

**Title: Salvation Through Judgment**

Text: Hosea 1:1-2:1

Date: July 13, 2025

Good morning, everyone. For you're a great blessing and joy, I'd ask that you would turn your Bibles to Hosea 1. Hosea 1:1 to the end of the chapter. Hosea 1. You might have to sing the song in your head to get there, you know, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos.

The prophet records these words in Hosea 1, *"The word of the Lord that came to Hosea, the son of Beerī, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam, the son of Joash, king of Israel. When the Lord first spoke through Hosea, the Lord said to Hosea, 'Go, take yourself a wife of whoredom and have children of whoredom, for the land commits great whoredom by forsaking the Lord.' So he went and took Gomer, the daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bore him a son. And the Lord said to him, 'Call his name Jezreel, for in just a little while I will punish the house of Jehu for the blood of Jezreel, and I will put an end to the kingdom of the house of Israel. And on that day I will break the bow of Israel in the Valley of Jezreel.' She conceived again and bore a daughter. And the Lord said to him, 'Call her name Lo-Ruhamah, for I will no more have mercy on the house of Israel, to forgive them at all. But I will have mercy on the house of Judah, and I will save them by the Lord their God. I will not save them by bow or by sword or by war or by horses or by horsemen.' When she had weaned Lo-Ruhamah, she conceived and bore a son. And the Lord said, 'Call his name Lo-Ammi, for you are not my people, and I am not, I am to you. Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be like the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or numbered. And instead of which was said to them, 'You are not my people,' it shall be said to them, 'Sons of the living God.' And the children of Judah and the children of Israel shall be gathered together, and they shall appoint for themselves one head. And they shall go up from the land, for great shall be the day of Jezreel."*

2:1, *"Say to your brothers, 'You are my people,' and to your sisters, 'You have received mercy.'"*

This is the word of the Lord. Would you please pray with me.

Father, we come before you now with quieted hearts, with ready ears, with eyes that wish to see, by your grace and by your spirit, glories from your word. And Father, we ask that you would give us a clearer sight of Christ, because of the preached word today. And by seeing Him, we might be further transformed into His likeness, into one degree of glory to another.

We pray this in Jesus' name, amen.

What are the critical ingredients, if we can say that, of God's salvation? What would you say are the critical ingredients to what God's salvation is? Well, certainly God, right? That's needed. A people to be saved, perhaps. Maybe we might say some kind of good reward, or reality that somebody is saved into, some

end goal in mind. But even if we had each of those things, salvation would still be not quite as sweet. One of the key ingredients of the feast of salvation is still missing. And that ingredient is perhaps a bit more bitter than one we would expect to make this salvation that much sweeter. And that ingredient is a little thing called judgment. Salvation is not complete without judgment.

God has, since the beginning of the Bible operated in such a way, that His great salvation must come through judgment. In one sense, salvation is not salvation unless a person needs to be saved from something, right? What are they being saved from if nothing negative is going on? We can't even understand the concept of salvation being saved from something without that thing, without judgment, without the negative side of the coin. And in another sense, God always seems to save through the act of judgment. Perhaps the best example of this is the quintessential example of redemption of salvation in the Bible, which is the Exodus narrative, where the people of Israel are saved from Egyptian captivity, not by being air-flighted to some pie in the sky on clouds in heaven, but through the destruction in the judgments of Egypt. That's how they're saved. Salvation, their salvation, comes through the judgments of their enemies. And this is a common theme that is seen throughout all of scripture, in fact, in all the places where God saves. And it is especially seen in the minor prophets.

And that is why this new study on the minor prophets, which we refer to as the minor prophets, are the book of the twelve, is entitled Salvation Through Judgment, encompassing the two primary themes of this twelve-part book, divine judgment, and messianic salvation, and their relationship. It's helpful when studying the Old Testament, or any book in the Old Testament, to not just drop down into the middle of the Old Testament without reference to the rest of the canon. It's good to get itself placed where it is in the canon of scripture, just to know where we are. In Luke 24:44, Jesus tells us that the law, the prophets, and the Psalms all speak about Him. And as in this prophet's section, or the prophetic section, that unsurprisingly, the book of the twelve appears, the twelve minor prophets.

