

Hosea 3:1-5

One way we see Christ in the Old Testament is to see that at key historical moments, the Lord enacted dramas that portray what Jesus would come to do.

One of these dramatic gospel portraits is in Hosea Chapter 3.

In chapter 1, Hosea was commanded by God to marry an immoral woman depicting how Israel had broken faith with the Lord by their idolatry

Chapter 2 showed the prophet providing for his adulterous wife, even whilst she kept sinning against him, and then wooing her back.

Summary

Hosea 3:1-5 completes God's gospel drama, as the prophet goes so far as to buy back his wife at auction, picturing the amazing grace of God to his unfaithful people.

1. Renewed Love vs. 1

One of the great themes of Hosea's love story with Gomer is the patient and pursuing grace of God toward his people. Chapter 2 concluded the main part of the story with Hosea wooing his unfaithful wife in the wilderness (**Hos 2:14-23**). Hosea 3 recounts the pivotal turning point in their relationship. This is not Gomer seeking a return to Hosea, it is the Lord who calls Hosea to act in the way that God acts in saving his people (**Hos 3:1**) The unworthiness of Gomer for such love is shown by her continued adultery, the same is true of Israel in her ceaseless idolatry. Nevertheless, Hosea loved Gomer and the Lord loved Israel despite their terrible sin (**Rom 5:8**).

2. Redeeming Love vv. 2-3

As Hosea went to love again his faithless wife, he found her on the auction block as a slave. We are not told how she got there, but it appears she ended up so destitute and disgraced as to be sold, presumably to pay her debts. Sin always leaves us worse off than we were before we started.

Hosea will have to pay a price to reclaim his bride. We do not know precisely the manner in which slaves were sold in ancient Israel, but like in most parts of the ancient world it probably involved humiliation and shame.

Hosea would have to share in Gomer's shame to win her back. Despite the sin that had wounded his heart, he bought her back at a costly price.

Verse 3 records the prophet's message to his slave wife. It was out of love that Hosea had sought his unfaithful wife. So it was to his love that he restored her. Does God love like that? Yes (**John 3:16**).

3. Latter Days' Return vv. 4-5

The message of Hosea 3:1-5 was originally directed to the people of Israel. The challenging marriage of the Hosea and Gomer was intended to represent Israel's relationship with the Lord. Just as Gomer must endure a remedial period in which her priorities were reformed and she was restored from the power of sin, exile would soon engulf the ten northern tribes (**Hos. 3:4**). The captivity of the northern tribes was not simple judgment, but the discipline of a loving God who knew that radical action was needed to separate their hearts from the sources of their sin (**Ezek 37:24; Mal 3:3; cf Heb 12:10; 1 Peter 1:6-7**)

The day would come for Israel when this long process of refinement was complete. Its success would be seen in the people's return to the Lord in true faith. Hearing God's call, the people of Israel would return in faith to "God, and David their king" (**Hos. 3:5**). David had long since died, but his descendant and heir, Jesus Christ, would call them to saving faith in his gospel. To embrace the heir of David would require the Israelites to repent of their pride in going their own way against the Lord. In the day of Christ, there would be a new and united people of God, Jew and Gentile.

When would Israel "come in fear to the Lord and to His goodness in the latter days" (**Hos. 3:5**)? The Bible makes clear that the phrase "the latter days" primarily refers to the period of history inaugurated by the first coming of Christ, in his life, death, resurrection, and ascension into heaven. (**2 Tim. 3:1; Heb 1:2**). Hence, the "latter days" in **Hos 3:5** is the period of history in which we are living when the gospel is going forth to the ends of the earth and sinners are turning from idolatry to seek and worship the true and living God. The effect of the discipline in **Hos 3:4** was to make the exiled Israelites into Gentiles (**Hos 2:23; Rom 9:25-26; 1 Pet 2:10**). Hence every sinner is forsake our idols, along with every other worldly source of reliance that has kept us from God. We are to return to him, seeking the Lord our God, coming in reverence to the goodness of his grace that is offered in the Gospel.

4. Amazing Love

How did God love sinners even before they had turned to him from sin?

Answer: **Rom 5:8** God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Sin has brought us into slavery. "The world bids fame, wealth, prestige, influence, power—all those things that are the world's currency but when all seemed lost, God sent the Lord Jesus Christ, His Son, into the market place to buy us at the cost of His life."