

The Parable Of Unrelenting Grace – Part 2 (Hosea 1:10-3:5 August 1, 2021)

HOSEA: The Triumph of Grace



Over the years, I have been in a few marriage counselling sessions where the wife said something like this:

Just letting you know – I trust you and don't think you would ever do this – **but** ... – if you ever commit adultery – I just don't know if I could get past it – and I really don't know how I would react ... just letting you know.

I imagine a few female heads are nodding.

Mind you – as a man – I can also say – I don't know any Christian husband who could ever countenance sharing his wife with another man.

Infidelity, adultery – there is no greater violation of the marriage covenant. Trust is damaged, intimacy destroyed and relationships ruined.

However, grace and forgiveness are powerful.

I have seen very hurt husbands and very betrayed wives say – it is so hard – but I will forgive you and then over time trust has reformed.

However, violate that trust again – violate that trust multiple times – and it is a much more difficult situation.

When that happens, what you often hear is – I'm sorry – I just can't keep doing this – I just can't be your wife, I just can't be your husband.

Now, what if the injured party is no mere man or woman but a holy God – One who is too pure to even look upon evil – a jealous God who would never share the love of His people with any other?

Now we come to the heart of the book of Hosea.

How can a holy God be reconciled to an adulterous people?

How can God do what seems impossible?

The Lord has a plan and He tells us His plan in a parable – an enacted parable.

The Lord calls Hosea to be His prophet – but in what has to be one of the most unexpected calls to ministry – God says:

Go and marry a whore and have children of whoredom.

It is not that God is cruel. It is not that He has it in for Hosea.

He wants to provide a tangible way for Israel and you and I to feel the pain, the betrayal, the treachery involved when we promise faithfulness to God but stray in our affection and allegiance – and as we will find in this morning's passage – God also wants to show us that there is actually hope to restore the relationship.

Hosea is a book that has one overarching message:



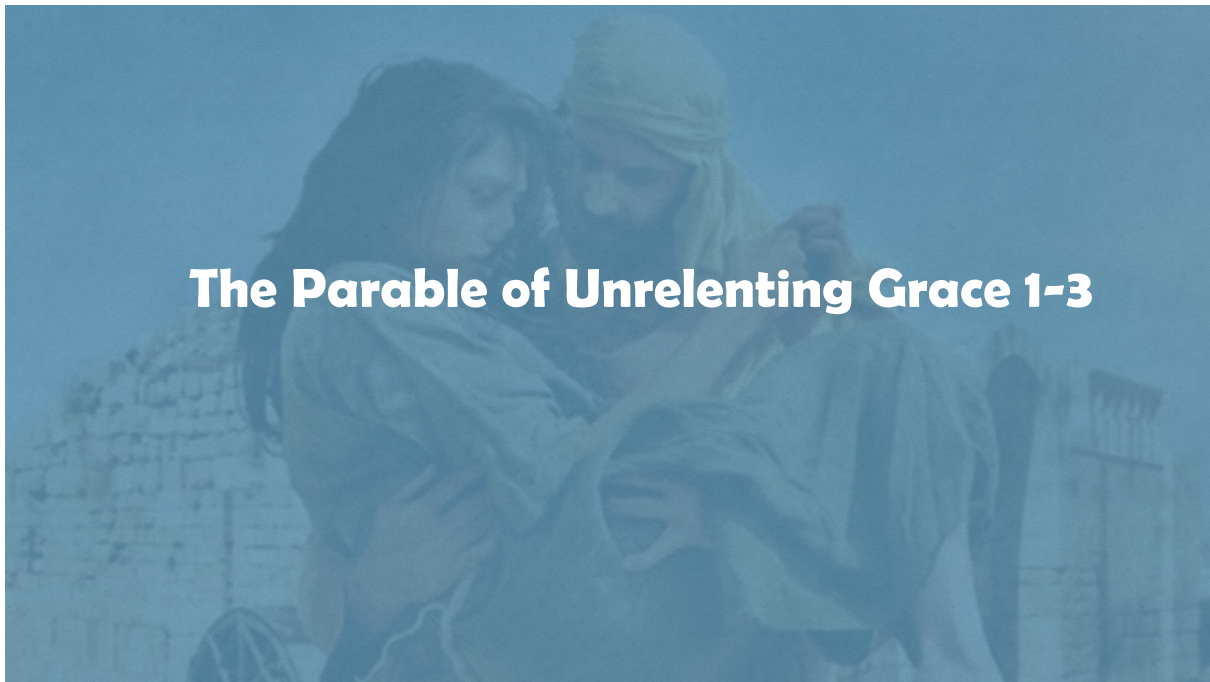
God's grace is greater than my sin.