The book of the twelve is not the final words of the Old Testament, as we might think from the ordering of our Bibles, but as Jesus says, they are caught in the middle before the end of the Bible, found in the writings and in Chronicles and Ezra, Nehemiah. But the book of the twelve does close out the prophets, which include Isaiah and Jeremiah and Ezekiel, and then the twelve. And the book of the twelve, like the other prophetic literature, finds its historical background and setting in the book of Kings. And so, if you've read the book of Kings, or read the book of Samuel, we kind of know the setting for the things that Hosea will be talking about, that other books will be talking about in this book.

Another issue that we might want to tackle before we hop into Isaiah is to understand the unity of the book of the twelve, to understand it as one book, not twelve separate books, not twelve unrelated books. Some people go even so far as to rearrange these twelve books, to order them chronologically for better understanding or something. But we should try to understand them in the way that they were ordered to begin with. Preaching from Zephaniah, without reference to the other books, is like doing a series on Ephesians 4, without reference to Ephesians 1-3. You're jumping into a middle of an already developing book and argument. The order that we have, the book of the twelve and unity of these twelve books as

one book, is important for how we approach the text. And the unity of these books is attested to by much of the historical evidence.

For instance, in 200 BC, the wisdom of Sirach says, the latter prophets consist of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Hosea, Joel, and Amos, Obadiah. No, he says, and the twelve prophets. The Dead Sea Scrolls are scrolls of individual books for all the books of the Bible, except for the first five books of the Old Testament, and, unsurprisingly, the book of the twelve. They combine them onto one scroll. Even the major Greek manuscripts, which have different arrangements of the Old Testament as a whole, moving around other books of the Old Testament, move the twelve together without mixing up their order. The church father Jerome, in his list of the canonical books, explicitly lists the twelve prophets as one volume, and even counts them as one book. And even our friend John Calvin said in the opening lines of his commentary on the minor prophets, the twelve prophets form but one volume. And perhaps the best evidence is not the historical evidence, but the Bible itself.

The New Testament tells us about how this book is actually one book in the way that they quote it. And we could spend a while doing this, but the best place to turn is the book of Acts, where in Acts 13:40 and 15:15, Paul introduces a quote from Habakkuk and Amos, not as Habakkuk and Amos, but quote the words of the prophets. Or perhaps the best example we have in Acts is in Acts 7:42, where Stephen introduces a quote from Amos as from the book singular of the prophets plural, meaning to say that there is a singular book that Amos is inside of. Therefore, the New Testament authors, the historical evidence, would attest to the fact that these books are actually one, and we should treat them as such.

You might be wondering, why does that even matter? Why not just preach one book and move on? Well, it matters for two reasons. Number one, the unified content of the book. What is said in one book must therefore be held in mind throughout the rest. They're not going to change or contradict one another. We can say that about all of scripture of course, but in a special way we do this with New Testament books as well. If I preach through the book of Luke, for example, like Pastor Zach is doing, we're going to try to remember everything that Luke 1 said in addition to everything that is being said in Luke 4, and we have to do the same thing with the book of the twelve.

And the second thing is the unified audience, the unified audience. The audience of this composition of the book of the twelve is not directly the Israelite people. We can often get confused with the audience within the book in the audience of the composition of the book. As Paul says in 1 Corinthians 10:11, "*Now these things happen to them,*" the Israelites, "*as an example,*" the audience within the book, "*but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come.*" The writing down, the composition of the Bible, this actually goes for all of the books of the Bible, are for anyone who would approach the Bible and read it. That is the intended audience of the book. The unity of the twelve matters because it reminds us of that very fact. These are Christian scripture after all, friends. Don't get that mixed up. They are scriptures written about the Christ to the people of the Christ who are under the covenant of the Christ. They are not Islamic scripture. They are not the scriptures of the world. They are not merely historical records. They're not even historical Jewish scriptures that only apply to them. They are Christian scripture.

