

Hosea – Class Two

God's Desire for an Intimate Relationship

The book of Hosea is a book of love. In fact, the whole bible is a book of love. Some people may read it as a book of condemnation; others may read it as a book of doctrines. But God wrote it from His heart, each word bearing within it a secret desire from within the bosom of God for us to know Him in a certain way.

One of God's greatest charges against Israel in the book of Hosea is that they did not know Him, *"There is no faithfulness or kindness or knowledge of God in the land" (Hos. 4:1 NASB)*. *"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being My priest" (Hos. 4:6 NASB)*. The Hebrew word used for "know" in these verses is the same word used throughout the Old Testament for marital relations, *"Now the man had relations with his wife Eve, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain" (Gen. 4:1 NASB)*. Hosea, in his illustration of God as husband and Israel as wife, desires for Israel to know God to the same level of intimacy that a wife knows her husband. This is not a theological knowledge of the character attributes of God, rather it is a personal relationship knowledge that has experienced Who God is through the knowing of union, *"And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God (Eph 3:19)*.

From before the foundation of the world the Lamb was slain, not for sin (because sin had not occurred) but for the bringing forth of a bride (Rev. 13:8). Even as Eve came forth from the side of Adam, so is the church meant to find her origin in Christ Himself. She is defined as bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh in the book of Ephesians (5:30). Many think that God's dealing with mankind began when He had to deal with our sins, but God's heart began to conceive of this plan to bring us into union with Christ from before sin and foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4, 9-11). Our sins and failures do not change the desire of God's heart towards us. His plan is not to simply deal with sin but to bring forth a fruitful Bride. In Hosea's time Israel was in dark days of idolatry and spiritual adultery, and yet God's heart and purpose towards her had not changed. Hosea came to Israel as a symbol of God's heart and purpose for His people. Before God had Hosea speak a word of prophesy, He had him marry a harlot. God did not have Hosea throw stones of condemnation at her; rather Hosea probably had a lot of stones thrown at him for being a prophet and marrying a woman of whoredoms. Even so, Jesus was mocked, scorned and crucified because He Who knew know sin became sin when He joined to us (II Cor. 5:21).

It can be easy to judge Gomer (Hosea's wife) as much worse than any of us, but the bible tells us that we were all "dead in sins" before Jesus saved us, *"But God, Who is rich in mercy, for His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath made us alive together with Christ (by grace ye are saved) (Eph. 2:4-5).* Romans 3:10 tells us that is none righteous, no... not one! We all need this profound grace that God has extended to us through HIS GREAT LOVE with which HE LOVED US unto His own death. These words are just common scripture until we SEE HIS HEART and melt. Paul declares profound truth in Galatians 2:20 when he shares that he is crucified with Christ and that Christ lives in him, but at the end of that verse Paul also tenderly refers to the Source of all this as Him "Who loved me and gave Himself for me". Sometimes we hear deep truths in verses while missing the deeper heart from whence that truth came. Paul knew to his depths what he was apart from Christ (Eph. 3:8), and yet received God's love that brought him into union with Christ. I believe that the harlot Hosea married (Gomer) is a picture of someone who receives the love extended to her and enters into God's heart and purpose for her. Just as Hosea is a sign to God's people of Christ crucified, so is Gomer also a sign of Israel entering into union with Christ Crucified, fulfilling their destiny.

"Gomer"

Gomer's name is translated "completion". I believe this completion refers to God's plan being consummated in His church unto the bringing forth of Christ. This completion also refers to Christ having a Bride that functions as His Body, bearing His Life. Gomer's mother is Diblaim, and her name is translated "double layers of grape cake". This might be like calling someone "double layers of chocolate cake", referring to their propensity to indulge their flesh. The nation of Israel is referred to as "your mother" throughout the book of Hosea (2:2, 2:5, 4:5). At this time in history Israel was largely given over to indulging their flesh, living for self-gratification. Gomer was the fruit of a self-absorbed nation that had long forgotten her God and was engorged with the fruit of selfish living. Although she was a harlot when Hosea married her, the scriptures bear evidence that she left her old identity and bore fruit from her union with Hosea; *"So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim; which conceived, and bare him a son" (Hos 1:3).* Therefore Gomer shows us that through union with Christ (our Husband) we can leave our old identity and bring forth fruit unto God (Roms. 7:4). Hosea's name is translated "Salvation" and shows forth a type of Christ saving us from our old life through bringing us into union with Himself in His death and resurrection. In her natural birth Gomer would be destined to keep living for self and departing from the one true God. Gomer was a harlot when Hosea got her... but HE became her new ORIGIN of life... her new Beginning... her new her. LOVE saved her... specifically GOD'S LOVE expressed through Hosea. A love that gave

himself to gain her (*Gal.2:20*). Hosea “took unto himself a wife of whoredoms” (*Hosea 1:2*), but once in union with Hosea Gomer had every possibility to conform to him and leave her old identity behind. The supreme action that came to Israel in her darkest hour of apostasy was a pure manifestation of God’s love through Hosea. We are saved by marriage... more specifically, union with the Lamb of God Who loved us and gave Himself for us and will eventually live through us (*Rev. 21:9*).