God's grace is – absolutely – greater than my sin.

Every one of us is a Gomer – undeserving of God's grace, forgiveness and love.

But God's grace is greater.

The book of Hosea begins in chapters 1-3 with:



The Parable of Unrelenting Grace.

Hosea is called to live out this parable in his marriage and family life.

He is called to marry a woman who is unfaithful to the vow of fidelity she made.

She whores around and falls pregnant to other men.

But lying behind this picture of darkness there is a picture of incredible hope.

Last week we saw that this parable gives: **The Gospel in three persons:**

The Gospel in three persons:

The Betrayed Husband – a holy God
The Promiscuous Wife – a sinful people



The **first** person is the betrayed husband. He represents our holy God.

Someone who never fails us or lets us down. Someone who chose us despite our sin and failures. Someone we owe our complete allegiance and fidelity to.

God wants us to feel the horror of our sin – to see our spiritual adultery through His eyes.

Now, I do need to touch on a little theology. While God has emotions – anger, compassion, grief, jealousy, love, joy – He has perfect emotions.

His emotions do not cause Him to change or react – but they are nonetheless real.

Theologians call the truth that God's emotions do not change Him the **impassibility** of God.

But, and this is the crucial point – God **does** have divine emotions. He **is** grieved by our sin.

God is *not* some unfeeling robot – He **hates** our sin and our spiritual adultery.

And this enacted parable is meant to give us a taste, an imperfect taste of what God experiences.

We could never feel God's perfect grief at our sin. But by picturing our sin as the worst kind of human betrayal – we understand something of the pain our sin causes God.

The **second** person is the promiscuous wife. She represents unfaithful Israel. But, she is also in another sense representative of us all.

It is important for us to understand that this is not just a message for Israel – it is a message for all fallen humanity. In a very real sense we are all Gomers. We have all failed to be faithful to our Creator.

Last week we saw how many opportunities God has given His people.

God chose Adam and literally gave him the world.

Adam was unfaithful.

Justice said – destroy Adam and this fallen cosmos.

God said – no. I will love again.

He chose to love a small nation – a nation dallying with the gods of the world – a nation enslaved in Egypt.

He rescued them – made them His and promised them a land of milk and honey. Promised priests and kings.

And Israel covenanted – You are our God – we will have no other gods before You.

Yet, by the time Moses walked down from Mount Sinai – they had violated this promise – they were prostituting themselves with the golden calf.

But God once again chose grace.

He sent prophets. He sent warning after warning.

He said – repent – return to Me and I will forgive you.

After the nation was divided – Jehu said – I will be faithful. He was not. He founded a dynasty of profound evil.

God warned the northern kingdom Israel – do not walk in the ways of evil – they failed to listen and were destroyed.

The southern kingdom – Judah – saw all of this. They said – we will not turn to the nations and gods of the nations. We will learn from Israel's error.

But, as Hosea's prophecy predicted – they too became unfaithful. And God had no choice but to act. His holiness meant He was forced to destroy the final part of the kingdom.

Not one person in Israel or Judah could ever say – we were not warned – this came out of the blue – we don't deserve this.

In the same way each of us have failed and failed again. God gave us everything – life – this world – families – and we betrayed Him.

God is the betrayed husband and we are Gomer.

God has portrayed this truth in these stark, brutal terms because our tendency is to say – I'm no Gomer – no adulterer. My sin is that that bad.

Yes it is. The best of us are spiritual adulterers and nothing less.

Hosea 1:9 ends with some of the saddest and most tragic words in Scripture. God saying to the nation:

You are not My people and I will not be your God.

That is justice. That is what happens when we sin against a holy God.

And this is every last one of us.

In the words of Psalm 14:2–3:

The LORD looks down from heaven on the human race to see if there is one who is wise, one who seeks God. All have turned away; all alike have become corrupt. There is no one who does good, not even one.

Justice says destroy every last rebellious man, woman and child.

Justice says there should be no verse 10 of Hosea 1.

But here is where grace comes in.

The great question though is **how**?

How can a holy God ever be reconciled to rebellious, unfaithful Gomers?

The answer comes in the **third** person we meet.

