



Restoring my Soul

HE RESTORES MY SOUL, HE LEADS ME IN PATHS

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MARCH 2023

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A FIVE DAY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

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By the prophetic Scriptures

The Lord appointed the apostle Paul to be a light to the Gentiles. **Act 13:47**. He was sent by the Lord to the Gentiles to preach the gospel of sonship and to establish lampstand churches. **Act 9:15**. Paul's letter to the Romans was written at the conclusion of his third missionary journey. It is the most systematic of all Paul's letters to the Gentiles. In his letter to the Romans, the apostle Paul proclaimed the mystery of God from the prophetic Scriptures.

'The mystery of God' is the gospel of sonship. **Col 1:27. Eph 6:19**. It is also the mystery of Jews and Gentiles united in the one body of Christ. **Eph 2:11-22. Eph 3:1-7**. In the time of the end, the mystery includes the removal of the blindness that has been invoked upon the Jewish nation, along with the regathering of the ten lost tribes of Israel in the fullness of the nations, so that 'all Israel will be saved'. **Rom 11:25-26**.

When we consider Paul's introduction and conclusion to his letter to the Romans, we observe the emphasis that he placed upon the gospel that is contained 'in the prophetic Scriptures'. For example, Paul began his letter by saying, 'Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God which He promised before *through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures*, concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord'. **Rom 1:1-3**.

Paul concluded his letter by saying, 'Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret since the world began but now made manifest, and *by the prophetic Scriptures made known to all nations*, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, for obedience to the faith - to God, alone wise, be glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen.' **Rom 16:25-27**.

Paul preached from Hosea

Paul declared that the prophets proclaimed the gospel of God in the holy Scriptures. **Act 28:23**. On this basis, Paul himself proclaimed the gospel of God, which is the gospel of sonship, using the prophetic Scriptures. He particularly used the Scriptures that were written by the prophet Isaiah and the prophet Hosea.

Paul specifically quoted from the book of Hosea concerning the inclusion of the Gentiles in the kingdom of God. We read, 'As He says also in Hosea: "I will call them My people, who were not My people, and her beloved, who was not beloved. And it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them, 'You are not My people', there they shall be called sons of the living God"'. **Rom 9:25-26**.

It is important to recognise that Paul did not simply use an isolated quote to support his point. He used this quote to direct our attention to the central proposition that is contained in the entire book of Hosea. The book of Hosea is a significant prophetic book. In many ways, it is a condensed summary of the book of Isaiah.

The prophet Hosea certainly had a unique participation in the offering and sufferings of Christ. At the beginning of Hosea's ministry, the Lord asked him to marry a harlot. Hosea's relationship with his wife then became a type of the Lord's relationship with the nation of Israel. The Lord told Hosea that the entire nation had committed great harlotry. **Hos 1:2**.

The name of Hosea's wife was Gomer. The name Gomer means 'completion'. It means 'to bring to a complete end'. Remembering that Hosea's marriage was typical of the Lord's relationship with the house of Israel, this was a fitting name for Hosea's wife. The Lord did bring the whole house of Israel to *a complete end* because of their idolatry and unfaithfulness. However, because 'the complete end' was in the cross, the prophet Isaiah declared that it would 'overflow with righteousness'. **Isa 10:22**.

Further Study **ROMANS 9**

Jezreel

In the same way that Gomer represents the house of Israel as an unfaithful harlot, Gomer's children represent all the individuals and families who had been brought forth and nurtured by Israel's motherhood. The Lord instructed Hosea to give each of Gomer's children a particular name. The name of each child demonstrated the nature of the Lord's relationship with the people who had rejected Him.

When Gomer bore their first son, the Lord instructed Hosea to call his name Jezreel. The name Jezreel means 'God scatters' or 'God sows'. The Lord explained the reason for this name by saying to Hosea, 'Call his name Jezreel, for in a little while I will avenge the bloodshed of Jezreel on the house of Jehu, and bring an end to the kingdom of the house of Israel. It shall come to pass in that day that I will break the bow of Israel in the Valley of Jezreel.' **Hos 1:4-5**. Using the symbolism of the weapon that belongs to an archer in the army, 'the bow of Israel' refers to its capacity to overcome and conquer its enemies.

The Valley of Jezreel was the plain that was situated between Jezreel and Megiddo. It was part of the territory that had been given to the tribe of Ephraim as their inheritance, when the nation of Israel entered the promised land.

In the first case, the Valley of Jezreel was the place where the strength of the bow of Israel was demonstrated. It was the place where the Lord sovereignly destroyed the vast army of the Midianites before Gideon and his three hundred men. **Jdg 6:33**. Notably, in this instance, the Lord ensured that the strength of the bow of Israel was demonstrated in weakness. We recall that, for this reason, the Lord kept reducing the size of Gideon's army. Furthermore, his army was not equipped with bows and arrows, or any natural weaponry. The remnant army in that day was equipped with trumpets and lamps. **Jdg 7:19-21**.

