

## **Does God Really Love Us That Much? Hosea 3:1-5 (NKJV)**

1 Then the LORD said to me, "Go again, love a woman who is loved by a lover and is committing adultery, just like the love of the LORD for the children of Israel, who look to other gods and love the raisin cakes of the pagans." 2 So I bought her for myself for fifteen shekels of silver, and one and one-half homers of barley. 3 And I said to her, "You shall stay with me many days; you shall not play the harlot, nor shall you have a man--so, too, will I be toward you." 4 For the children of Israel shall abide many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred pillar, without ephod or teraphim. 5 Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the LORD their God and David their king. They shall fear the LORD and His goodness in the latter days.

Last week we got a description of God's plan to bring Israel back to Himself.

They had wandered away from Him and gone after other gods, other lovers.

They spent the blessings that God gave them in worship of the false gods.

And still God was longsuffering. For over 200 years He protected them and prospered them.

Remember Hosea is living during the most prosperous time for the nation of Israel but they do not turn back to God during all that prosperity.

But they wander farther and farther away until they become more repulsive to God than the pagan nations who were in the land before them.

So remember what God would do to them next.

He would drive them from the land and bring them to poverty and slavery.

He would take away their blessings that He had bestowed upon them.

And then when they are down, then He begins to lift them back up and to allure them to Himself.

So when we come to chapter 3 we find the greatest picture of this in all the Bible.

God gives Hosea a message that no doubt troubled him severely.

- I. Then the LORD said to me,
  - A. "Go again, love a woman
    - 1. I wonder how it happened. Did Hosea come home one day to find the children abandoned by their mother.
    - 2. I am sure that there were plenty of signs that she was not faithful.
    - 3. But finally she leaves her family for another man and this time she doesn't come home at all.

4. This is the part of the story where we kind of have to fill in the blanks.
  5. How long was she with that man before he got rid of her or maybe she moved on to what she considered greener pastures.
  6. But as often happens, just like the prodical son she eventually ends up at the bottom of society, a slave, worth only what someone is willing to pay for her.
  7. So God has his eye on all this just like He had His eye on Israel.
    - a. He who followed Hagar into the wilderness, who met Jacob at Bethel and forgat not the slave Joseph in prison, remembers also Hosea's wife. His love is not satisfied with His Nation-Bride: He remembers this single outcast. It is the Shepherd leaving the ninety-and-nine in the fold to seek the one lost sheep. *George Adam Smith, "The Book of the Twelve Prophets," in The Expositor's Bible: Jeremiah to Mark, ed. W. Robertson Nicoll, vol. 4, Expositor's Bible (Hartford, CT: S.S. Scranton Co., 1903), 504.*
  8. And when the day came when Gomer was put on the slave block, Hosea gets a message from God to go buy her.
  9. Now think of that for just a minute. Wouldn't most of us be saying good riddance to bad rubbish.
- B. Who is loved by a lover
1. The word love is used 4 times in this verse but all of them with different meanings.
    - a. Go love
      - (1) This of course has the idea of a pure love like God has for us, a sacrificial love.
      - (2) What God was calling Hosea to do had nothing to do with satisfying any thing in his life.
      - (3) So this is no doubt something very difficult for Hosea that God is asking him to do.
    - b. Who is loved
      - (1) This probably has the more sensual idea of love as who she was making love to.
      - (2) This has less to do with love than it does lust.
      - (3) Gomer was not a woman of deep relationships.