The Gospel in three persons:

The Betrayed Husband – a holy God
The Promiscuous Wife – a sinful people
The Redeeming King



The Redeeming King

He is introduced in verse 11 – the single ruler – then in chapter 3 we are told He is a King like David.

And it is in this figure – who Christians know to be Jesus Christ – that we find the gospel.

What we are going to find this morning is this:



**The only hope for Gomers
is Christ**

The only hope for Gomers is Christ.

The only hope for Gomers is Christ.

Who is a Gomer? Every one of us. Every descendant of Adam.

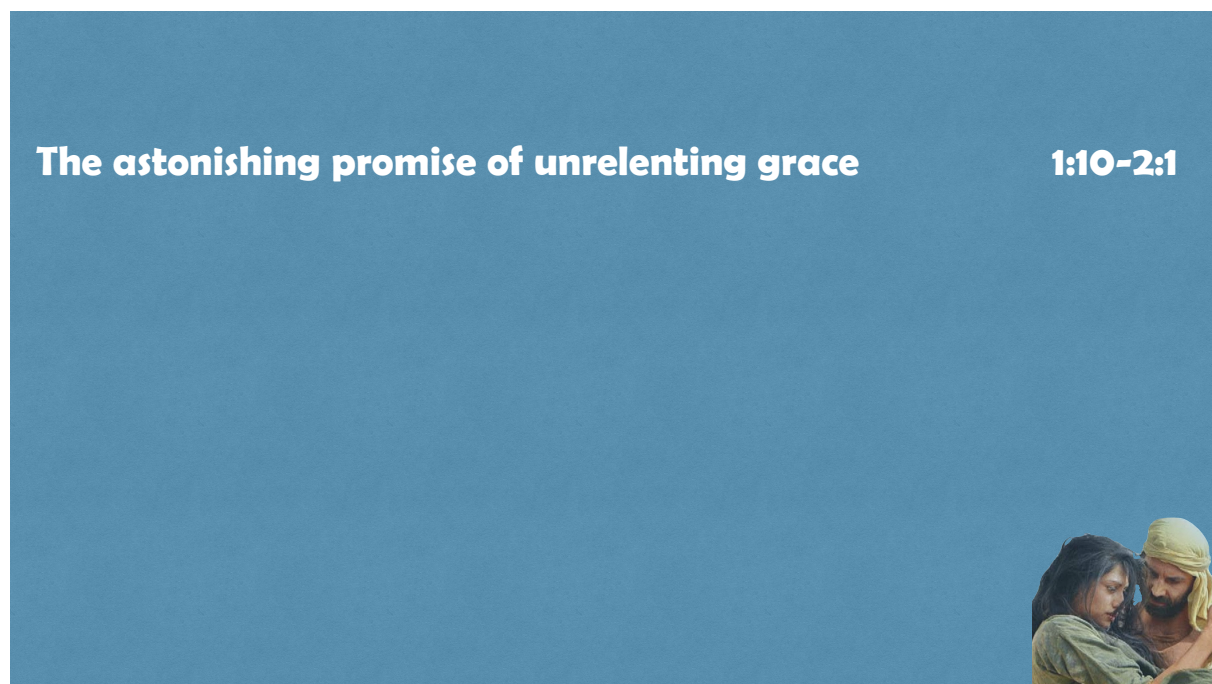
We are born unfaithful, depraved sinners. We deserve nothing but judgment.

However, there is hope – one hope – our only hope – Christ.

Justice says there is no hope for Gomers.

But grace says – in Christ there is hope. No sin is beyond forgiveness.

We find this in our passage which begins with:



The astonishing promise of unrelenting grace

1:10-2:1

Last week we saw that Israel thoroughly deserved a divorce and judgment.

Nothing could be clearer.

But what she gets is grace.

Verse 10:

Yet the number of the Israelites will be like the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or counted.

This just seems so out of context. It seems to undo everything God says in verses 2-9.

God has just said – you are not My people – I have no one left who is mine.

Now He says – the number of Israelites – My people – will be like the sand of the sea.

What is going on?

In verse 9 – the voice you hear is justice.

In verse 10 – the voice you hear speaking is that of grace.

God is going to do the impossible.

Notice what this verse alludes to.

After Abraham had been willing to obey God – to the point of killing his son Isaac – God made this incredible promise in Genesis 22:17:

I will indeed bless you and make your offspring as numerous as the stars of the sky and the sand on the seashore.

