Think more about who made it. Think about with whom it is made. It is the engagement of a Holy God, who owns all, has all, wants for nothing, and is complete in himself, to someone like me who owns nothing, has nothing but a humongous sin debt, needs everything and could contribute nothing toward my need. Worse still, I hated the God who has always loved me and provides those needs and was

actively engaged against him who was actively engaged in my betrothal. My every thought, motive, word and deed, proceeding from an ungodly sinner could only produce in me dead works and fruit unto death. Gomer could not hold a candle to me. I was one of those who said "Crucify Christ and give us Barabbas." Worse than that, I was like Barabbas, engaged in insurrection against the Church and her Christ, and deserving of death for my part in his death. **But**, "God justifies the ungodly." To such as I the king says "I have betrothed thee unto me, I have pardoned thee. I have adopted thee. I give thee a palace, you are a prince, and I will make of you a royal priesthood, a holy nation. Like the father of the prodigal son in Luke 15, "Bring forth the best robe and put it on him." That robe of righteousness put on by imputation which is the whole of my salvation. "Give him a ring," the symbol of my unbroken betrothal to God. "Put shoes on his feet." Ephesians 6:15 "Having his feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." Do this, for this is my son. From a pauper to a prince God's betrothal lifted this beggar from the dung heap to the palace of the king. "In the day of his power" this sinner was made to see that my enemy was in reality my benefactor. It is this truth that set me free to engage with God in covenant. It is a liberating betrothal.

### **3. It is lasting. V-19..** "I will betroth thee to me forever."

What God promises in the future is that which he predestinated in the past and is so sure to happen he can speak of it as already accomplished. My sovereign Creator had already betrothed me to his Son in the Everlasting Covenant of Grace, which he consummated by his death on the cross. It was by his death he earned the right to be the bridegroom and as such, the head of the church. I have always been betrothed to Christ, which insured that he would betroth me to him in the day of his power: the day of regeneration and conversion. What I was from eternity past and shall forever be, was communicated to me in the gospel. Nothing could prevent this betrothal of me to Christ and nothing can disannul this betrothal. The pardon, adoption, provisions and the love are only evidence of what the elect have always been: sons whose names are written in the Lambs Book of Life from the foundation of the world.

**Read Jeremiah 31:3.** God's mind and purpose to have a people is as old as is God himself. Never has there been a time when God has not loved his Bride. "The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." The amazing fact of his love for us guarantees our betrothal to him, and that forever. His is a lasting betrothal.

### **4. It is lawful. V19...** "I will betroth thee to me in righteousness and in judgment."

The laws of our state recognize marriage between a man and a woman to be legal and binding for those who meet their requirements. Agreement to the terms of the marriage certificate must be witnessed and signed by all parties. After a waiting period, blood tests are received and when the

administrative fees are satisfied, is the certificate issued. Failure to answer every requirement of the agreement renders it null and void.

Of how much greater significance and importance is God's marriage certificate? Again, the responsibility to its requirements lies with the Husband. His betrothal must be legal also. Failure in one requirement renders it null and void.

In the everlasting covenant of grace, made before time, God betrothed to himself a bride, a chaste virgin. When sin entered, this bride, typified by Gomer went a whoring after other gods. God's elect, his chosen, his betrothed bride played the harlot and broke the marriage covenant made by the Triune God head. In Adam we left the God of glory for an idol of our imagination. The penalty under God's law in Israel for adultery was death by stoning. *"The wages of sin is (eternal) death."*

Because God's love is everlasting he did not abandon his elect. He continued to care for her, who attributed his care to her 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."* **Read Hosea 2:8.** *"For she did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, which they prepared for Baal."* Can you relate to this? I remember when I, in ignorance attributed *"my corn, wine and oil"* (those temporal, physical blessings representative of spiritual blessings provided for me by Christ even in my idolatry) and every blessing God gave me to an idol of my imagination. I didn't know God either.

**Read V-10.** *"And now will I discover her lewdness in the sight of her lovers, and none shall deliver her out of mine hand. (None shall thwart my exposing to her the sin of idolatry.)"* Don't you remember when God exposed in you the sin of idolatry? This is the case for all he betroths. Every single one of those betrothed by Christ own the title, *"former idolater."* **Read Hosea 2:14.** *"Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her."* The most comforting words I ever heard are: *"Thy warfare is accomplished."* For me, the unfaithful one, *"God did not cast away his people which he foreknew,"* although worthy and deserving of death.