Gomer represents the remnant that will “marry” the Crucified; (the True God... Jezreel, the Sown God... the Crucified Christ.) She finds God’s true image in the manner in which Hosea loves and gathers her into Himself. She sees in his eyes and actions the death that he bears to bring her in to oneness. She experientially begins to know the love of God that surpasses understanding (*Eph. 3:19*). This action of God as manifest through Hosea begins to reveal that Salvation (Hosea’s name) comes through union and not our own righteousness. Not just salvation from hell, but salvation from our blindness, idolatry, adultery with wild vines, and the vile nature of self. God is light, and in the darkest hour of our spiritual history His love shines like the noon day sun, saving us from ourselves! If we lift our eyes above our own condition and ask the Holy Spirit to open the heavens of God’s heart, we will find the Crucified One Who has loved us with an everlasting love (*Jer.31:3*). As we behold Him in the power of the Holy Spirit, we begin to leave the wasteland of our barren souls and enter into glorious oneness with Him Who is all fullness.

Receiving The Grace of God

For Gomer to allow Hosea to “take her unto himself” required as certain yielded-ness on her part. Many people struggle with being able to accept the grace of God that is extended to us through Christ. We feel so overwhelmed with guilt and shame that we find it impossible to receive the Word of God, (the words from His heart) and embrace Him as our new identity. We reject our own mercy by observing the lying vanities of our sins and failures (*Jonah 2:8*). God is always working to enfold us into His crucified heart as His wife, the question is – are we ready to be enfolded? The fact that Gomer allowed this grace to happen to her speaks volumes on her behalf. She can become an example and encouragement to those of us who struggle in this area. Even to this day, Gomer is met with shame and disgust for who she is apart from Hosea (a harlot). But the Word of God is not guiding us to despise Gomer, but to LEARN FROM HER. Many have only seen Gomer for who she is apart from Hosea, rather than who she becomes in union with Hosea. Even now in our present lives, we can judge one after than flesh rather than knowing one another in Christ (*II Cor. 5:16 -17*). Gomer’s name means, “completion”; but for the most part Gomer is only known separate from Hosea as a harlot in her own sins, rather than

one who finds completion in another. Just imagine, years after you have been one with Jesus and walking in His Life, someone comes up to you and identifies you only according to your past! Comments such as; “Hey, there goes Bob the drug addict” or “Look at Sally the self-absorbed” might be the way people identified us. If that did actually happen to us we would feel misunderstood and hurt. Yet quite possibly we have done this same thing to Gomer in our comprehension of what she represents in the scriptures.

Saved By Union!

Our eyes must leave the land of “ME / US” and lift up to the land of “GOD’S LOVE IN CHRIST” to begin to prepare our hearts to receive of His grace. There is great opposition that comes to each of us as we open the doors of our heart to embrace and receive the Word of God concerning our identity in Christ. We can become flooded with old identities of who we are apart from Christ rather than accepting that we are “complete in Him” (*Col. 2:10*). When we receive these old identities we are choosing to return to our “single status” as separate from Christ. If Gomer rejected marriage with Hosea and remained single she would have continued in her identity as a harlot. But when Gomer embraced Hosea’s marriage proposal and entered into union with Him, she found a new beginning that brought her into a completely new identity as Hosea’s wife rather than Gomer the harlot. She was saved from her old identity of separation and sin. She was saved unto a new identity of oneness with Hosea and fruitfulness by him. Just like Gomer, we too need to be saved by union! Consider this: whatever things God’s people could be brought into through the law, how much more could they enter in through marriage with the Lamb? If we want to gain fruitfulness through the works of the law, then we are on our own doing our best for God. Ultimately, the end of that path is a realization of our need for Jesus, (or an enormous amount of pride built upon self-deception). God has always had incredible plans to bring His people into the deepest possible measure of fruitfulness through oneness with Christ Crucified. The first step is to RECEIVE GOD’S GRACE that (through His Cross) brings us into union with Christ. Paul was persecuted for preaching this path to fruitfulness, but he never stopped sharing this Gospel and the faith that gave him access into this grace (*Roms. 5:2, Gal. 3:8*).

Gomer’s Progression in Union

Further scriptural proof that Gomer did actually embrace union with Hosea and become fruitful in that union is found in chapter one verse three: “*So Hosea went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim; Gomer conceived, and bare him a son*”.