The question is this. Is this a conditional or unconditional promise?

A conditional promise would be – **if** you and your descendants are faithful – **then** and only then will I turn you into a great nation who are My people.

But the astonishing part is that this is actually an **unconditional** promise.

God says – I will do it – I will be faithful to fulfil this promise regardless of how your descendants act.

This promise will be fulfilled through My faithfulness – not through yours.

Here is the point – God promised a seed – sons and daughters as part of His covenant with Abraham and not even the sin of the people could void this promise of God.

This prophecy says that though the nation will be reduced to nothing – it will become a multitude like the sand on the seashore.

Where Israel failed – God would triumph.

In verse 10, God is reminding us – **His grace is greater than our sin.**

Verses 10 and 11:

And in the place where they were told: You are not my people, they will be called: Sons of the living God. And the Judeans and the Israelites will be gathered together.

This is a prophecy of the final healing – the coming reconciliation.

God **will** be reconciled with His people.

Judah and Israel **will** be reconciled.

All divisions will be healed.

Notice what God says – those who became *not My people* will become ... we might expect the Lord to say – they will once again be ... My people. But He says – they will be **My sons** – *sons of the living God*.

This is family language – adoption language. We will not just be a people under a King – we will be sons – precious to the Almighty.

And here is how this plays out. Our gracious God will *not* destroy every last Jew. He is going to preserve a remnant. From that remnant – One will come.

And from the sacrifice of that One – this promise of sonship will be extended to every single nation.

Abraham was told the covenant would bless all the peoples on earth.

The sand on the seashore will come from every nation – not just from Jews.

In Romans 9:25 and 26 Paul quotes these very verses. He writes – as Hosea promised — God’s saving love will go beyond Judah and Israel to include Gentiles. All nations will be blessed.

Don’t overlook how incredible this is. Fulfilling this promise is no small thing.

If you are married – you stood at the altar and said – I vow – for better for worse – till death do us part.

In your mind the worse would have been things like – illness, financial stress, death. Adultery and betrayal would have been possibilities – but not ones we really thought would happen.

But God *knew* – He *knew* those who would be His people would betray Him. It is not that spiritual adultery was a possibility – it was a certainty.

Yet ... He covenanted to save this rebellious people anyway.

Not one of us deserves it – we deserve judgment.

But, hope for Gomers is found in the covenant given to Abraham.

Verse 11:

They will appoint for themselves a single ruler and go up from the land. For the day of Jezreel will be great.

This one ruler is alluded to in so many places in the Old Testament:

- The one who will crush Satan's head
- The seed of Abraham
- The coming priest who will make the final sacrifice
- The coming King who will build a house, a kingdom that will never fail

These are shadowy allusions – but they all point to One who is coming.

We who live on the other side of His coming know that this One is Christ.

But even today – His work or reconciliation is not finished. But when it is finished, the day of Jezreel will be great.

Jezreel – means God scatters. The battle in Jezreel began the scattering.

In this one ruler the reversal – the gathering of God's true people – His sons and daughters – is shown to be truly great.

Chapter 2 verse 1:

Call your brothers: My People and your sisters: Compassion.

The day **will** come when the reconciliation will be complete.

Not My people will become – My people.

No compassion will become – Compassion.

Our sin is great – but it cannot derail the grace of God or the plan of God.

God made a promise to Abraham and God keeps His word.

This is simply astonishing. In light of our sin that God would choose love us.

At this point, there is a sense where this prophecy could jump to chapter 3 verse 5:

Afterward, the people of Israel will return and seek the LORD their God and David their king. They will come with awe to the LORD and to his goodness in the last days.

Israel failed – God won't fail.

But the plan can't jump to the end.

Imagine the last days of Judah. Babylon is tearing the city and the Temple to pieces.

The people of the land – from the least to the greatest are being slaughtered.

No doubt every last person is thinking – our sin did this – we should have listened.

Every last person would be crying out – God – we should have listened – we repent – save us.

So, what if the skies split open and the angels of God appeared and saved Judah at that time?

There are a couple of huge issues:

- The promise to save the nations would never have been fulfilled.
- And most important of all – the issue of sin – how sinners could be reconciled to a holy God would not have been addressed.

But God has a plan to fulfil his promise to Abraham and address these issues.

So, He outlines His plan. First comes:

The astonishing promise of unrelenting grace **1:10-2:1**

The temporary withdrawal of God's compassion **2:2-13**



The temporary withdrawal of God's compassion **2:2-13**

There is an astounding word here – **temporary**.