The question is how could a holy and just God, who declares *"the soul that sinneth it shall surely die,"* save an adulterer like me? How can one who willfully disobeyed God's commandment live to tell it? God couldn't over look my sin and remain a Just God. He couldn't dispense his love to me at the expense of his holiness and justice. Here we see the dilemma of Deity, which really is no dilemma. There is a way. I must be betrothed to Christ in righteousness and judgment by him who is the Lord our Righteousness. The full responsibility for my sin must be charged to one who is qualified and willing to satisfy it: I'm a sinner, I can't do it. My Husband can. But again, how can a Holy and Just God charge my husband with sin he did not commit and remain just?

The heart of the gospel reveals the answer in substitution, satisfaction and imputation. **Read 2 Corinthians 5:21.** *“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him,”* and that not by impartation, not by infusion but by imputation alone. A prayer of thanksgiving should be first on our lips every day for this act of grace.

Righteousness imputed declares and demands life, sin conceived and charged demands death. The righteousness Christ established in his obedience, suffering and death must and has been imputed to every sinner for whom it was established. Not one of Christ's betrothed shall fail to have it. Why, because justice demands it. Justice demanded Christ die when sin was imputed to his charge. Righteousness demands the betrothal of all for whom he died if it is charged to their account.

And when was that righteousness charged to his betrothed? *“I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving chords have I drawn thee.”* The gospel is the song of redemption by the imputed righteousness of Christ.

Those clothed in their filthy rags shall be betrothed in his righteousness. **Read Isaiah 61:10.** *“I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.”* I **“The Lord our Righteousness”** will betroth her **“The Lord our righteousness”** to me a righteous bride. (Jeremiah 23:14, 33:16) I can marry no less than the righteous and that in justice. The Bride's righteousness resides in heaven in the person of Christ who satisfied justice for her by his death on the cross.

Justice demands, where righteousness is imputed, the sinners complete pardon and, not only forgiveness but participation in, and right and title to the whole inheritance of grace. God has blessed his betrothed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Sinners are not betrothed to become righteous; they are so because they are already righteous, not in themselves but in their husband, Christ, and at midnight when the Bridegroom calls they will have their lamps trimmed and will go in with him to the marriage supper. Those with no oil for their lamps and improper wedding garment will be cast out. Why? Justice demands it. **God's betrothal is legal.** It's right for God to marry his bride and its right to reject those who are not ready and properly attired.

## **5. It is love in action. V19b-20**

**V-19b.** *“I will betroth thee unto me in lovingkindness and mercies. I will even betroth thee to me in faithfulness; and thou shalt know me.”*

In Christ alone is loving-kindness, mercy and faithfulness to be found. God is love; it is his love that is the cause of my salvation. In loving kindness Jesus came to offer up his sinless humanity

on the altar of his Deity. Christ is our Mercy Seat. In him alone is law and justice satisfied. 1Th 5:24; *“Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.”* It is Christ’s faithfulness that holds this marriage together. That’s how David could pray in Psalm 51:1; *“Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.”* God is not just a just God, he is also a Savior.

It is in this capacity all those betrothed to Christ shall know him and Jesus said in John 17:3; *“And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”* Love sent the Savior to die in my place, how could he love me so? God is love. His betrothal is love in action. a living betrothal. It is life, it is for life and it is for the living.

## **6. It is life changing. Hosea 2:21-23**

From the day of his power, the sinner is never the same. He is a new creature. From death he was made alive; was motivated by duty, now love. From darkness to light he sees Christ’s betrothal to him and his to Christ. To these the people of God, he says in **Hosea 2:21**, *“And it shall come to pass in that day, (what day) the day of God’s power, when the cry comes up to God, “I will hear.”* What will he hear?

“I will hear the heavens.” What will he hear the heavens say? What they hear the earth say. And what will the earth say? What it hears the corn, the wine and the oil say. And what will the corn, wine and oil say? What they hear Jezreel say. And what will Jezreel say?

Remember Jezreel, “the scattered,” “God sows,” The remnant that went after other gods like those at Bethel and Dan, whom God scattered to the four winds. The remnant out of every kindred, tribe and nation, Jew and Gentile betrothed to God, whom Christ promised he would not lose one shall be gathered into one fold, Christ the Head.

