

Hos 2.2-23—There's no place like home

Israel has broken covenant with God, vv.2-5

- I. The Lord tells Hosea to accuse Israel of breaking the terms of the covenant He made with them in Ex 24 under Moses, v.2.
 - A. In that covenant, Israel promised to be faithful to Yahweh and to worship none but Him, Ex 24.3, 7; 20.2-6.
 - B. But instead, she willfully rejected the LORD and went after other gods, 1Kgs 12.16, 25-33.
 - C. How amazing that, with the words, “plead, plead” the Lord declares that there’s a way back home if she’ll only repent, v.2.
- II. The Lord tells Hosea to threaten judgment, vv.3-4.
 - A. God can’t abide sin, especially in His own people. So He makes clear that if they’re determined to continue in sin, then the blessings of the covenant will be revoked, cf. Lev 26.14-39.
 - B. The Lord threatens exile, because disobedience must be punished and sin has consequences, cf. Dt 28.15.
 - C. How merciful it is that although the Lord won’t overlook our sins, He operates within it, using discipline, withdrawal, affliction, and even exile to bring His people back home.

God calls Israel back home, vv.6-15

- I. The first thing the Lord will do to call Israel back home is isolate her, vv.6-7.
 - A. God will deal with her the way a man deals with an unruly animal.
 - B. What’s needed is a heart change, but when the heart is bent on sin, it takes hedges and walls to break it so it can see the misery of sin and the beauty of home, Lk 15.17-18.
- II. The second thing the Lord will do to call Israel back home is impoverish her, vv.8-13.
 - A. He’ll take back the temporal blessings of the covenant which He promised them in the land. He’ll take back all the blessings of the land which declared that it was a land under Yahweh’s blessing and they were a people under Yahweh’s care.
 - B. Not only were they living in rebellion, but they were using all His blessings for their idolatrous worship, Js 4.3-4.
 - 1. She refused to acknowledge that her provisions were gifts from the Lord and she’d forgotten and forsaken the Lord and said of her idols, “These are my gods who care for me.”

- C. So the Lord would strip her naked of all her blessings and thereby remind her that there’s no one like Yahweh and no place like home.

- 1. How amazing that God’s grace is willing to reach as far as we are lost and bring us back home.

- III. The third thing the Lord will do to call Israel back home is afflict her, vv.14-15.

- A. He’ll bring her back into the wilderness in which He first brought her when he redeemed her from Egypt because it was there that she betrothed her love. It was there that she said, “All the Lord says we will do, and we will be obedient.”

- B. Bringing her into the wilderness of affliction, the Lord will remind her of the beauty of being at home with Him.

God will keep covenant, vv.16-23

- I. The Lord suddenly speaks of a Day when His people will call Him Husband again, a Day when the names of all other gods will be removed from their lips, a Day when the covenant blessings of the land will be restored, vv.16-18.
- II. But how will this come about? Can a people so unfaithful and a wife so adulterous be reclaimed? How can it be?
- III. God Himself will bring it about. He will betroth her to Himself in such a way that she will stay home, vv.19-22.
 - A. And He’ll do this by covenanting with His Son Jesus, who’s a City of Refuge for covenant breakers, a storehouse of mercy for the undeserving, a Fountain for cleansing for the sinful, and the Good Shepherd who loses none of the sheep committed to Him, Jn 6.37; 10.27-28.
- IV. We’ll always be sinners in need of help, sinners who, when left to ourselves, will wander away from home.
 - A. But the gospel revealed in this passage is that God has made a way for sinners like us to come back home and stay home, to enter into covenant with Him and be faithful to that covenant. And that way is through faith in His Son, Jesus Christ.
 - B. Hear, then, the call of this passage today: *Repent and believe in Jesus Christ, because He’s the door of hope left open by God for us to come back home.*