If I were God – and thank goodness for us all I am not – our betrayal and spiritual adultery would make me say – you are not My people – I withdraw my love and compassion – **forever**.

In these verses, we are meant to hear and feel the grief, the horror of Israel's sin.

God is betrayed by His people and it leads to a temporary time where God withdraws His love from Israel.

Verse 2:

Rebuke your mother; rebuke her. For she is not my wife and I am not her husband.

Israel is not God's wife.

Look at verses 2-4. Promiscuity, adultery – Israel loved other gods before the Lord.

God feels this betrayal.

A holy God must respond – He exposes nakedness. Her sin is shown for what it is and – the consequences of her sin will be like dying of thirst in a desert.

Verse 5:

Yes, their mother is promiscuous; she conceived them and acted shamefully. For she thought, "I will follow my lovers, the men who give me my food and water, my wool and flax, my oil and drink."

Israel was an agrarian society. They literally lived and died by whether there was rain and a good crop.

The appeal of the Baals and the gods of Canaan was that they claimed to control the rains and the crops.

And here is the kicker – it is not just rain and wheat they offered – there is sex too.

At the temples to Baal there were ritual prostitutes. You paid money – had relations with them – then Baal was pleased to watch this display and he granted fertility to the land.

So, the Jews said – look I am just doing my bit to help the land.

Normally, I would never cheat on my wife or my husband – I would never cheat on God ... without good reason.

I still love my spouse, I still love God – it is just the land needs rain – so visiting the temples of Baal is a noble thing. Can't you see that?

Really?

Tell me a husband who would accept it if he uncovered his wife's adultery and she said – look I slept with my boss to get a promotion. I did it for the family. What are you upset about?

God is a jealous God.

Our society has its gods. Gods of astrology, Lotto, sport, playboy and Wall Street.

Christians are not immune to these gods. And all too often we rationalize the dalliance.

If I win Lotto – I can help the church.

It is just a bit of soft porn – no one is harmed – my marriage is preserved.

No! It is spiritual adultery. And God hates it.

In verses 6 and 7, God says He will frustrate them. He will punish them.

There will be no rains and crops. Her way to prosperity and happiness will be lined with thorns and walls.

There will be no satisfaction from these gods.

There are consequences to sin.

Unfaithfulness ruins marriages and families.

Greed leads to despair.

Here Israel's sin led to a withdrawal of God's compassion.

The end of verse 7:

Then she will think, "I will go back to my former husband, for then it was better for me than now."

Sin never leads to lasting satisfaction. Having God's love withdrawn was terrible.

God brought His people to a land of milk and honey. They wanted more. The result of chasing the Baals left a bitter taste and they said – Oh no – we were better off worshipping the Lord and being faithful to Him.

In Psalm 137 – the people found themselves in exile in Babylon and wept. God we want you to take us back.

This is the man who commits adultery – loses his wife, loses the respect of his children, is scorned by friends and family – and wakes up one day saying – I was a fool I had the world and lost it.

This is the prodigal son who wastes his father's inheritance and ends up eating the pods meant for pigs.

This is the young person who grows up in a church – and leaves it for the world – is used by the world, abandoned by lovers and says – I was a fool.

Sin might give a short taste of pleasure, but it soon turns to dust.

Verses 8-13:

She does not recognize that it is I who gave her the grain, the new wine, and the fresh oil. I lavished silver and gold on her, which they used for Baal. Therefore, I will take back my grain in its time and my new wine in its season; I will take away my wool and linen, which were to cover her nakedness. Now I will expose her shame in the sight of her lovers, and no one will rescue her from my power. I will put an end to all her celebrations: her feasts, New Moons, and Sabbaths— all her festivals. I will devastate her vines and fig trees. She thinks that these are her wages that her lovers have given her. I will turn them into a thicket, and the wild animals will eat them. And I will punish her for the days of the Baals, to which she burned incense. She put on her rings and her jewelry and followed her lovers, but she forgot me. This is the LORD's declaration.

It took losing everything for Israel to realise – every good thing we had came from God.

Same for. Us. Our life, our next breath, our next meal – our families, our jobs, our country, our church.

Israel was nothing – a few slaves in Egypt.

God made them into a great kingdom.

In the days of David, the kingdom never lost a battle.

