**Hosea Chapters 2 and 3**

**The LORD and Israel, His Spouse**

**Lesson 18**

1. **When did you feel closest to God this week? *Or*, was there a particular verse or idea in our reading of Hosea this week that you found particularly insightful or inspiring?**
2. **The LORD is speaking of and to Israel in these chapters. Read Hosea 2:4-5 below. Keeping in mind the metaphor of a marriage to an adulteress, *what is it that the LORD will do to Israel if she keeps cheating with other gods?***

**Hosea 2:4-5** Accuse your mother, accuse! For she is not my wife,
    and I am not her husband. Let her remove her prostitution from her face,
    her adultery from between her breasts,**5**or I will strip her naked,
    leaving her as on the day of her birth; I will make her like the wilderness,
    make her like an arid land, and let her die of thirst.

1. **Which words in the above verses are words that describe the break of the covenant between God and the Israelites?**
2. **In verses 6-12 what offense is Israel accused of? What does this suggest about the beliefs of the people of Israel at that time?**

**Hosea 2:6-12** I will have no pity on the children, for they are children of prostitution.
**7**Yes, their mother has prostituted herself; she who conceived them has acted shamefully. For she said, “I will go after my lovers, who give me my bread and my water,
    my wool and my flax, my oil and my drink.” **8**Therefore, I will hedge in her way with thorns and erect a wall against her, I so that she cannot find her paths. **9**If she runs after her lovers, she will not overtake them; if she seeks them she will not find them.
Then she will say, “I will go back to my first husband, for I was better off then than now.”

**10**She did not know that it was I who gave her the grain, the wine, and the oil,
I who lavished upon her silver, and gold, which they used for Baal, **11**Therefore I will take back my grain in its time, and my wine in its season; I will snatch away my wool and my flax, which were to cover her nakedness. **12**Now I will lay bare her shame in full view of her lovers, and no one can deliver her out of my hand.

1. **Looking again at verses 6-12 above. What is Israel doing with the blessings from the land?**
2. **Empathy: If you gave a gift to your spouse, and your spouse in turn gave your gifts to a lover, how would you feel?**
3. **More evidence of Israel’s infidelity to the LORD of the covenant in verses 13-15. What else is Israel guilty of?**

**Hosea 2:13-15** I will put an end to all her joy, her festivals, her new moons, her sabbaths—
    all her seasonal feasts **14**I will lay waste her vines and fig trees, of which she said, “These are the fees my lovers have given me”; I will turn them into rank growth and wild animals shall devour them.**15**I will punish her for the days of the Baals, for whom she burnt incense,
When she decked herself out with her rings and her jewelry, and went after her lovers—but me she forgot—oracle of the Lord.

1. **What will the LORD do to win back Israel? Read Hosea 2:16-25 below.**

**Hosea 2:16-25** Therefore, I will allure her now; I will lead her into the wilderness and speak persuasively to her. **17**Then I will give her the vineyards she had, and the valley of Achor as a door of hope. There she will respond as in the days of her youth, as on the day when she came up from the land of Egypt.

**18**On that day—oracle of the Lord—You shall call me “My husband,” and you shall never again call me “My baal.”
**19**I will remove from her mouth the names of the Baals; they shall no longer be mentioned by their name.

**20**I will make a covenant for them on that day, with the wild animals, With the birds of the air,
  and with the things that crawl on the ground. Bow and sword and warfare I will destroy from the land, and I will give them rest in safety.**21**I will betroth you to me forever: I will betroth you to me with justice and with judgment, with loyalty and with compassion;**22**I will betroth you to me with fidelity, and you shall know the Lord.
**23**On that day I will respond—oracle of the Lord—I will respond to the heavens, and they will respond to the earth; **24**The earth will respond to the grain, and wine, and oil, and these will respond to Jezreel.

**25**I will sow her for myself in the land, and I will have pity on Not-Pitied.
 I will say to Not-My-People, “You are my people,” and he will say, “My God!”

1. **What does this tell us about the mercy of God?**
2. **Chapter 3 looks to the end times or the “last days.” This prophecy was written approximately 300 years after David. What is the meaning of verse 3:5 when it says the Israelites would seek David? Check your footnotes for help. See Hosea 3:3-5 below.**

**Hosea 3:3-5** “You will wait for me for many days;
    you will not prostitute yourself
Or belong to any man;
    I in turn will wait for you.”
**4**For the Israelites will remain many days
    without king or prince,
Without sacrifice or sacred pillar,
    without ephod or household gods.
**5**Afterward the Israelites will turn back
    and seek the Lord, their God,
    and David, their king;
They will come trembling to the Lord
    and to his bounty, in the last days.