Further Study JUDGES 7

The Valley of Jezreel

The Valley of Jezreel became an important place for the nation of Israel. Over time, the valley changed from being a place of miraculous deliverance to being the place of God's sovereign judgement upon them. The city of Jezreel, which was at one end of the valley, was the place where King Ahab had his royal palace. The Scriptures recorded that 'Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all of the kings of Israel who were before him'. **1Ki 16:33**. Ahab's wife was Jezebel. She was a worshipper of Baal and known to be a sorcerer. **2Ki 9:22**. In the days of Elijah, Jezebel persecuted and killed many of the prophets of the Lord. **1Ki 18:4**.

Ahab coveted the vineyard of Naboth, which was next to his royal palace in Jezreel, and offered to purchase it from him. **1Ki 21:1**. However, Naboth was unwilling to sell it to the king because it was the inheritance that his family had received in the promised land. Seeing how upset Ahab had become because he was not able to have this vineyard, Jezebel arranged for Naboth to be falsely accused by worthless men, and then murdered. She then instructed her husband to go and take possession of the vineyard. **1Ki 21:7-16**.

In response to this great sin, the Lord sent Elijah the prophet to say to Ahab, 'In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, dogs shall lick your blood, even yours.' **1Ki 21:19**. Furthermore, the Lord said, concerning Ahab's wife, 'The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.' **1Ki 21:23**. The word of the Lord concerning Ahab was fulfilled after he was killed by a random arrow in a battle with the Syrians. His blood ran from the wound onto the floor of his chariot. When the chariot was washed by a pool, the dogs licked up the blood. **1Ki 22:38**.

The bloodshed of Jezreel

The word of the Lord concerning Jezebel, and the rest of Ahab's household, was fulfilled after Jehu was appointed by the Lord to be the king of Israel in the place of Ahab's son. Jehu had previously served in the army of Ahab and had become a commander in the army of his son, Joram. Under the instruction of Elisha, the young prophet who anointed Jehu said to him, 'You shall strike down the house of Ahab your master, that I may avenge the blood of My servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the Lord, at the hand of Jezebel.' **2Ki 9:7.**

Jehu shot King Joram, the son of Ahab, straight through his heart, with an arrow. He then cast his body into the field that had belonged to Naboth. **2Ki 9:24-26.** Following this, he commanded that Jezebel be thrown out of her window. He trampled her body under the feet of his horse, and then went inside to eat and drink. When he later asked for her body to be buried, the servants discovered that most of her body had already been eaten by wild dogs. This event was the direct fulfilment of the word of Elijah concerning the death of Jezebel. **2Ki 9:30-37.** After the death of Jezebel, King Jehu also organised the slaughter of Ahab's seventy sons. **2Ki 10:6-7.** All of this bloodshed occurred in Jezreel, at the hand of Jehu.

Jehu had been an instrument of judgement in the Lord's hand. The Lord commended him for his obedience. The reward for his obedience was that his sons would sit on the throne of Israel for four generations. **2Ki 10:30.** Nevertheless, Jehu was not a righteous king. Even though he killed all the prophets of Baal at that time, he did not turn away from the idolatry of Jeroboam, who had placed the golden calf in Bethel and the golden calf in Dan. **2Ki 10:29. 2Ki 10:31.**

An end to the kingdom

Jehu was an instrument of judgement in the Lord's hand. The Lord used him to judge the house of Ahab because of its wickedness. However, this does not mean that Jehu was a righteous king. Like many of the kings of Israel before him, he continued to follow the idolatry of Jeroboam. **2Ki 10:29**. In due time, the Lord also judged the house of Jehu. The Lord declared to the prophet Hosea, 'In a little while, I will avenge the bloodshed of Jezreel on the house of Jehu, and bring an end to the kingdom of the house of Israel.' **Hos 1:4**.

Notably, in the days of Jehu, the Lord began to cut off parts of Israel. **2Ki 10:32-33**. All of Jehu's sons did evil in the sight of the Lord. Hosea prophesied during the reign of Jehu's great-grandson. The Lord avenged the bloodshed of Jezreel on the house of Jehu, in the fourth generation of his sons. Jehu's great-great-grandson reigned for only six months before he was openly assassinated before all the people. **2Ki 15:8-10**.

When the Lord judged the house of Jehu, He broke the bow of Israel in the Valley of Jezreel. **Hos 1:4-5**. Approximately thirty years after the end of the house of Jehu, the Lord brought an end to the whole kingdom of Israel. **2Ki 17:7-23**. The ten northern tribes were conquered by the Assyrians and were scattered among the Gentiles.

We are reminded that the name Jezreel means 'God scatters'. The ten northern tribes of Israel, under the leadership of Ephraim, were scattered by the Assyrians. This was the sovereign judgement of God upon them. From that day, they have been assimilated among the Gentile nations of the world. It is not possible to trace the lineage of any modern nation, or group of people, to the ten lost tribes of Israel. They will never be regathered as a definable national group of people. However, the remnant of the northern tribes of Israel are regathered into the kingdom of God in the fullness of the Gentiles.