In the days of Solomon, the kingdom was awash with gold and silver. The wealth of the kingdom blew the mind of the Queen of Sheba.

Every grain of wheat, every grape, every olive, every ounce of gold or silver was a gift from God to His people.

But they took those gifts and used them to impress the Baals.

This is a wife taking the jewellery her husband gave her to pay for a male prostitute.

God says – you think I will just ignore that affront to My name, to My glory?

I will take it back. I will take back the wool and linen she wears – I will strip her naked.

I will send famine, pestilence and sword.

And no Baal, no god of the land will help her.

The celebrations will end. She thought this bounty came from her lovers – it came from Me.

And she will reap the whirlwind. The judgment that is coming upon Israel is thoroughly deserved.

When you read the prophets you find the arrogance of Israel.

They found every reason to say why God would not punish them for their sin.

As bad as we are – the nations are worse – God won't have anyone.

In Ezekiel they said – we have the Temple – no way will God punish us because the Temple would be harmed.

And of course – they cried – we are your children – we are the recipients of your love and your covenant – you won't punish us.

The result is that they didn't think they really had to repent. They could have the Baals and God.

And then God withdrew His love.

The Baals were not so hot.

Life was not so good – they cried – can we have you back?

Our society is complacent. The gods of technology and wealth have replaced the Lord.

We worship Apple and Amazon not the Lord Almighty.

We think we have no need for God.

But, when God withdraws His love and hands us over to our sin it is never pleasant.

So many of the problems in our society are due to God handing us over.

The divisions, the discord, the over-confidence in technology to save us.

It is a terrible place to be.

Israel found that out the hard way.

This withdrawal of compassion makes what comes next such a shock.

This was not the end. Now we have a stunning picture of:

The astonishing promise of unrelenting grace

1:10-2:1

The temporary withdrawal of God's compassion

2:2-13

The final restoration of God's compassion

2:14-23



The final restoration of God's compassion 2:14-23

Now we jump to the end of the story. What God will do in the last act.

Here, the tone shifts markedly.

In these verses – God speaks of what He will do **on that day** – the final day.

God is not done with His people – He will love them again.

This is why I had to add the astonishing word – *temporary* – to describe verses 2-13.

Paul picks up on this. In Romans 11 he is speaking about God's dealings with Israel.

He says this in Romans 11:25–26:

A partial hardening has come upon Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And in this way all Israel will be saved.

There will be a *temporary* time of rejection – a hardening.

During this time – there will be opportunity for Gentiles to be grafted in.

Then God will love Israel again and all Israel will be saved.

This final time of restoration is what God speaks of in these verses.

Notice the change.

Verse 13 – I will punish her for the days of the Baals – becomes verse 14:

Therefore, I am going to persuade her, lead her to the wilderness, and speak tenderly to her.

God chooses to love His people again.

But this time it will stick – not because we get it right – but because of what God does.

God goes back to the beginning – and He takes the lead.

In the wilderness – Israel first rebelled and grumbled.

In the Valley of Achor – Achan sinned on behalf of the people.

These places of rebellion are removed. God speaks tenderly to His people again – but this time the result is different.

God makes Israel faithful and righteous and everything He removed from her – such as the vineyards – He restores.

Israel will be a bride longing to follow a husband – but this time she will be faithful.

Verses 16 and 17:

In that day— this is the LORD's declaration— you will call me, "My husband," and no longer call me, "My Baal." For I will remove the names of the Baals from her mouth; they will no longer be remembered by their names.

Baal meant lord.

God says – I will be more than a lord – I will be a husband. And those other Baals – the false lords will be banished.

One husband – Me!

Verse 18:

On that day I will make a covenant for them with the wild animals, the birds of the sky, and the creatures that crawl on the ground. I will shatter bow, sword, and weapons of war in the land and will enable the people to rest securely.

God's covenant will undo the fall.

The dominion over the creation that was lost at the fall is restored.

War and discord is destroyed leaving only peace.

Verses 19 and 20:

I will take you to be my wife forever. I will take you to be my wife in righteousness, justice, love, and compassion. I will take you to be my wife in faithfulness, and you will know the LORD.

This is incredible.

The whore will become righteous – washed clean.

The unfaithful adulterer will become faithful – never to stray again.

We will be joined to God in holiness forever.

In verses 21 and 22 God promises a restoration of all He removed – the blessings and fruitfulness.

God will give His people what the Baals never could.

God will undo the curse of Jezreel and gather His people in the final place of promise.

