

THE NEW YOU Sermon Series –“Jezreel”, “No Mercy”, “Not My People”

Can we talk about the song we just sang? What were your initial thoughts/ reactions to the lyrics? *“Though You slay me... Though You take from me... Though You ruin me...”* We don’t normally think about God in such ways!

Why would God do such things to His people?

- God hates sin! **Isaiah 13:11**
- God loves the sinner! **Hebrews 12:6**
- God will do whatever it takes to free us from our bondage! **John 3:16**

God’s Word tells us these truths, but sometimes words are not enough! Sometimes we need to see it in the flesh... & experience it for ourselves!

Have you ever thought you knew/understood something, but discovered that you really didn’t, because you’ve never truly experienced it yourself?

- The loss of a parent!
- The rejection and abandonment of a child!
- The cheating of a spouse!

We know what we know based upon our experiences! We have experienced much from God... but through what lens do we understand those things?

God also experiences much in relation to us... He doesn’t need “experience” to know what we go thru... but it helps us, knowing that He does! **Heb. 4:14-16**

God is able to empathize with us... But I wonder, have we ever tried to empathize with Him? To try to look through the lens by which He sees?

To consider what it must be like to be God to a people like us?

- When God, our Creator, hears us deny Him, or reject Him as such...
- When our heavenly Father experiences us in our rebellion as children...
- When God, who is the definition of love, is rejected by those He loves...

What must it be like for God to interact with us in our sin? What would He, the “all-powerful” & “all-loving” God do to get our attention?

The book of Hosea is one of the most attention-grabbing books in Scripture! It serves as a lens into how God experiences us, and how the knowledge of that should change how we respond to Him!

Hosea was a prophet of God... called to declare the Word of the Lord... but he was to do more than just declare it, he was called to live it, for all to see!

Hosea was called to experience the very message that God wanted to communicate to His people... for experience was/is a much better teacher!

Hosea 1-2

- “Go, take to yourself a wife of whoredom...”
- “have children of whoredom...”
- “for the land commits great whoredom by forsaking the Lord...”

God had Hosea marry someone he knew would be unfaithful to him!

Why? Because that is what God has done with His people!

Hosea has a child with Gomer & God has him name the child Jezreel... a memory of bloodshed... a place of destruction... a name that means “to scatter.”

Why? Because that has been the story of God’s people time & time again!

Gomer has two other children (probably not Hosea’s) & God tells him to name them “Lo-ruhama” which means “no mercy”, and “Lo-ammi” which means “not my people”

Why? Because the covenant between God and His people has been broken, and the result is a removal of the covenant blessings!

Just as when an adulterer gives birth to an illegitimate child, the spouse has no obligation to that child, so too does God have no obligation to us if we are the ones who have broken covenant with Him!

God, like Hosea, does not have to show mercy, or claim an illegitimate child as his own... God’s people/Gomer have made their bed & now must lie in it!

God, like Hosea, is justified in letting His bride go, to fend for herself... Sometimes you don’t know what you have (love, blessing) until it’s gone!

God, like Hosea, would be completely just to abandon... scatter... withhold mercy... and remove Himself from the covenant relationship He established with His people... BUT God, like Hosea, instead chooses:

- To pursue her/us... **Hosea 2:14-15**
- To buy her/us back... pay the ransom... **Hosea 3:1-2**
- To be faithful to the marriage covenant... **Hosea 2:19**
- To “sow & reap” a harvest, where the seed of “Jezreel” was “scattered”...
- To “show mercy” to “No Mercy/Lo-ruhama”... **Hosea 2:23**
- To declare “Not my people/Lo-Ammi” the “Children of the Living God!” **Hosea 1:10**

God wants to get our attention... Will Hosea’s experience be enough to do so, or do we need to have a “Though You slay Me” kind of experience ourselves?

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