

Beyond Servanthood- Lovers

In Hosea 2:14-16 we are told that those who know God as their Lord (or, Master) can later go on to know God as their Husband. This is a deeper, more intimate relationship with the Lord!

The Book of Hosea shows us 2 ways that can help teach us this:

- 1) Hosea's wife, Gomer, was brought into this love relationship with her husband.
 - 2) In a similar way, the Lord worked in Israel's hearts to bring them into this love relationship with God.
1. Hosea 2:14 *"Therefore, behold, I will allure her, will bring her into the wilderness..."*
 - A) God drew Gomer into a wilderness experience of loneliness, difficulty, & danger Hos.2:6-9, 3:2.
 - B) God drew unfaithful Israel into *"the wilderness of the peoples,"* Ezek.20:35-36.
 - C) If we have no deepening love relationship with God then our service can become legalistic, dry, and boring. This happened to the Ephesian church when they were very busy but had left their first love, Rev.2:2-4. This was also the experience of the Shulamite woman in S. of Sol.1:6-7.
 - This experience of losing your first love can become a spiritual wilderness: trials, testing, spiritual dryness, loneliness. In this wilderness the servants of God are tempted to fill their needs in carnal or evil ways, just as Christ was tempted in the wilderness, Lk.4:1-13.
 - This may include: success / pride / power / tempted to wrong natural provisions, such as love.
 2. Hosea 2:14 *"...and speak comfort to her."* This comfort in the wilderness happens to those who have already been punished for their sins, Is.40:1-3
 - A) Hosea bought his wife from slavery, and comforted her with his love & faithfulness, Hos.3:1-3.
 - B) God promised to redeem Israel (Hos.13:14) and heal them from backsliding, Hos.14:4-8.
 - C) After times of discipline & suffering, God wants to comfort us, S. of Sol.8:5- we come into a deeper love relationship with Christ! A deeper trust!
 3. Hosea 2:15 *"...I will give her her vineyards from there,"*
 - A) Gomer was blessed again as the wife of Hosea, and came into prosperity again.
 - B) Israel was to be brought back from her captivity, and restored to God's promises.
 - C) Us: vineyards speak of congregations (Is.5:7), or ministry. The Lord can give us a newly fruitful ministry after we are cleansed and brought into a new love relationship with God!
 4. Hosea 2:15 *"...and the Valley of Achor as a door of hope;"* 'Achor' is 'Trouble' in Hebrew.
 - A) Gomer went through a 'Valley of Trouble' to bring repentance & renewal: a door of hope!
 - B) The Valley of Achor is also the valley in Joshua 7:25-26 where defeated and discouraged Israel cleansed away their sin and regained victory.
 - C) God can allow our wandering, hearts to lead us to defeat & discouragement to bring us to cleansing & a new love relationship with Him, 1 Pet.4:1, Deut.8:2-5, Heb.12:5-6, Rom.8:26.
 5. Hosea 2:15 *"...She shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, as in the day when she came up from the land of Egypt."* "Coming up from Egypt" symbolized the salvation of the Israelites.
 - A) Israel (and Gomer) were restored to the joy of their salvation, Ps.51:12.
 - B) After our wilderness sufferings and the valleys of trouble, God wants to rescue us and bring us back to the full joy of our salvation. If we will be broken, humble, & repentant, we can still go on with God into a deeper love relationship with Him!
 6. Hosea 2:16 *"...And it shall be, in that day, says the Lord, that you will call Me 'My Husband,' and no longer call Me 'My Master.' - Hosea 2:14-16.* God wants to restore & deepen our love relationships:
 - A) - Gomer was restored to her faithful, loving husband- he was more than a master!
 - Israel was cleansed from idolatry, and will yet be fully restored, Rom.11:26-27.
 - The Shulamite: could give her love during ministry, S. of Sol.7:12
 - B) We must pay a price (of suffering) to restore our marriage, or to restore & deepen our love relationship to God. We need to go beyond servanthood, that God will become our lover!
 - C) Then we will be able to restore others, 2 Cor.1:3-6. Hosea suffered to help restore an entire nation!