Verse 23:

I will sow her in the land for myself, and I will have compassion on Lo-ruhamah;
I will say to Lo-ammi: You are my people, and he will say, “You are my God.”

God will restore His compassion and they will be His people.

These are pictures of heaven. The new Eden. Fruitfulness, no discord, only peace – God’s people united with Him as a holy, pure bride.

This is an amazing picture, yet the question remains – how can God do this?

Everything we have seen reinforces the fact that God’s people are Gomers – sinners.

A holy God can’t just choose to overlook sin. So how can this happen?

How does not My wife verse 2 become – My wife forever verse 19?

How does I will punish verse 13 become – I will bless verse 22?

Glad you asked.

God has a plan to achieve the impossible. And in our final section we find that plan centres around:

The astonishing promise of unrelenting grace

1:10-2:1

The temporary withdrawal of God's compassion

2:2-13

The final restoration of God's compassion

2:14-23

The incomprehensible cost of Christ's sacrifice

3:1-5



The incomprehensible cost of Christ's sacrifice

3:1-5

Once again, the task of living out what this plan looks like falls to Hosea.

Hosea 3:1–2:

Then the LORD said to me, “Go again; show love to a woman who is loved by another man and is an adulteress, just as the LORD loves the Israelites though they turn to other gods and love raisin cakes.”

Almost certainly this woman here is Gomer. But notice that she is not called his wife – she left and betrayed him. She is just **a woman** – loved by another man – she gave herself and became an adulteress.

This is clearly years after God first called Hosea – at least three children's worth of years.

Remember Hosea's first call. God commanded him – Go and marry a whore and have children of whoredom.

Last week we saw that every fibre of his being would have said – no way – find another sap.

But you can't say no to God.

However, I suspect Hosea may have reasoned like this – OK – but I only have to put up with this shame for so long.

He may well have put his hope in Deuteronomy 24:1:

If a man marries a woman, but she becomes displeasing to him because he finds something indecent about her, he may write her a divorce certificate, hand it to her, and send her away from his house.

Anything indecent! Some rabbis said that meant anything as minor as burning a husband's dinner. But every rabbi said adultery crossed this line.

I suspect Hosea thought – as soon as she messes up – certificate of divorce – out – so long Gomer – much happier Hosea.

It seems he didn't have to do this – she just up and took off with other lovers.

Good riddance. He would be happy to never see her again.

But now years later God appears.

I am certain Hosea would have wondered – Oh no! What now?

If he thought the first task was tough – this was even tougher.

God says – even after she has been so unfaithful – betrayed you – humiliated you – you are to go and love her **again** – even though it costs you everything.

I can't even begin to fathom how hard this would be.

But as hard as it was for Hosea – it was harder for God.

God was going to love Israel again – even though they had turned to other gods and loved raisin cakes.

Raisin cakes, what's the deal with the raisin cakes?

Raisin cakes were made of compressed, dried grapes. They are no death by triple chocolate cake.

But the significance is that they were involved in the worship of Baal – you ate them in Baal's temples.

Israel swapped a relationship with the true God for stone idols and raisin cakes – Esau giving up his birthright for red stew made a far better deal.

But incredibly, God chose to love her again.

Verse 2:

So I bought her for fifteen shekels of silver and nine bushels of barley.

God said – Hosea – go love Gomer again – but first you have to buy her back.

You see, it is not that Gomer is knocking on Hosea's door – forgive me – I was such a fool – please have me back.

Nor is it even that Hosea had to suck up his pride – walk down to Gomer's new house, knock and say – I want you to come home.

No! He had to go and buy her.

In fact – he has to buy her *again* – because he would have paid a bride price – now he has to pay again.

Clearly Gomer has fallen on hard times. She gave the most precious thing she had – her intimacy to lovers – who abandoned her.

Most likely she was forced to sell herself into slavery – or sell herself into temple prostitution.

Now she has to be bought out of this.

Exodus 21:32 the price for a female slave is thirty shekels of silver.

But Gomer only cost fifteen shekels of silver and nine bushels of barley.

A couple of points. Most likely this combined price is somewhat less than thirty shekels of silver. It seems Gomer was so degraded, so tarnished – that she wasn't even worth full price. She was scratch and dent sale goods.

No one wanted her – she was too soiled to command a decent price.

Yet the fact that Hosea paid in silver and barley suggests he had to scrape the price together. It cost him all he had to redeem her.