**Read again Hosea 2:8.** *“For she did not know that I gave her corn and wine and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, which they prepared for Baal.”* Though Gomer forsook the Lord and went after her idols, God did not stop providing her physical and spiritual needs. In **V-22** the corn, wine and oil, representing things spiritual is mentioned again.

What will Jezreel say to the corn, wine and oil? **Read Hosea 2:16.** *“And it shall be AT THAT DAY, saith the Lord, that thou shalt call me Ishi; and shall no more call me Ba’al-i.”* Ishi and Baali signify “My Husband.” Baali, dominance and subjection; Ishi, love and compassion.

In the day of God’s power, Jezreel, the scattered shall say *“Ishi, my husband; Hosea 2:23b, “Thou art my God.”* Who is my husband and my God? That One represented in the corn. **Read John 12:24;** *“Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.”* That corn of wheat is Christ, the Bread of Life, who died, was buried and rose again the third day. The impeccable Christ was made a

curse when he hung on that tree and died, the just for the unjust. **“Thou art my Husband and my God.”** That One represented in the wine. The wine represents the blood of Christ, He who trod the winepress of God’s wrath alone for the love of his betrothed. **Read Matthew 26:28.** “For this **(Wine)** is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.ö **Thou art my Husband and my God.** The one represented in the oil of anointing. Oil in the scriptures is symbolic of the Holy Spirit, who anoints for service, sacrifice and healing. To Christ was the Spirit given without measure. **Read Psalm 45:7.** “*Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.* He, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, despised the shame and is set down at the right hand of the Father.ö **Thou art my Husband and my God.**

How can Jezreel, so named because God scattered them over all the face of the earth declare “Thou art my God?ö How can those who were called öLo-ruhama, (will not have mercy) and those call Lo-ami, ömeaning not my people.ö be shown mercy and recognition as God’s people? **Read Hoses 2:23.** “*I will sow her unto me in the earth.*” Christ, öthe sower went forth sowing seeds. He sows good seed, the wheat among the tares. He sows among the thorns, along the roadside, in the stony ground, in the good soil. **And some beareth fruit.**

Christ’s promise is to “*whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*” Jezreel called out to the Corn, Wine and Oil: “*Ishi, thou art my God.*” This call, from the remnant in the earth is heard by Christ himself, represented by the corn, wine and the oil, who in the power of the Holy Spirit calls the scattered to himself in the earth. The earth will cry unto the heavens, where Christ is seated at the right hand of the Father, pleading the merits of his obedience suffering and death to redeem his people. The God of heaven will hear. **Read Psalm 19:1.** “*The heavens declare the glory of God, the firmament showeth forth his handiworks* The heavens declare the glory of a sovereign, omniscience, Creator God. This alone is sufficient revelation to engage the sinner in seeking after God. His redemptive glory, how he can be just and justify the ungodly is seen in the face of Jesus Christ who sits at the right hand of the Father, ever making intercession for his betrothed. He pleads the merits of his substitutionary work on behalf of his betrothed. The firmament showeth forth his handiworks. His handiwork is salvation by the imputed righteousness of Christ which is all my salvation. Included in this handiwork is the betrothal of his bride unto himself. **Read Hosea 2:23.** “*And I will sow her unto me in the earth, and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not my people, thou art my people; and they shall say, thou art my God.*” What a blessed people are the people of God.

In the society section of today’s paper are the announcements of those couples engaged to be married. They do this to share with you and me their love for and commitment to each other in a relationship that statistically, stands no more than a 50/50 chance of enduring.

In the volume of God’s Word today is the announcement of another engagement, the marriage celebration of the Lamb that cannot fail because our faithful God betroths his Bride in

faithfulness. She cannot go back to idolatry. *“Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for His seed remaineth in him and he cannot sin because he is born of God.”* Those ÷IN CHRISTö cannot sin because in Him is no sin and his seed remains in him. Are you ÷in Christ?ö Is your name included in the wedding announcement? Has he announced your betrothal to himself?

When at midnight the cry is made, ÷behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him,ö will you be ready? When the door is shut to the age of grace will you be locked out? Or, can you say as those betrothed, *“Ishi, My husband and my God. The people of God can.*

By Winston Pannell