Lo-Ruhamah and Lo-Ammi

The Lord further illustrated the nature of His judgement upon the house of Israel when He named Gomer's next two children. When Gomer bore a daughter, the Lord said to Hosea, 'Call her name Lo-Ruhamah, for I will no longer have mercy on the house of Israel, but I will utterly take them away.' **Hos 1:6**. The name Lo-Ruhamah means 'no mercy'. Until this time, the Lord had continued to extend mercy to the house of Israel because of the covenant that He had made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. **2Ki 13:23**. Despite their idolatry, He had not yet destroyed them or cast them away from His presence. However, through the naming of Gomer's second child, the Lord proclaimed that this mercy had come to an end.

When Gomer bore another son, the Lord said to Hosea, 'Call his name Lo-Ammi, for you are not My people, and I will not be your God.' **Hos 1:9**. The name Lo-Ammi means 'not My people'. This means that the northern kingdom of Israel had completely lost the blessing of adoption. There were no longer any believing families within the house of Israel who were walking in the faith of their father, Abraham. Rather, all of the people served Baal and practised sorcery. They had *sold themselves* to do evil in the sight of the Lord. **2Ki 17:17**. The time had now come for the Lord to 'remove them from His sight'. **2Ki 17:18,20,23**. Every child in the house of Israel, whether circumcised or uncircumcised, had become no different from the unblest heathen. **Hos 2:4. Hos 4:6. Hos 5:7. Hos 9:12**.

In the place where it was said

We soberly recognise the comprehensive nature of the sovereign judgement that was proclaimed upon the house of Israel. However, remarkably, the prophet Hosea then continued, 'Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or numbered. And it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them, "You are not My people", there it shall be said to them, "You are sons of the living God"'. **Hos 1:10.**

The first and foremost application of 'the place' in this prophetic statement is *the cross of Christ*. Significantly, when the house of Israel was *scattered* by the Assyrians among the nations of the world, they were also *sown* into the judgement of the cross. The cross is the full revelation of God's mercy and His judgement. It is the place of blessing and cursing, and of remembrance and forgetfulness. On His offering journey from the garden of Gethsemane to the cross, Jesus Christ gathered up the whole human race and took us out into the sea of God's forgetfulness. However, at the same time, He brought us back from the land of forgetfulness, by the power of His resurrection life, to be remembered by God as His sons.

Speaking about the place of judgement where Christ suffered the full wrath of God upon our sin and uncleanness, the psalmist asked the question, 'Shall Your lovingkindness be declared in the grave? Or Your faithfulness *in the place of destruction*? Shall Your wonders be known in the dark? And Your righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?' **Psa 88:11-12.** The cross is the place where God proclaimed to the whole human race, in the offering of Christ, 'You are not My people.' In this same place of judgement, He also proclaimed to every person who is willing to repent and to lay hold of His mercy, in the fellowship of Christ's offering, 'You are sons of the living God.' **Rom 9:25-27.**

Overflowing with righteousness

The ten northern tribes of Israel have been scattered among the Gentiles in all nations. The remnant of the house of Israel is now being recovered, as part of the Gentiles, in the fellowship of lampstand churches in all nations. This has been true for the whole church age. Writing to the elect who had been scattered abroad in lampstand churches, the apostle Peter declared that we are ‘a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people ... who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy’. **1Pe 2:9-10**.

The prophet Hosea concluded his first summary of the gospel by saying, ‘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! Say to your brethren, “My people”, and to your sisters “Mercy is shown”’. **Hos 1:11. Hos 2:1**. In these summary verses, Hosea identified that the threefold judgement of God upon the house of Israel would overflow with righteousness through the offering of Christ on the cross. When the judgement of God overflowed with righteousness, through the offering of Christ, the meaning of the name given to each of Hosea’s three children was reversed.

The name Jezreel, which means ‘God scatters’, was reversed when God *gathered together* both Jews and Gentiles in His physical body through His offering on the cross. **Eph 2:14-18**. The prophet Isaiah proclaimed that the true Israel of God would be brought forth from the wellsprings of Judah. **Isa 48:1**. This prophecy was fulfilled through Jesus Christ, who was born in the lineage of David, from the tribe of Judah. The true Israel of God is the ‘one new man’ that was created by Jesus Christ on the cross. **Eph 2:14-16**. The ‘one new man’ is the body of Christ, which includes both Jews and Gentiles.

Further Study **ISAIAH 10**

Jew and Gentile in one body

Having removed the middle wall of separation, and united Jews and Gentiles in His physical body on the cross, Jesus Christ has become the 'one Head' of the true Israel of God. **Hos 1:11**. He is the Head of His many-membered body. **Eph 1:22-23**. The body of Christ is the true temple which belongs to God the Father. In his letter to the Ephesians, the apostle Paul declared to both the Jews and the Gentiles, 'Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God.' **Eph 2:19**.

