

## “The Heart and Holiness of God” (Hosea 14:1–9)

By Pastor Jeff Alexander (9/25/2022)

### Introduction

1. Hosea was God’s prophet to the northern kingdom of Israel during a very dark period of the nation’s history. The judgment of God was coming to the nation by the terrible Assyrians, scattering them among the nations. The kingdom of Israel would be no more forever. Judah would follow very soon, but, unlike Israel, would be returned to the land in order for Jesus to be born in Bethlehem. After His death and resurrection, Judah was also destroyed by the Romans.
2. However, we read of God’s intention to restore Israel and Judah (Hosea 2:14, 15). In the context of this promise, the Lord explains that Israel will call Him “*My Husband*” and she will forget the Baals. He declares, “*I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love and in mercy. I will betroth you to me in faithfulness*” (vv. 19, 20). The book of Hosea is filled with what seems to be conflicting messages such as the verses just read. On one hand, God declares His determination to judge His people because of their awful sinfulness. On the other hand, God laments and promises His mercy and compassion (Hosea 11:8, 9). How does God resolve this conflict. Hosea’s marriage to Gomer is the both the example and prophetic illustration of His plan to raise up for Himself a faithful bride.

### I. A Soiled Bride Sanctified Through Covenant Love

1. Hosea’s domestic life illustrates God’s message to the nation (1:2). Gomer’s children represent the fruit of that rebellion. After Gomer deserted Hosea, he redeemed her for the price of a slave (3:1–3). Jesus redeemed and sanctified His bride with the price of His own blood (Ephesians 5:26, 27). Hosea 6:2 was cited by Jesus twice in the Gospel of Matthew (9:13, 12:7). Clearly, God intends to redeem out of Adam’s race a new race that will walk in His ways and live holy lives to the glory of God.
2. After Hosea redeemed her, the Lord showed that He, too would divorce Israel (3:5). How would this redemption occur?
  - a. The divine solution is revealed in Chapter 11:1—“*Out of Egypt I called my Son*” (see Matthew 2:13–15).
  - b. There are two Israels in view. The first, ethnic Israel, is a natural descendant of Adam which persistently refuses to hear and obey the Lord. The second, the true Israel, is also the second Adam, hearing and obeying His heavenly Father. All who are called to faith in Him are *in Him* as the Israel of God, having been delivered from the curse of the first Adam. Paul deals with this fact in Romans 11.

### II. The Divine Principle in Review

1. The divine principle at work is clearly stated by Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:22: “*In Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.*” Adam, as the seminal head of the race, passed his fallen nature to all his offspring, and the consequence is that in Adam they sin naturally and die (Romans 6:23).
2. Adam’s connection to the race was more than that of a *covenantal* representative (as in the federal headship view held by most reformed theologians). Adam was the true *seminal* (seed) head of the race. His sin nature was passed on to his descendants, thus everyone is a sinner by virtue of having been born to parents who are sinners. There is a natural union of all “*in Adam.*”
3. However, “*in Christ shall all be made alive.*” If it is the same in Christ, how then is there a seminal relationship to Christ? Even more importantly, how did Christ escape the curse of Adam in His becoming a human? The answer to both questions is the work of the Holy Spirit.

- a. Christ became a human being through the unique work of the Holy Spirit's supernaturally impregnating a woman. When the virgin Mary was told by the angel Gabriel that she was to bear a son, she inquired, "*How will this be, since I am a virgin?*" (Luke 1:34). Gabriel explained, "*The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God*" (v. 35). The result of the virgin birth is twofold.

Jesus' human body was created by the Holy Spirit in Mary's womb. The virgin birth kept Jesus from inheriting Adam's sinful nature, thus He was *sinless* (*holy*—1 Peter 2:22, citing Isaiah 53:9). As Adam was created directly by God so also was Jesus the man. That made Him, like Adam, uniquely "the Son of God" (Psalm 2:7).

- b. All *in Christ* have eternal life and can never die. They become *in Christ* through the new birth, which is a work of the Holy Spirit, thus, "*You are all sons of God, through faith*" (Galatians 3:26, John 3:8; John 1:12, 13). This new people in Christ are made up of both redeemed Israelites and Gentile believers (John 11:51, 52).

### III. The Children of Whoredom

1. The former life and its fruit are seen in Gomer before redemption (1:2).
  - a. The first son of Gomer was *Jezeel* (meaning either "*God sows*" or "*God scatters*" as in sowing, 1:4, 5). Hosea's prophecies (like Isaiah's) contain *wordplays* to show either positive or negative acts of God as connoted by the name (2 Kings 9:1–13; 27, 28).
  - b. The second child, a girl, was named *Lo-ruhamah*, meaning "*not pitied*" or "*unloved*" probably because of Hosea's denial of fatherhood. Hosea's rejection of the child reflects the Lord's rejection of ethnic Israel (1:6). A hint is given in the following verse as to God's future purpose (v. 7). The greater purpose is realized in the reason for Christ's coming—to gather a people for His name, as seen in the third child.
  - c. The third child was named *Lo-Ammi*, meaning "*not a people.*" The covenant privilege God gave to Israel was His presence among them (Leviticus 26:12, 13). Ethnic Israel refused to acknowledge their covenant Lord. Peter cites this passage to show the *Gentiles*, because of Christ, are given mercy, even becoming the people of God (1 Peter 2:10).
2. The new life is a work of the Spirit through the Lord's promised mercy (2:14, 15). "*I will betroth you to me forever. I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love and in mercy. I will betroth you to me in faithfulness. And you shall know the LORD*" (2:19, 20).
  - a. Real Christians know the Lord. The Lord's contended with ethnic Israel's priests (4:1; 6). New covenant believers are priest, knowing and teaching the Lord.
  - b. Real Christians are disciplined by the Lord (5:2–10). Israel's final destiny was declared (9:17).
  - c. Real Christians heed the Lord's pleadings (10:12).