Hosea and The Epistles of John: *Hesed*, God's Covenant Love

Lesson 6: Covenant Redemption

Key Verse: "So I bought her for fifteen shekels of silver and a homer and a lethech of barley."~Hosea 3.2

When purchasing a new car, some advise taking a hammer to put the first ding on your new car! It is fun and exciting to get something new: a car, a dress, a job, a home, and other opportunities and material things. However, it is inevitable that with time, "the shine wears off", and what was once exciting and thrilling is now ordinary or tedious or damaged! However, time has not ever, nor will ever, change how your **Redeemer** feels about you. No matter how many dings or how much damage you have in your life, He never regrets having personally paid the price of your **redemption**, or freedom from sin's enslavement. His redemption of you means that "the shine" of His Glory will never wear off.

Thank You, Lord, for redeeming us from sin. Even more, You are our Advocate whose blood is the propitiation that will never allow us to be placed in sin's marketplace! Help us understand the cost of our redemption this week. Show us how precious we are to you and may we in return belong only to You.

Hosea 3.1-5 And the LORD said to me, "Go again, love a woman who is loved by another man and is an adulteress, even as the LORD loves the children of Israel, though they turn to other gods and love cakes of raisins."

2 So I bought her for fifteen shekels of silver and a homer and a lethech of barley. **3** And I said to her, "You must dwell as mine for many days. You shall not play the whore, or belong to another man; so will I also be to you."

4 For the children of Israel shall dwell many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or pillar, without ephod or household gods.

5Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the LORD their God, and David their king, and they shall come in fear to the LORD and to his goodness in the latter days.

Diamonds: The most striking feature of Hosea 3.1-5 is that this is the only place where Hosea speaks directly, using his first-person voice ("LORD said to me", "I bought", "I said"). All we hear in Hosea's voice hints at heartbreak and at shattering consequences for Gomer's persistent adultery. The intentional phrase "love a woman who is loved by another man and *is an adulteress*…" implies Gomer as the adulterer, not a different woman caught up in adultery. That Gomer is the one God commands Hosea to love is reinforced by God's command, "Go *again*…" While the storyline is of the shattered marriage between Hosea and Gomer, the real focus is the LORD's love of His unfaithful nation, "the children of Israel".

1. From verse 1, what are the people of Israel choosing to love?
2. From verse 1, what is God's response to the choice of what His children love, even as it isn't Him?

Imagine how humiliating this command from God is to Hosea. Gomer continues in prostitution and adultery despite his faithfulness to her, and devotion to providing for her even as she shares his luxuries with her lovers (Hosea 2.5, 7-8). It is not clear who is raising their three children, Jezreel, No Mercy, and Not My People. Even worse, it is implied that they are being raised within the sex trade industry (Hosea 2.4). And now, Hosea must "Go again" and love her.

3. It is okay to consider what is not described in Hosea's obedience to God's command in Hosea 3.1-2. What do you imagine Hosea had to endure to complete the transaction summarized in the sparse sentence, "So I bought her for 15 shekels of silver and a homer and a lethech of barley." (V 2)?

Dr. Dearman reminds us that Hosea has already bought his bride for her original bride price in Hosea 1.2[1]. And here again Hosea must pay for his bride.

4. Out of what circumstance does it appear that Hosea is buying Gomer (Hosea 3.1-5)?

[1] Dearman, p. 136

Hosea's actions allude to the two times God has paid for His people's sins. We often recognize God's payment of His Son, Jesus, to save us from His wrath and to free us from sin. However, God paid to cover the shame of sin brought on His Beloved first children, Adam and Eve. Adam and Eve learned of God's light in hard contrast to their descent into darkness just as John teaches us in 1 John 1.5-6. Their sudden awareness of God's perfect light caused them to hide their shame, represented by their nakedness, first with fig leaves (Genesis 3.7, 10). But self-righteousness never turns God's wrath from sin, nor does it have the ability to make one holy like God is Holy. And so, God did the unthinkable to one (or more) of the perfections in His Creation. He killed it to cover His sinful children (Genesis 3.21).

5. Consider how pleased God was in Genesis 1.24-25, 31. Consider that God Himself created each animal, calling them good (Genesis 1.25)! And now consider that He had to choose one or two to kill to cover His children's shame. What do you think this cost God?

6. What does this first payment for sin's shame teach you about God?

Having purchased her, Hosea establishes clear boundaries with Gomer (V 3). The purpose of her being isolated from other men and unable to have sexual intercourse with her legal husband (who now also legally owns her as his servant) is found in God's message to Israel in verse 4: they too will be isolated from their political power and religious institutions as well as deprived of necessary things that they have corrupted. God's plan is to purify them from their idolatry through isolation, thus inducing their repentance, and then to restore them to *His Goodness*.[2] "Hosea's call to the people to return to YHWH (Exodus 33.19-20) is based on his conviction that YHWH's forgiveness and goodness work in tandem, and that YHWH has defined for the people what is good in accord with His integrity."[3]

7. You and John live(d) in "the latter days" of V 5! What has John written in 1 John 1.1-2.17 that enlightens your understanding of Hosea's prophecy in V 5?

