Hosea 2-3 Reflection Guide

HEAT: What is the immediate context of this text? What circumstances surround the passage? What struggle or blessing is being unpacked? What aspect of life are people responding to?

Hosea and Gomer are living out the relationship between God and Israel and between God and us. Hosea’s forgiveness and pursuit of Gomer in the middle of her unfaithfulness is meant by God to show Israel what is really happening between God and his people. Israel has been living in safety and prosperity and God is calling them to remain faithful to him instead of running other gods (lovers) for help and security.

THORNS: What sinful ways do they [we] respond to the same circumstance? Are any seen in the text?

Hosea 1:2 When the Lord began to speak through Hosea, the Lord said to him, “Go, marry a promiscuous woman and have children with her, for like an adulterous wife this land is guilty of unfaithfulness to the Lord.”

Hosea 2:2 Rebuke your mother; rebuke her. For she is not My wife and I am not her husband. Let her remove the promiscuous look from her face and her adultery from between her breasts. 3 Otherwise, I will strip her naked and expose her as she was on the day of her birth. I will make her like a desert and like a parched land, and I will let her die of thirst. 4 I will have no compassion on her children because they are the children of promiscuity. 5 Yes, their mother is promiscuous; she conceived them and acted shamefully.

Hosea 2:7 She will pursue her lovers but not catch them; she will seek them but not find them. Then she will think, “I will go back to my former husband, for then it was better for me than now.”

The hearts of God’s people had turned away...their affections, hope, love was no longer tethered to God who had saved them, protected them, provided for them...but now their hearts were tethered to other gods. They were committing spiritual adultery. They were abandoning the Lord. And when God begins to discipline them by removing his blessings, Israel begins to seek the Lord but it is not a return to Him personally... it is just in order to receive the “stuff”.

BAD ROOT: What heart issue lies at the root of their [our] sinful response? What new HEAT is created by their [our] sinful response? What about God are we failing to believe in our THORN responses? What do they [we] desire?

1) Israel had forgotten God. Gomer had forgotten who she was by virtue of her covenant with Hosea and Not in their minds...but with their heart...affections...hope...commitments. God called Israel to Himself, redeemed them out of slavery to Egypt, made a covenant with them at Sinai, “I’m yours, you’re mine”...taken them to the land He promised...where he protected them, provided for them, loved them... But they had forgotten who they were b/c of that covenant... Israel had forgotten how God had blessed them in the past

2) B/c they had forgotten how God had loved them in the past, they now were mistaken about where their present blessings were coming from. Israel had begin to believe that their present prosperity and security had come as a blessing from Baal.

Hosea 2:8 She does not recognize that it is I who gave her the grain, the new wine, and the oil. I lavished silver and gold on her, which they used for Baal.

2:5b - For she thought, “I will go after my lovers, the men who give me my food and water,
my wool and flax, my oil and drink."

2:12 She thinks that these are her wages that her lovers have given her.

It's as if Hosea shows up with food and money for Gomer while she is living with another man. Then that man tells Gomer that HE (not Hosea...not God) provided those things, but him.

CROSS: How is God or his grace displayed in the text? What aspect of Christ's work on the cross is most necessary here? What commands are in the text that I need to obey?

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.”

2 So I bought her for 15 shekels of silver and five bushels of barley.

He could have stoned her for her infidelity. He didn't come to shame her...condemn her...didn't come to bring her back into his house as a slave...instead she takes her back at steep price to himself...clothes her and takes her home. He loves her.

God steps into the marketplace of sin and buys us out of sin’s bondage by the death of Christ. “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son...” (John 3:16). He became “trouble” that we may have Hope. He would be stripped naked and exposed on the cross. His head would be hedged in with thorns. Jesus became “unloved”, “no mercy”, “cut off from father”, “judged in bloodshed” that we could receive mercy, compassion, be adopted...So we became his, and he took us and clothed us, not with the dirty robes of our old unrighteousnesses, which are as filthy rags, but with the robes of his righteousness.

Looking forward to the cross, God deals with his people with mercy. When you and I are betrayed...it only seems natural to respond with bitterness or anger...but God responds to our betrayal of Him with mercy. He calls them to return...to put away the false gods (2:2). God prevents Israel from being satisfied by other gods and hedges Israel. (2:6-13) God will remove temporal blessing so that Israel can see that he, not Baal is the true source...That HE IS THE TRUE BLESSING (2:9-10) This is mercy...to be exposed before it’s too late. Romans 2:16...we will all be exposed, the hearts will be seen. While losing that temporal blessing may seem hard, the eternal consequences for spiritual adultery are much worse.

Hosea 2: 14 Therefore, I am going to persuade her, lead her to the wilderness, and speak tenderly to her. 17 For I will remove the names of the Baals from her mouth; they will no longer be remembered by their names. 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. 19 I will take you to be My wife forever. I will take you to be My wife in righteousness, justice, love, and compassion. 20 I will take you to be My wife in faithfulness, and you will know Yahweh 23 I will sow her in the land for Myself, and I will have compassion on No Compassion; I will say to Not My People: You are My people, and he will say, “You are My God.”

GOOD ROOT: What can they [I] believe about God because of the cross? What do they [I] desire now? How does Christ enable me to obey his commands? How is Jesus the solution / motivation for transformation and action in this text?

Hosea 3:3 You must live with me many days. Don’t be promiscuous or belong to any man,
and I will act the same way toward you.”

In Hosea and in the cross, we see the relentless love of God...one who chooses to love those who will be unfaithful to him. What we see through Hosea and Gomer is that God’s love for you is not based on your performance for Him...but on His promise to you! This changes our heart to want to be draw near to him and obey! Living in holiness is not about trying harder to become something we are not. It’s about remembering who we are in Christ and living out of that. It requires remembering the fullness of God’s love for us on the cross...this identity was won through the shedding of His blood...

How does the gospel save us from #2 under Bad Root?

FRUIT: What would the expected fruit of the gospel be in this situation? What does obedience look like for you right now? Does it speak of this in the text? Where else in the Scriptures is this?