

OLD TESTAMENT GOSPEL DOCTRINE CLASS

Green Mountain 1st Ward, Lakewood, Colorado

12 September 2010

Page 1

Lesson 34: "I Will Betroth Thee unto Me in Righteousness" (Hosea 1–3; 11; 13–14)

Introduction

Each of the following phrases is a comparison from the book of Hosea. Think about what the comparison might mean. For example, saying someone is "as a lion" may indicate strength or fierceness.

"THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL
SHALL BE AS THE SAND OF THE SEA"
(HOSEA 1:10)

"I WILL POUR OUT MY WRATH
UPON THEM LIKE WATER"
(HOSEA 5:10)

"THE LORD . . . SHALL
COME UNTO US AS THE RAIN"
(HOSEA 6:3)

"HE SHALL COME AS AN EAGLE"
(HOSEA 8:1)

"ISRAEL IS AN EMPTY VINE"
(HOSEA 10:1)

"JUDGMENT SPRINGETH UP AS HEMLOCK
IN THE FURROWS OF THE FIELD"
(HOSEA 10:4)

"THEY SHALL BE . . . AS THE SMOKE
OUT OF THE CHIMNEY"
(HOSEA 13:3)

"I WILL MEET THEM AS A BEAR
THAT IS BEREAVED OF HER WHELPS [CUBS]"
(HOSEA 13:8)

"I AM LIKE A GREEN FIR TREE"
(HOSEA 14:8)

Hosea and other prophets used comparisons because comparing a complicated or unfamiliar idea with one that is simpler or more familiar makes it more understandable to the people who are being taught. Comparisons also help provide a lot of detail in just a few words. In addition to these smaller comparisons, Hosea also used extended comparisons, which are called metaphors or similitudes (similitude is the word used in the scriptures). The book of Hosea contains several comparisons to help us understand the relationship between Jesus Christ and his people.

Background: Hosea preached both before and after the fall of Israel. His ministry lasted somewhere between two to as many as eight decades. Hosea received his call under Jeroboam II, king of Israel, when Israel was deep in apostasy. His marriages, as directed by the Lord, put him in a position that helped him understand how the Lord might have felt in his relationship with Israel as the people prostituted themselves and then came running back in their moments of remorse and repentance.

Lesson Highlights

- Using the similitude of a faithful husband and an adulterous wife, Hosea describes the relationship between the Lord and Israel.
- Because of his love for his people, the Lord continues to invite Israel to repent and return to him.

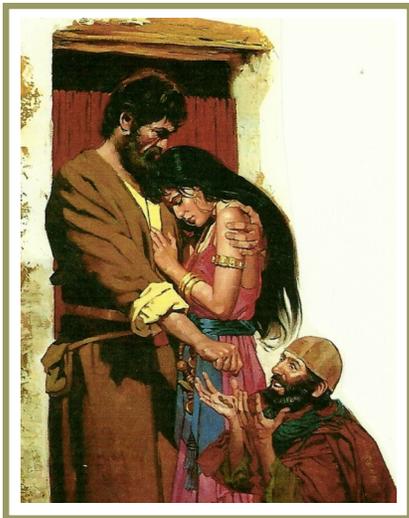
A study of this lesson will help us understand that the Lord is loving and merciful and will forgive us when we repent and return to him.

Next Week

#35 God Reveals His Secrets to His Prophets (Amos 3; 7–9; Joel 2–3)

President Spencer W. Kimball:

"Modern idols or false gods can take such forms as clothes, homes, businesses, machines, automobiles, pleasure boats, and numerous other material deflectors from the path to godhood. What difference does it make that the item concerned is not shaped like an idol? Brigham Young said: 'I would as soon see a man worshipping a little god made of brass or of wood as to see him worshipping his property!'" (Miracle of Forgiveness, p40-41)



Hosea and Gomer

Hosea speaks graphically and dramatically about the love that God has for His people Israel as

He asks His prophet Hosea to marry a prostitute as an example of the extraordinary effort He puts forth to reach us amidst the many life choices we make.

Using the similitude of a faithful husband and an adulterous wife, Hosea describes the relationship between the Lord and Israel. (Hosea 1–3)

One of the most frequently used similitudes in the scriptures describes the Lord as a bridegroom (or husband) and his covenant people as his bride (or wife). **Hosea 1–3** powerfully uses this similitude, comparing Israel's idol worship to adultery. In these chapters the prophet Hosea represents the Lord as the husband, and Gomer represents Israel as the wife.

In the book of Hosea, the Lord's relationship with Israel (and with the Church today) is compared to the relationship between a husband and wife. As we review the selected scriptural passages, consider what this comparison teaches us about the level of commitment and devotion the Lord expects from us.

Hosea 1:2-3; 2:5, 13 - Ancient Israel was comparable to Gomer, who is described as "a wife of whoredoms", because just as Gomer had left her husband for her lovers, Israel had forgotten the Lord and become wicked.