Speaking to both the Jews and the Gentiles in the body of Christ, the Lord said, 'Say to your brethren "My people", and to your sisters "Mercy is shown"'. **Hos 2:1**. We observe that the name Lo-Ruhamah, which means 'no mercy', was reversed by the command to say to one another, 'Mercy is shown'. The name Lo-Ammi, which means 'not My people', was reversed by the command to say to one another, 'My people'. When a dispute arose on this matter because of Paul's ministry to the Gentiles, the apostle Peter boldly declared to his Jewish brethren that they needed to embrace the fulfilment of this prophecy in the early church. That is, the believing Jews needed to embrace the believing Gentiles as their brothers and sisters in Christ.

Peter testified that he had personally witnessed the salvation of the Gentiles when he was sent by God to proclaim the gospel of sonship to Cornelius and his household. **Act 15:7**. **Act 10**. He recounted that the Holy Spirit had sovereignly fallen upon them, clearly demonstrating that God no longer made any distinction between the Jews and the Gentiles. **Act 15:8-9**. The apostle James proclaimed that the gathering of the Jews and the Gentiles into the body of Christ was the restoration of the tabernacle of David. **Act 15:14-18**. 'The tabernacle of David' describes the dwelling place of all twelve tribes of the true Israel of God, on Mount Zion.

The day of Jezreel

In summary, the Lord declared through Hosea, 'For great will be the day of Jezreel!' **Hos 1:11**. In the first case, 'the day of Jezreel' was the day of Christ's offering! We know that the offering of Christ is a finished work in relation to salvation and judgement. On His offering journey from the upper room to the cross, Jesus learned our obedience and finished all the works of our sonship. **Isa 26:12. Psa 139:15-16. Eph 2:10.**

However, we also know that everything that Christ has already accomplished for us on the cross has not yet been revealed in our lives. **Heb 10:14. 1Jn 3:2.** The finished work of Christ is progressively revealed in our lives as we continue to embrace our unique participation in the fellowship of His offering and sufferings. **Heb 5:9-10.** Significantly, we observe the same principle in relation to the fulfilment of the day of Jezreel for the house of Israel among the Gentile nations.

Since the time of the early church, God's promise to the house of Israel has been fulfilled for *a remnant* of sons of God in the fellowship of lampstand churches. The apostle James clearly understood this when he addressed his letter to 'the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad'. **Jas 1:1.** However, in the time of the end, there will be a further manifestation of *the day of Jezreel* when God's promise will be fulfilled for *the fullness of the Gentiles*.

Once the Father has taken His seat, the remnant from Christ's lampstand churches will be sealed as the firstfruits of the true Israel of God. In the time of the end, the evangelistic ministry of the firstfruits will gather a great multitude which no man can number, from every nation, tribe, people and tongue, into the kingdom of God. **Rev 7:9.** This great multitude will be the fulfilment of Jacob's prophecy concerning Ephraim. Jacob prophesied that the seed of Ephraim would become the fullness of the nations. **Gen 48:19.**

Bring charges against your mother

Having concluded his first summary, the prophet Hosea began another summary by saying, 'Bring charges against your mother, bring charges; for she is not My wife, nor am I her Husband! Let her put away her harlotries from her sight, and her adulteries from between her breasts.' **Hos 2:2.**

We can apply this statement to the house of Israel. Following the split between the house of Israel and the house of Judah, the ten northern tribes became increasingly unfaithful to the Lord. The Lord likened their unfaithfulness to harlotry. The prophet Jeremiah declared, 'Have you seen what backsliding Israel has done? She has gone up on every high mountain and under every green tree, and there played the harlot.' **Jer 3:6.** On account of Israel's spiritual adultery, the Lord put her away and gave her a certificate of divorce. **Jer 3:8.**

Significantly, we can also apply this statement to the unclean daughters of Zion during the church age. The church is the bride of Christ. When Jesus Christ addressed the seven lampstand churches, He was sanctifying and cleansing His wife with the washing of the water of the word. **Eph 5:25-26.** This initiative of Christ had a polarising impact within the seven lampstand churches. We know that there would have been a remnant in each lampstand church who heeded the word of Christ, embraced their participation in the fellowship of His offering and sufferings, and became overcomers within their generation. **Rev 2:7.**

However, most of the believers in the lampstand churches rejected the word of Christ. They did not recognise the need to be washed by Him. They did not turn from their idolatry. Rather, they continued to embrace the various doctrines that were promoted by the synagogue of Satan. In this manner, the daughters of Zion became like unfaithful harlots. The prophet Isaiah said, 'The daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with outstretched necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, making a jingling with their feet.' **Isa 3:16-17.**

A harlot church

The Lord declared through the prophet Hosea concerning a harlot church, 'I will not have mercy on her children, for they are the children of harlotry. For their mother has played the harlot; she who conceived them has behaved shamefully. For she said, "I will go after my loves, who give me my bread and my water, my wool and my linen, my oil and my drink"' **Hos 2:4-5**. Rather than remaining faithful to the Lord, a harlot church has chased her lovers. Her 'lovers' include the secular nations of the world. The unsanctified mixture between the church and the state is one of the symptoms of this harlotry.