- (4) She was concerned about her own physical needs and she knew out to meet them.
  - c. Like the love of the Lord
    - (1) This is peeking of God's pursuing love that we spoke of last week.
    - (2) It is sovereign.
    - (3) It is immutable.
    - (4) It is without regard for what it receives in return.
  - d. They love raisin cakes.
    - (1) a purely physical love.
    - (2) Loving something for they can get out of it.
    - (3) These raisin cakes were used in the pagan worship to the queen of heaven that we see in other parts of the Bible.
- C. And is committing adultery
- 1. She is married but having relationships with other men.
  - 2. She may have even be a temple prostitute.
  - 3. How will Hosea ever get this out of his mind, the degree of unfaithfulness that she has shown.
- D. Just like the love of the LORD for the children of Israel
- 1. Here is the type of love that Hosea is called to.
    - a. This is what God has done for us.
    - b. He loved us enough to send His Son to die in our place.
    - c. And this is the type of love that God expects of us in return.
  - 2. Gomer is like Israel, and Hosea must be like God.
    - a. For the people of Hosea's day Hosea not only gave the message, his life was the message.
    - b. To illustrate God's love for wayward Israel Hosea will go out of his way to redeem Gomer and bring her home once again.
- E. Who look to other gods and love the raisin cakes of the pagans."
- 1. God is holy and He must deal with sin. The essence of idolatry is enjoying the gifts but not honoring the Giver. To live for the world is

to break God's heart and commit "spiritual adultery." God is love and promises to forgive and restore all who repent and return to Him. He promises to bless all who trust him. *Warren W. Wiersbe, Be Amazed, "Be" Commentary Series (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 21.*

2. This all has to do with pagan or false worship.
3. The raisin cakes are a part of the pagan worship of the idols.
  - a. Do you think it was foolish for Israel to give up the Living God for raisin cakes.
  - b. Well I think it is no different today.
  - c. People forsake God for just about the same thing today.
  - d. Whatever they love more than God, is their god.
4. "Flagons of wine" should actually be translated as "cakes of raisins." This is a reference to the cakes of raisins which were used in the sacrificial feasts of the Canaanites. They were a part of the heathen worship of idols, which the children of Israel had adopted. *J. Vernon McGee, Thru the Bible Commentary: The Prophets (Hosea/Joel), electronic ed., vol. 27 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1991), 41.*

## II. So I bought her for myself

### A. So Hosea purchases her.

1. This speaks of redemption and opens a whole new theme of study.
2. To redeem means to buy back.
3. This is what God has done for us.
  - a. We were lost on the slave block of sin and Jesus came and paid the price for our souls.
  - b. Only it was not with silver and gold but with the precious blood of Jesus Christ.
  - c. 1 Peter 1:18–19 (NKJV)
    - (1) 18 knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

### B. For fifteen shekels of silver, and one and one-half homers of barley.

1. The price of a slave was 30 shekels of silver so does he get a

bargain or was she just not worth that much?

2. Barley was the cheapest grain and was normally only fed to the animals.

III. And I said to her,

A. "You shall stay with me many days;

1. Her relationship is not the same as before.
2. Before it was love that was to keep her at home.
3. But now she was no longer her own person, but was bought and paid for.
4. She belonged to Hosea in the thinking of the people of the day.
  - a. He could do to her as he pleased.
  - b. She had no rights, she had sold them when she ended up a slave.

B. You shall not play the harlot,

1. She will no longer trade her body for what she wanted.
2. No longer will she be free to chase after other lovers.
3. She will be a faithful wife as she ever should of done.

C. Nor shall you have a man—

1. But this is where she saw her best selling point.
2. She had learned, no doubt from her harlot mother how to get what she wanted from and man.
3. But that is now out of the question.
4. She will be celibate and pure.

D. So, too, will I be toward you."

1. Not even Hosea would have her in the way of a husband, at least for a time.
2. The one thing that she thought was her bargaining chip was now withdrawn from the game.
3. Also she sees that Hosea did not purchase her for what he could get from her but because he was to love her as God loves.