Consider what God asks of him. Go to this woman who betrayed you and humiliated you – multiple times – this soiled degraded sorry excuse for a woman and you give everything you have to redeem her – and then you choose to love her again.

How hard is that?

But, that is what God did for us.

This kind of love is a choice. Nothing in Hosea would feel love toward Gomer.

Verse 3:

I said to her, "You are to live with me many days. You must not be promiscuous or belong to any man, and I will act the same way toward you."

The terms used here are not husband and wife – marital intimacy words.

This indicates there would be a period of time where the full reconciliation as man and wife has not occurred.

Hosea did this because it pictures what God will do with Israel. Verse 4:

For the Israelites must live many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred pillar, and without ephod or household idols.

All of these things kings, sacrifices, sacred pillars, idols – were involved in false worship.

During this time, Israel must not prostitute herself.

God is not yet ready to restore full relations – **yet**. There will be a temporary withdrawing of compassion.

But in the fulness of time – verse 5:

Afterward, the people of Israel will return and seek the LORD their God and David their king. They will come with awe to the LORD and to his goodness in the last days.

This verse pictures the final restoration.

But notice this mention of David.

It is only as the Bible unfolds that the threads come together.

The Gospel in three persons:

The Betrayed Husband – a holy God

The Promiscuous Wife – a sinful people

The Redeeming King – a crucified Saviour



This third person – the redeeming king – is none other than Christ – our crucified Saviour.

It cost Hosea everything to ransom the worthless Gomer.

It cost God everything to ransom us – it cost Him the death of the most precious thing – His Son.

And we were no prize – we were Gomer.

We were in slavery to sin. We were headed to hell. We were soiled damaged goods.

But God bought us – with the blood of Christ – everything He had.

And it is in the death of Christ that the mystery of how Gomers – sinners – can be reconciled to God is solved.

God washes our sin in the blood of Christ.

God makes us spotless by giving us the righteousness of Christ.

God chooses to love us again – because He hides us in the One He loves – Christ.

We are made perfectly clean and righteous in Christ.

As near impossible as it would be for Hosea to love Gomer again – it is actually impossible for God to love us.

A holy God can't simply forgive us. He can't just ignore our sin. His holiness demands justice.

But the cross makes the impossible – possible. His love pays the penalty His holiness demands – in full.

Christ is the missing ingredient. He is how God can be reconciled to us.

But it cost Him everything.

In this parable we have a picture of the gospel.

We are:



Born a Gomer

Born again Gomer

Reborn Gomerless

Born a Gomer

We are sinners by nature – spiritual adulterers. We are the soiled, degraded unfaithful spouse.

Then through the love and sacrifice of Christ who bought us we become a:

Born again Gomer

We receive the righteousness of Christ – positionally.

But we still have to fight the old Gomer within.

That is us today.

But one day Christ our King will return and then we will be:

Reborn Gomerless

Sinless, righteous, a faithful bride to Christ.

In the days of Israel a serial adulteress, a temple prostitute, a woman like Gomer was considered worse than a murderer. Despised and totally without hope.

But Hosea gave everything to love her again and make her his.

This parable says no one – absolutely no one is beyond the love of God in Christ.

This was Israel's only hope.

This is our only hope.

This is the gospel – the good news – the greatest news ever heard.

It is grace that is greater than all our sin.

The Parable Of Unrelenting Grace – Part 2 (Hosea 1:10-3:5 August 1, 2021)

Main Point: The only hope for Gomers is Christ.

General Questions:

1. What was that promise that God made to Abraham?
2. Was this promise conditional or unconditional? Why? Does it matter?
3. When Judah finally repented after Babylon attacked – why could God not just save them and have heaven begin then?
4. Why did were Gentiles important to the plan?
5. Why was the issue of sin so hard to deal with?
6. Why did Israel find the Baals so attractive?
7. What was it like when God withdrew His compassion?
8. Why are verses 14-23 of chapter 2 yet to come?
9. Why does Israel finally become faithful and pure?
10. Why is Hosea redeeming Gomer such a good picture of Christ?
11. How would you describe us (Christians) today? Gomers, Gomers who are positionally holy, former Gomers, other?
12. What will we be in eternity?

Application Questions:

1. How can you use this enacted parable in evangelism?
2. What does this teach us about forgiveness and perseverance and choosing to love in marriage?
3. How does this help you to understand the gospel and the glory of the cross?