The Lord declared that He will bring a harlot church to judgement. The corruption of a harlot church will be exposed before the eyes of the world. The Lord said, 'I will uncover her lewdness in the sight of her lovers, and no one shall deliver her from My hand. I will also cause her mirth to cease, her feast days, her new moons, her sabbaths – all her appointed feasts.' **Hos 2:10-11**. The Lord's judgement upon a harlot church will include bringing all her sacramental, religious practices to an end. The Lord summarised His judgement by saying, 'I will punish her for the days of the Baals to which she burned incense. She decked herself with her earrings and jewellery, and went after her lovers; but Me she forgot.' **Hos 2:13**.

When we recognise the Lord's judgement upon the idolatry and harlotry of the daughters of Zion, we understand why the Lord said to the people, 'Bring charges against your mother.' **Hos 2:2**. The charges will include the reality that the unclean daughters of Zion have replaced the gospel of sonship with the doctrines of men; and they have replaced the fellowship of the *agape* meal with sacramental practices. **Mar 7:6-7**. The Lord was clear that a harlot church will not bring forth sons of God. **Hos 2:4. Hos 1:2**.

The Valley of Achor

In the context of His sovereign judgement upon all harlotry, the Lord also promised that He will cleanse a remnant from among the daughters of Zion. Speaking about an unclean daughter of Zion, He said, 'I will allure her, will bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfort to her. I will give her vineyards from there, and *the Valley of Achor as a door of hope*; she will sing there, as in the days of her youth, as in the day when she came up from the land of Egypt.' **Hos 2:15**. The Lord will speak comfort to those who turn in response to His rebuke and begin to mourn as they look upon Him whom they have pierced. **Zec 12:10**.

The expression of the Lord's comfort will be to give her the Valley of Achor *as a door of hope*. This is a significant statement. The Valley of Achor is the place where the nation of Israel sanctified themselves by dealing with the sin of Achan, who had hidden things in his tent which were devoted to destruction. The Scripture recorded that once this corruption was removed from among the people, 'the Lord turned from the fierceness of His anger'. **Jos 7:26**. The place of God's judgement became the door of hope when the people removed the idolatry from their midst.

The nation of Israel had to deal with the idolatry in their midst before they could possess the promised land, in the same way in which Jacob needed to deal with the idolatry in his family before they could return with him to Bethel. Jacob said to his family while they lived in Shechem, 'Put away the foreign gods that are among you, purify yourselves, and change your garments. Then let us arise and go up to Bethel; and I will make an altar there to God, who answered me in the day of my distress and has been with me in the way which I have gone.' **Gen 35:2-3**.

A door of hope

As we approach the time of the end, the Lord will equip an overcoming remnant in lampstand churches to instruct the daughters of Zion to remove all idolatry from their midst so that they can be recovered and restored as part of the bride of Christ. Jesus declared to the presbytery in Philadelphia that He had set before them an open door. **Rev 3:8**. Notably, when the Lord places *an open door* before an overcoming presbytery to proclaim the gospel of sonship to the unclean daughters of Zion, He will also be placing *a door of hope* among the daughters of Zion, for those who are willing to turn from their idolatry. **Hos 2:15**.

Referring to the restoration and cleansing of the daughters of Zion as we approach the time of the end, the Lord said, 'And it shall be in that day ... that you will call Me "My Husband", and no longer call Me "My Master"'. **Hos 2:16**. The name 'My Master' can equally be translated as 'My Baali'. We note the difference between being *married to Christ*, and simply addressing Him in the same way that the Canaanites worshipped Baal, whom they believed to be the son of their chief god.

Addressing the Lord in the same manner as Baal is an expression of idolatry; not the simplicity of devotion to Christ. **2Co 11:3**. Referring to the judgement at the last day, Jesus said, 'Many will say to Me in that day, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?" And then I will declare to them, "*I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practise lawlessness!*"' **Mat 7:22-23**. This judgement will be the outcome for all believers who have not been cleansed from sin and uncleanness, in the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings.

Betrothed to Christ forever

The Lord proclaimed through Hosea, concerning all those who have been cleansed from sin and uncleanness as part of the heavenly Jerusalem, *'I will betroth you to Me forever; yes, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and justice, in lovingkindness and mercy; I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness, and you shall know the Lord.'* **Hos 2:19-20**. In a similar way, the Lord promised the overcomers in the presbytery of Philadelphia that He would write upon them, *'the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God.'* **Rev 3:12**.

When the name of the New Jerusalem is written upon the 144 000, as the firstfruits of the true Israel of God, it will signify that they have been betrothed to the Lord forever. **Rev 7:1-8**. Furthermore, they will be sanctified to be *'the walls'* and *'the gates'* of the New Jerusalem, during the time of the end. **Rev 21:12**.