Deity: Redeemer[4]~ (Hosea 3.2) Sinners find themselves in bondage to sin (John 8.34; Romans 6.6, 16-17) and under the curse of the law (Deuteronomy 27.26; Galatians 3.10, 13). Christ has redeemed sinners by the ransom price of His life (Mark 10.45; Galatians 4.4-5; 1 Timothy 2.5-6). The blood of Christ is explicitly identified as the price by which redemption is purchased (Acts 20.28; 1 Corinthians 7.23; 1 Peter 1.18-19; Revelation 5.9).

The ransom of Christ's blood was paid to God, whose holiness demanded a just payment for the penalty of sin. Though Satan is the custodian of sin and death (Hebrews 2.14-15), Jesus is not beholden to Satan that He should make payments to him. Rather, Satan is God's chief captive and cannot make demands of God.

Jesus Christ is our Redeemer because He paid our sin debt to purchase us out of bondage to sin and the law with His own blood. Christ's people are therefore called the "redeemed" or the purchased ones (Ephesians 1.7; Colossians 1.13-14) and,

[2] Dearman, p. 141

[3] Dearman, p. 142

[4] MacArthur & Mayhue, pp. 533-535

as such, belong to Him.

"However, the Lord Jesus does not provide half a salvation. He has purchased the redemption not of [women's] souls alone but also of their bodies (Romans 8.23). For this reason, says Paul, we eagerly wait for Christ's return from heaven (Philippians 3.20-21)...The believer's perishable, inglorious, weak natural body will be raised from the dead and transformed into an imperishable, glorious, powerful spiritual body (1 Corinthians 15.42-44, 50-57)."[5] The application of our Redeemer's work is accomplished now through the Holy Spirit. And because we are redeemed in Christ, there is no law preventing the application of our Redeemer's work in our lives! *Hallelujah!*

8. Galatians 5.22-23 provides an exhaustive list of the "fruit" of His redeemed people. List the "fruit" of those who belong to God. Which fruit do you notice Him ripening in your own life?

Doctrine: Redemption[6]~ (Hosea 3.2) Used to describe a commercial transaction, to redeem is "to purchase out of the marketplace". Thus, a redeemer is one who acts to buy another back or release another from blame or debt; one who acts to free another from what distresses or harms: to make worthwhile: to free from captivity by payment of ransom.

The institution of the year of Jubilee (anniversary celebration) in Leviticus 25 reveals God as the first redeemer of His people (out of Egypt). Even more, God's law provides redemption of His people through the release of debts and the required Sabbath rest of the land. God commanded a Sabbath rest for the land every seventh year, culminating in a once-in-a-generation year of Jubilee in the fiftieth year. Dr. Sklar identifies this once-in-a-generation year as a "super-Sabbath year"[7], a "crowning Sabbath year with special benefits for the people"[8].

Jesus' first documented mic-drop occurred when He declared that the year of Jubilee had arrived (Luke 4.16-21). Using Isaiah 61, "a passage that uses the language of Jubilee to describe a future restoration of the people of God",[9] Jesus fulfilled the year of Jubilee by showing compassionate care for the poor (Luke 7.21-22; 14.13) and excoriating the heartless rich (Luke 16.19-31). He also released people from sickness, demonic oppression, "and above all, the debt of their sins", giving them peace (Matthew 9) and hope that they were members of God's family. Jesus will complete the fulfillment of redemption, or inaugurate an eternal Jubilee, when He returns to gather His people to Him in heaven (1 Thessalonians 4.13-18; Revelation 22.20).[10]

9. What has Hosea taught you about the process and/or cost of redemption?

Your Scripture-Soaked Prayer: Goodness! I hope you approach this week's SSP with enthusiasm and eagerness to worship, honor, and thank your Redeemer….

[5] MacArthur & Mayhue, p. 636

[6] MacArthur & Mayhue, pp. 533-536

[7] Sklar, p. 298

[8] Sklar, p. 300

[9] Sklar, p. 312

[10] Sklar, p. 312

Lecture Outline:

Aim: God redeems what our sin has broken.

I. Pursued (Hosea 3.1) **T1:** God lovingly pursues His prodigal children.
   a. In what specific ways has God demonstrated His intentional pursuit and unconditional love for you?
   b. How will you commit anew to praying for those who seem too lost for God to save?

II. Redeemed (Hosea 3.2) **T2:** God sacrificially redeems His enslaved children.
   a. How does knowing Jesus as your Redeemer cause you to marvel at Him?
   b. You have been bought with a price and now belong to Jesus. How are you honoring Him with your body?
   c. Jesus has bought your freedom. How might you be living as a slave to someone or something other than your Redeemer?

III. Restored (Hosea 3.3-5) **T3:** God patiently restores what sin has broken.
   a. Do you know this Jesus?
   b. Is the greatest desire of your heart to live in faithfulness, yielding your life in love to the Savior you now follow as Lord? If not, what do you need to change?
   c. In which area of your life might you need to take radical action to separate your heart from the source of your sin?

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Phillips, Richard D., *Hosea: Reformed Expository Commentary* (Phillipsburg, New Jersey: P&R Publishing, 2021) pp. 45-55
Sklar, Jay, *Leviticus,* Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014)