Perception: Gomer had to first perceive of what was in Hosea's heart in order to receive and conceive of it. We naturally tend towards self-awareness, and therefore almost intuitively yield ourselves to whatever we feel or think. Our natural minds effortlessly perceive of our own guilt, therefore it is easy for us to allow our shame and regret to have conception in us bringing forth its fruit of rejection, hopelessness and despair. We can be quick to perceive faults in others, and then conceive a critical spirit towards them. To perceive of what is in God requires a great turning of the heart and openness to the Holy Spirit. It requires determination to forge new paths based on something that is true in God's heart and yet foreign to ours. To press past the information or action and into the essence of the Person from whom the words or deed came is to begin to perceive. If we only hear teaching and instruction, never perceiving their origin or spirit, then we will simply become legalistic people trying to follow the rules and do the right thing. To perceive beyond the surface of the scriptures is to press past the veil of our understanding into the spirit of the One Who is Source and fullness.

*Prov. 1:2 To know wisdom and instruction; to **perceive** the words of understanding;*

*Is. 6:9 And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but **perceive** not.*

*1 Jn. 3:16 Hereby **perceive** we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.*

Conception: After perception comes the receiving of His Word in the power of the Holy Spirit resulting in conception. Conception is made possible when a heart receives God's grace, accepting union with Him despite what has yet to manifest in the natural. There is one action that the Word of God mentions concerning Gomer more than any other. It is the one thing that is spoken of most concerning her, spoken of even more than her harlotry. That thing is "CONCEPTION". Gomer conceived and brought forth three times in the first chapter. Each conception represents Gomer receiving into her heart the Seed of Christ Crucified in a specific view. Each child brought forth from that conception represents the specific knowing of Christ Crucified she received. Remember, Hosea was relating to Gomer as husband and not as a judge. A husband shares his heart and spirit with his wife so that she can partake of him in oneness whereas a judge metes out judgments and decrees from afar. God wanted to relate to Israel as His bride (*Jer. 3:1*). He did not just want to tell her things, but breathe into her His very Spirit and Life through oneness. Yet, no matter how much God spoke to His beloved Judah and Israel through the law and prophets, very little was received and even less was conceived unto fruit-bearing. The Lord needs those who will respond to Him and receive His word with a heart to

conceive. Consider the people of God hundreds of years after Hosea's time in the small village of Nazareth. The Spirit of God found one young girl willing to receive His Word and conceive of it in the power of the Holy Spirit thereby bringing forth Christ (*Lk. 1:31-38*). Maybe this can help us see how important it is to God that His people not just listen to what He is saying, but receive it so deeply within as to conceive and bring forth Christ. We may look at the young virgin girl in Nazareth and believe that her conception of the Son was partly due to her virginity and uprightness, but let us consider Gomer, a harlot. She had no righteousness in herself... but she had Hosea who took her as his wife.

*Mt. 1:20 But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is **conceived** in her is of the Holy Ghost.*

*Lk. 1:31 And, behold, thou shalt **conceive** in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.*

*Heb. 11:11 Through faith also Sara herself received strength to **conceive** seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.*

Comprehending “perception” and “conception” is important because without participation in these aspects of our union with Christ we cannot bear His fruit. Gomer eventually brought forth three children. Those three children represent a believer being conformed to the image of the Son and bringing forth Christ (*Roms. 8:29*). Conception came to Gomer from receiving Hosea's love and not her own righteousness. Even though the fruit of that union (their two sons and a daughter) all relate to living Christ crucified in practical ways, conception did not come to Gomer through studying the problems in Israel and determining how to proceed. We may want to bear fruit by studying all the ways the Lamb nature manifests through a believer, yet apart from union into Him we can do nothing (*Jn. 15:5*). We must participate in communion and fellowship with the Lamb as those in union with Him. It can be easy to believe that a classroom is the environment in which Christ becomes formed in us, when in reality it is Christ Himself that is the environment from whence all fruit comes, that is why God brought us into union with Christ. Gomer needed to receive of Hosea's unconditional love in order to bear the fruit of that love. We need to know Him “Who loved me and gave Himself for me” before we can bear fruit from that union. Embracing the way of the Cross in our daily lives and trials is simply God's love in action through us. God's kind of love cannot be active through us if we have not first received it (*“We love Him, because He first loved us” I Jn. 4:19*)! May we all take the time to seek God's face, to pursue Him with our hearts, and give ourselves to fulfill His heart's desire to have a people that truly know Him.

Lesson Two Homework

1. Explain the spiritual significance behind Gomer's name and Gomer's mother's name.
2. What is it that Gomer found in Hosea?
3. What is the spiritual significance behind Hosea's name?
4. What can we learn from Gomer that can benefit us in our relationship with Christ?
5. Compose a short essay on "perception" and its place in the process of bringing forth Christ
6. Compose a short essay on "conception" and its place in the process of bringing forth Christ.
7. Explain why fruitfulness does not come from only studying about the Lamb.