The great multitude that no man can number from every nation, which comprises the fullness of the bride city, will come in through the 144 000, who are *'the gates'* of the city. When the great multitude come into the city, they will also be betrothed to the Lord forever. The fulfilment of this promise for the great multitude is recorded in Revelation Chapter 7. **Rev 7:15-17**.

The Lord further summarised *'the day of Jezreel'* in the time of the end, by saying, *'It shall come to pass in that day that I will answer ... I will answer the heavens, and they shall answer the earth. The earth shall answer with grain, with new wine, and with oil; they shall answer Jezreel.'* **Hos 2:21-22**. This is an interesting passage. The first point to note is that the Lord refers to the firstfruits of the true Israel of God who have been cleansed and betrothed to Him forever, by the name Jezreel. We have considered that the name Jezreel means *'God scatters'*. However, it equally means *'God sows'*.

The bow of the true Israel of God

The Lord proclaimed concerning His bride, 'Then I will sow her for Myself in the earth'. **Hos 2:23**. Since the beginning of the church age, the Lord has sown sons of God in lampstand churches that comprise the bride of Christ, among all the nations of the world. For example, we know that the apostle Peter led a large company of sons of God from Jerusalem down to Babylon. Writing to the elect, who had been sown into other places, he concluded his first letter by saying, '*She who is in Babylon, elect together with you, greets you.*' **1Pe 5:13**.

In the time of the end, the elect will be sown into the world as they proclaim the gospel of the kingdom, which is the gospel of sonship, as a testimony in all nations. When the first seal is opened, the 144 000 will be sent into the world like *the vanguard of an army*. **Rev 6:1-2**.

We recall that the Lord broke the bow of Israel in the Valley of Jezreel when He judged the house of Jehu, before He then scattered the entire nation of Israel among the nations. **Hos 1:5**. Significantly, the Lord will restore an overcoming remnant in lampstand churches *as the bow of the true Israel of God*, before He regathers the whole house of Israel as the fullness of the nations. **Rom 11:25**.

The key point is that the remnant from the lampstand churches who have overcome Satan by the blood of the Lamb, the word of their testimony, and laying down their lives for one another, will be sealed as the firstfruits of the true Israel of God. **Rev 12:11**. The firstfruits will become the bow of the true Israel of God in the hand of Jesus Christ, as the rider of the white horse. When the apostle John saw the opening of the first seal, he said, 'I looked, and behold, a white horse. *He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.*' **Rev 6:2**.

The redemption of the bride

The third chapter of the book of Hosea contains *a third summary* that focuses on the redemption of the house of Israel as part of the church, the bride of Christ. The unfaithfulness of Hosea's wife, Gomer, was a direct parallel to the unfaithfulness of the house of Israel, to the Lord. To illustrate the way in which He would recover His unfaithful bride, the Lord said to Hosea, '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.' **Hos 3:1.**

Hosea obeyed the Lord, and recorded, 'So I bought her for myself for fifteen shekels of silver, and one and one-half homers of barley.' **Hos 3:2.** One and a half homers was the equivalent of fifteen ephahs of barley. The fifteen ephahs of barley was, most likely, worth the same as fifteen shekels of silver. **Amo 8:5.** Hence, half the payment for the woman was made in silver and half the payment was made in barley. The total payment was the equivalent of thirty shekels of silver. Under the Law Covenant, thirty shekels of silver was the value that was placed upon the life of a slave. **Exo 21:32.**

The thirty pieces of silver is significant because it was the amount that the Jewish Sanhedrin was willing to give to Judas for the betrayal of Jesus. The Gospel of Matthew recorded that Judas asked the chief priests, 'What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?' They responded by counting out to him 'thirty pieces of silver'. **Mat 26:14-15.** In this transaction, they rejected Christ as their King and Shepherd. They valued His life as that of a lowly slave. In the first case, the payment of the thirty pieces of silver demonstrated that Jesus Christ was despised by men. He was not esteemed. **Isa 53:3.** He was the Stone which the builders rejected. **Psa 118:22.**

The value of the life of a slave

The prophet Zechariah said to the people in his day, 'If it is agreeable to you, give me my wages; and if not, refrain.' The people responded by giving 'thirty pieces of silver' to the prophet. **Zec 11:12**. This value was a reproach upon the Lord. It demonstrated that the people spurned His love and care toward them as their Shepherd-King. The Lord then said to Zechariah, concerning the money, 'Throw it to the potter – that princely price they set on Me.' **Zec 11:13**. We know that this prophecy was fulfilled when Judas threw the thirty pieces of silver into the temple, and the priests used the money to buy a potter's field. **Mat 27:5-10**.

Jesus did die as a slave, but not as a slave of sin. He died as the willing and obedient Slave of the Father! Jesus Christ is Yahweh the Son. In the fellowship of the Everlasting Covenant, He emptied Himself to become the Father's Son and Slave for the purpose of revealing the Father and accomplishing His will for mankind. **Php 2:5-7**. As the Son of Man, He then humbled Himself and was obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. **Php 2:8**. His slavehood revealed His kingship. As Jesus Christ descended to the lowest parts of the earth, in obedience to the Father, He conquered all of His enemies, and redeemed us from our slavery to sin and death.