Israel's "lovers"—the things that caused the people to turn away from the Lord were other gods, material goods, and the practices of the world. Each of these things diverted Israel and may divert us from our dedication to following the Savior unless we guard against them daily.

Hosea 2:5 - The adulterous wife gave credit for her food and clothing to her partners in adultery.

Because of his love for his people, the Lord continues to invite Israel to repent and return to him. (Hosea 11; 13–14)

Throughout the book of Hosea, the Lord reproves the Israelites for their great sins. After the Lord, through Hosea, describes the captivity and destruction that will result from Israel's wickedness, he

Hosea 2:5; 2:12 - The Israelites attributed the fruitful land in which they lived to their false gods or idols.

People today give credit to false gods (degrees, financial expertise, worldly knowledge, useful contacts) for the blessings they receive.

Hosea 2:8-9 - The husband reminded his wife that he—not her lovers—supplied her with food, water, and other possessions and warned that just as he supplied them, he could take them away.

The Lord has provided you with material and spiritual blessings as gifts.

It is required of us to show our appreciation to the Lord for the blessings he has given us.

Hosea 2:6-13 - records the attitude of the husband toward his unfaithful wife. Here, he is willing to let justice prevail and let her learn by punishment, deprivation, and severe judgments the need to repent.

The attitude is different in **verses 14-23**. Even though the wife had been unfaithful, the husband still loved her and wanted her to come back to him. Likewise, the Lord still loves his people who have gone astray, and he wants them to turn again to him.

again invites his people to repent and return to him.

Hosea 11:4 - Another similitude often used in the scriptures to describe the relationship between the Lord and his people is the master-

Elder Henry B. Eyring explained: "*This was a love story. This was a story of a marriage covenant bound by love, by steadfast love. ... The Lord, with whom I am blessed to have made covenants, loves me, and you, ... with a steadfastness about which I continually marvel and which I want with all my heart to emulate*" (Covenants and Sacrifice [address at the Church Educational System Symposium, 15 Aug. 1995], 2).

Hosea 2:19 - The husband promises to make a covenant with his wife if she would return to him.

Hosea 2:20, 23 - The Lord promises mercy to his people if they will repent and return to him.

This promise is important because we all need the Lord's mercy extend to us.

Hosea 3:1-2 - In this scripture, the husband purchased his wife from her lover (in Old Testament cultures, women were often considered property and could be bought or sold).

Hosea 3:3 - The husband required fidelity of his wife after he purchased her.

In return, he promised to be faithful to her.

1 Peter 1:18-19 - In the sense that he has sacrificed his life for us, Jesus Christ "bought" each of us.

In return for his sacrifice, Christ requires us to be faithful and diligent in his service.

animal relationship. This similitude is used briefly here.

Hosea 11:7-9 - Through this comparison, we learn about the Lord's feelings for his people—that he is deeply concerned about them. Note

that the Joseph Smith Translation of verse 8 says “*mine heart is turned toward thee*” instead of “*mine heart is turned within me.*”

Hosea 11:1; 12:9, 13; 13:4-5 - Several times the Lord reminded the Israelites of how their ancestors were delivered out of captivity in Egypt.

Hosea 13:14 - This event is another similitude. As the Lord delivered the children of Israel from bondage in Egypt, so will he deliver them—and all people who come unto him—from sin and death.

Hosea 12:6; 14:2-3 - To return to the Lord and receive deliverance, the Israelites needed to repent of their sins and renounce the other gods they had worshiped.

Conclusion

The book of Hosea reminds us of the importance of being faithful to the commandments of the Lord. We are also reminded that if we sin, there is still a chance for us to be restored to our former blessings. If we repent and strive to live faithfully, we can still be redeemed through the atonement. What a wonderful blessing! It gives each of us hope.

Hosea 14:4-7 - The Lord promised, upon conditions of repentance, to heal and love them and bless them with prosperity.

The Lord makes similar promises to us if we repent of our sins.

The similitudes in the book of Hosea should help you understand how the Savior feels about you.

“O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself” (Hosea 13:9)

During Hosea’s ministry, the Northern Kingdom (Israel) was attacked by the Assyrians, who would eventually destroy the kingdom and take the people captive. In a literal sense the Assyrians were responsible for the destruction of Israel. But the Lord said, “*O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself*”.

Hosea 13:9-10; 14:1 - In removing the Lord as their king, Israel had destroyed itself. Israel’s only hope for salvation after the destruction of their nation was to return to the Lord.

Hosea's final words:
"Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the LORD are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein" (Hosea 14:9).

Gospel Doctrine Notebook

Record your thoughts on the teachings discussed in this lesson.

- Record your thoughts on Hosea's comparison of Israel to the unfaithful wife. How might these principle apply to your life?
- How do the similitudes in the book of Hosea help you understand how the Savior feels about you?