IV. For the children of Israel shall abide many days

A. Without king or prince,

1. Hosea 5:15 (NKJV)
    - a. 15 I will return again to My place Till they acknowledge their offense. Then they will seek My face; In their affliction they will earnestly seek Me.”
  2. Now the application to Israel.
  3. She will loose those things that made her separate as a nation.
  4. No longer will they have self rule by one of their own people.
  5. They will become a people governed by others.
  6. They will have no king of their own.
  7. Israel today is without a king because she rejected her King and therefore has no kingdom. “We will not have this man to reign over us” (Luke 19:14). “We have no king but Caesar” (John 19:15). She has no prince because there is no reigning dynasty in Israel. All the records were destroyed when the Romans captured Jerusalem in A.D. 70, and nobody can prove to which tribe he or she belongs. *Warren W. Wiersbe, Be Amazed, “Be” Commentary Series (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 20.*
- B. Without sacrifice or sacred pillar,
1. Not only would they not be able to sacrifice to the true God but they would not worship the false god’s of the pagans.
- C. Without ephod or teraphim.
1. The ephod was used in Judah as a means of communication with God and a sign of God’s priests.
  2. But they have cut themselves off completely from all of that through their wondering.
- V. Afterward the children of Israel shall return
- A. And seek the LORD their God
1. Deuteronomy 4:29–30 (NKJV)
    - a. 29 But from there you will seek the LORD your God, and you will find Him if you seek Him with all your heart and with all your soul. 30 When you are in distress, and all these things come upon you in the latter days, when you turn to the LORD your God and obey His voice
  2. Malachi 3:3 (NKJV)
    - a. 3 He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, And purge them as gold and silver, That

they may offer to the LORD An offering in righteousness.

3. But at the end they will once again turn their hearts toward the God of their fathers and seek the true God.
  4. They will return from the place they were removed and carried to all the world.
  5. The Jews call this the diaspora
    - a. Diaspora of the Jews. Dispersion of Jewish people from Israel to foreign lands. Diaspora, a Greek noun meaning a “sowing” or “scattering,” is regularly used in the Septuagint to mean “exile” (Jer 25:34; cf. Is 11:12; Ez 20:23; Zep 3:10). The word occurs twice in the NT (Jas 1:1; 1 Pt 1:1), referring to Christian Jews residing outside Palestine as a result of the several dispersions in Israel’s history. Diaspora sometimes refers to the exiled people, sometimes to the place of exile. *James L. Mason, “Diaspora of the Jews,” Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 623.*
- B. And David their king.
1. This is a prophetic reference to Jesus.
    - a. Ezekiel 37:24 (NKJV)
      - (1) 24 “David My servant shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd; they shall also walk in My judgments and observe My statutes, and do them.
  2. Someday the Jews will return from all over the world to the land of Israel.
  3. And Jesus will be their Messianic King.
- C. They shall fear the LORD and His goodness in the latter days.
1. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.
  2. God will put His fear in their hearts.
  3. And they shall be His people and He shall be their God.
  4. Hosea 14:1–2 (NKJV)
    - a. 1 O Israel, return to the LORD your God, For you have stumbled because of your iniquity; 2 Take words with you, And return to the LORD. Say to Him, “Take away all iniquity; Receive us graciously, For we will offer the sacrifices of our lips.

5. Hosea 1:11 (NKJV)

- a. 11 Then the children of Judah and the children of Israel  
Shall be gathered together, And appoint for themselves one  
head; And they shall come up out of the land, For great will  
be the day of Jezreel!
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The word again leaps off the page from verse 1. “Go again, love.” The “againness” of God’s repeated, indefatigable love for Israel is to be Hosea’s purpose and passion (suffering love). “All human grace is but the reflex of the Divine.”

In Hosea 3:1 the use of the same term for love highlights the contrast between true and perverted love.

Yahweh commands love that is no mere feeling but deliberate action.

*Lloyd J. Ogilvie and Lloyd J. Ogilvie, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, vol. 22, The Preacher’s Commentary Series (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Inc, 1990), 68.*

Romans 5:5–8 (NKJV)

5 Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us. 6 For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. 8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

But Hosea’s love steals across his whole land like the dew, provoking every separate scent and colour, till all, Galilee lies before us lustrous and fragrant as nowhere else outside the parables of Jesus. *George Adam Smith, “The Book of the Twelve Prophets,” in The Expositor’s Bible: Jeremiah to Mark, ed. W. Robertson Nicoll, vol. 4, Expositor’s Bible (Hartford, CT: S.S. Scranton Co., 1903), 499.*