The key point is that the prophet Hosea redeemed his wife with the equivalent of thirty shekels of silver, because it was 'the value of the life of a slave'. From the perspective of the Jewish Sanhedrin, the thirty shekels of silver was *the miserly value* that they placed upon the life of Christ as a slave. However, at the same time, Christ's death as the Slave of the Father was *the great value* that He placed upon the redemption of His bride, the church. Jesus Christ redeemed the church by laying down His own life, *not* with thirty shekels of silver. **Eph 5:25**. **1Pe 1:17-19**.

Further Study **1 PETER 1**

For many days

Having redeemed his wife, Hosea said to her, 'You shall stay with me *many days*; you shall not play the harlot, nor shall you have [love] a man – so, too, will I be toward you.' **Hos 3:3**. The simplest interpretation of this verse is that Hosea instructed his wife to abstain from all immorality and to remain faithful to him. In turn, he promised to remain faithful to her. In the same way, the apostle Paul said to the Corinthians, 'I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.' **2Co 11:2**.

Speaking about the remnant of the house of Israel in lampstand churches, the Lord said, 'For the children of Israel shall abide *many days* without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred pillar, without ephod or teraphim.' **Hos 3:4**. 'Many days', in this instance, refers to the church age, during which the elect are scattered in lampstand churches among the nations of the world. The Lord said that the remnant would not have a king or a prince, because the church is separate from the state in every nation. The church is the heavenly Jerusalem, and it is not represented on the earth by kings or civil authorities. **Rev 21:2**.

The Lord also said that the remnant in lampstand churches would be 'without sacrifice or sacred pillar'. **Hos 3:4**. We know that the offering of Christ brought an end to all sacrifice and offering in the temple. **Dan 9:27**. However, more broadly, 'a sacred pillar' is any man-made idol in the household of God. The Lord said to the nation of Israel before they entered the promised land, 'You shall not plant for yourself any tree, as a wooden image ... you shall not set up *a sacred pillar*, which the Lord your God hates.' **Deu 16:21-22**. The sacramental practices that have become religious traditions in the church are 'sacred pillars'. They have been established by man as alternatives to fellowship at the tree of life.

Without ephod and teraphim

The Lord said that the faithful remnant in lampstand churches would be 'without ephod or teraphim'. **Hos 3:4**. Under the Law Covenant, the 'ephod' belonged to the high priest, who entered the Presence of the Lord on behalf of the people. **Exo 39:1-7**. In the New Covenant, there is no priesthood that functions as an intermediary between the Lord and His people. **Rom 10:5-8**. Every son of God must receive the word that is publicly proclaimed by the messengers in the right hand of Christ. They must then, *personally, draw near* to join the fellowship of the agape meal. **Heb 10:19-22**. In contrast to this, the presumption of a priest, or any minister, to bless the Eucharist is an example of holding on to a form of 'ephod' in the church.

The 'teraphim' refers to *the household idols* that were used for divination and the worship of ancestral spirits. **Gen 31:19**. The Lord has promised to remove all of these forms of idolatry and uncleanness from His lampstand churches during the church age. **Zec 13:2**. The cleansing and purifying initiative of Jesus Christ, as He walks among His lampstand churches with eyes like a flame of fire, has been received and embraced by *a very small remnant of overcomers* in each generation of the church age. **Isa 1:9**.

As we approach the end of the 'many days' that belong to the church age, the Lord will sovereignly judge all the daughters of Zion who have persisted with their unfaithfulness, and have not forsaken these various forms of idolatry. **Isa 3:16-26**. The Lord will make a complete end of the sacred pillars, the spiritual ephods, and the household idols among the daughters of Zion. This will be a profound manifestation of the judgement of Jezreel upon the church. However, for all those believers who humble themselves under the mighty hand of God, and turn from their idolatry, the day of judgement will also be the day of their cleansing and deliverance.

Further Study **ISAIAH 3**

The last days

We read in the final verse of Hosea Chapter 3, '*Afterward* the children [sons] 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.' **Hos 3:5**. 'The latter days', or 'the last days', refers to the time of the end. After the 'many days' of the church age, the Father will place His throne in the middle of the heavenly Jerusalem, and will spread His tabernacle over all the citizens who belong to Mount Zion. **Isa 4:4-5**. Jesus Christ will also stand up from the right hand of God and will move His entire administration into the centre of the Father's throne. He will stand in the middle of the Father's throne as the Lion of the tribe of Judah. **Rev 5:5-6**.

Jesus Christ will stand as the Son of David to rule over Jews and Gentiles in the one kingdom of God. In the time of the end, the firstfruits of the true Israel of God will gather the fullness of the nations into the kingdom. The great multitude from every nation will seek the Father, and Jesus Christ, who is 'David their king'. **Hos 3:5**. The prophet Isaiah declared, 'In that day there shall be a Root of Jesse, who shall stand as a banner to the people; for the Gentiles shall seek Him, and His resting place shall be glorious ... He will set up a banner for the nations, and will assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.' **Isa 11:10-12**.

Hosea concluded by saying that, when the great multitude come into the kingdom of God in the time of the end, they will 'fear the Lord and His goodness'. **Hos 3:5**. Having been saved in the day of God's wrath upon the nations, in the day of Jezreel, the great multitude will be God-fearers who have beheld the goodness and the severity of God. **Rom 11:22**.

The Valley of Jehoshaphat

We have considered that the house of Israel will be recovered in the Valley of Jezreel as 'the fullness of the nations'. The Scripture also teaches that one-third of the Jewish nation will be recovered in the Valley of Jehoshaphat. The Lord declared through the prophet Joel, 'For behold, in those days and at that time, when I bring back the captives of Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations, and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; and I will enter in judgement with them there on account of My people, My heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations; they have also divided up My land.' **Joe 3:1-2.**

The name Jehoshaphat means 'Yahweh judges'. The Valley of Jehoshaphat is the place where the Lord sovereignly judged the nations who had gathered against the Jews in the days of King Jehoshaphat. In those days, a great multitude, who included the people of Moab and the people of Ammon, gathered against the Jews. Having become a God-fearing king, Jehoshaphat set himself to seek the Lord, and he proclaimed a fast throughout Judah. **2Ch 20:3-4.** The whole nation came together to seek the Lord.

During this sacred assembly, King Jehoshaphat prayed in the midst of all the people, 'O our God, will You not judge them? For we have no power against this great multitude that is coming against us; nor do we know what to do, but our eyes are upon You.' **2Ch 20:12.** When the king had finished praying, the Spirit of the Lord fell upon one of the prophets. The prophet declared, 'Thus says the Lord to you: "Do not be afraid or dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours but God's ... you will not need to fight in this battle. Position yourselves, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, who is with you, O Judah and Jerusalem!"' **2Ch 20:15,17.**

The prophetic song

In response to the prophetic word, King Jehoshaphat and the entire nation bowed before the Lord and began to worship. The Levites stood up to praise the Lord God with voices 'loud and high'. **2Ch 20:18-19**. The following day, the king led the people out of Jerusalem. He encouraged them all by saying, 'Believe in the Lord your God, and you shall be established; believe His prophets, and you shall prosper.' **2Ch 20:20**. After consulting with the people, Jehoshaphat appointed specific men to sing to the Lord and to praise the beauty of His holiness. **2Ch 20:21**. This group of singers went out before the army, singing, 'Praise the Lord, for His mercy endures forever.' **2Ch 20:21**.

The singers were the vanguard who went before the army. Remarkably, 'when they began to sing and praise, the Lord set ambushes against the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; and they were defeated.' **2Ch 20:22**. The enemies of Judah turned against each other until they had destroyed one another. After this great victory, the king and all the people gathered together to bless the Lord in what they called 'the Valley of Berachah', which means 'the valley of blessings'. **2Ch 20:26**. Revealing the two sides of the cross, the Valley of Jehoshaphat, which means 'the valley of judgement', became 'the valley of blessings', for the Lord's people.

In the time of the end, the 144 000 will be the vanguard who go into the world with Christ. Their weaponry will be their prophetic song. The 144 000 will be singing a new song that they have learned in the fellowship of Christ's offering, which only they can sing. **Rev 14:3**. It will be a song of sovereign judgement upon the nations of the world while, at the same time, it will be a song of miraculous deliverance for a great multitude of Jews and Gentiles to come into the kingdom of God.

The salvation of the Jews

The prophet Joel prophesied concerning the opening of the sixth seal, ‘“Let the nations be wakened, and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; for there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations. Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, go down; for the winepress is full, the vats overflow – for their wickedness is great.” Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision.’ **Joe 3:12-14**.

In the prophetic ‘Valley of Jehoshaphat’, two-thirds of the Jewish nation will be cut off for judgement, as part of the harvest of the ungodly nations. However, one-third of the Jewish nation will be delivered from this judgement and will come into the kingdom of God. The Lord declared through the prophet Zechariah, concerning the Jews, ‘I will bring the one-third through the fire, will refine them as silver is refined, and test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, and I will answer them. I will say, “This is My people”; and each one will say, “The Lord is my God”’. **Zec 13:9**. We note that this is *the same confession of faith* that belongs to the fullness of the Gentiles.

In his letter to the Romans, the apostle Paul declared, ‘I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so *all Israel* will be saved.’ **Rom 11:25-26**. We know that there will be a remnant of the Jews in lampstand churches, who will belong to the 144 000 as the firstfruits of the true Israel of God. **Rev 7:4-5. Zec 9:13**. However, by the time that the sixth seal is opened, there will also be a great harvest from the Jewish nation, who will join the fullness of the Gentiles in the mountain of the Lord’s house as it fills the whole earth. **Isa 2:2**.



Restoring
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