In light of the unity of the book of the twelve, we have the fact that we have a unified audience and also a unified content of the book. But in light of this unity, we now turn to the book of Hosea, expecting, as we would with any book, vital information about the entirety of the corpus in the introduction to the book. Hosea is a fitting introduction because he not only starts with the two themes of salvation and judgment, but he speaks directly about our status as those who have been saved. You know, as sinners, our only hope is the salvation that belongs to the Lord, right? Our only hope in life is the salvation that belongs to the Lord. We know that as sinners, we are under judgment, that we rightly deserve judgment, and we need salvation. And Hosea shows us, by a very unique way of focusing on judgment, he shows us the hope of salvation that we might look at it and remember it and remind ourselves that by God's grace, we are God's people and we have received mercy. That by God's grace, we are God's people and we have received mercy. And that's exactly what our main idea is for today from Hosea 1. Hosea 1 tells us that we are God's people and we have received mercy. And the three ways that he shows this is first in Hosea's context in chapter 1, second in Hosea's family in verses 2-9, and third with Hosea's hope in verses 10 through the beginning of chapter 2. Hosea's context in verse 1, Hosea's family, and Hosea's hope.

First, we have Hosea's context. Hosea's context. Verse 1 reads for us, *"The word of the Lord that came to Hosea, the son of Beeri, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel."* And I want us just to get three key observations from this text. The first is this, the word of the Lord that Hosea starts with, the word of the Lord that came to Hosea. The contents of this book are not Hosea's merely just his perspective. It's not Hosea's opinion. It's not anyone's opinion, for that matter. The contents of this book, actually the entire book of the Twelve, is the word of the Lord. It is divine speech to us, divine words straight from the mouth of God Himself. Other books of the Twelve also start with a similar beginning, the word of the Lord, or the oracle that was given to, or the vision of Obadiah. As we read these books, as we interpret them, we're not just merely getting historical accounts, we're getting God's word itself. And we have to approach it as such, and listen to it as such, and keep our ears peeled to it as such, and submit ourselves to that. This is a word of the Lord.

Next, we have the audience. The audience, Hosea gives us that information in telling us the kings that he's a prophet during. In the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, and Jeroboam, kings of Judah, and king of Israel. Based on the names of the kings listed here, we see that Hosea is a contemporary of the prophets Isaiah and Micah, and he has a prophetic ministry to both, actually, the northern and the southern kingdoms of Israel and Judah. But we will notice that Hosea is primarily a prophet to Israel, as he's going to really focus on the northern kingdoms, wickedness, and sin in the book. But he will also have scathing judgments, very similar judgments, concerning the wickedness of Judah.

Third, we have the spiritual state of the people, the spiritual state of the people. As we had just mentioned, there is a divided kingdom, a divided kingdom of north and south. Instead of being a united kingdom under one rule, Israel has been split in two, between a northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah. And this split happens in 1 Kings 12 under King Rehoboam because of the unrepentant rebellion of the people against the Lord and against the house of David. So even the mere fact that we have kings of Judah and kings of Israel, this split kingdom, we know that Hosea is speaking to a very wicked place right now, a very sinful people.

And on top of that, the list of the names of the kings tell us that even more, Azariah and Jotham and 2 Kings 15, both of them did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, but the text tells us in 2 Kings that *"Nevertheless, the high places were not taken away. And the people still sacrificed and made offerings on the high places."* Or how about Ahaz, king of Judah and 2 Kings 16, it says of him that *"he did not do what was right in the eyes of the Lord, as his father David had done, but he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel. He even burned his son as an offering, according to the despicable practices of the nation's whom the Lord drove out before the people of Israel."* How about Hezekiah, we know that Hezekiah was a pretty good king right? But even at the end of his life, the Lord tells him because of his sin, *"Behold the days are coming, when all that is in your house, and that which your father stored up till this day, shall be carried to Babylon. Nothing shall be left, says the Lord."* Then in Israel with Jeroboam and 2 Kings 13, it says, *"and he did what was evil in the sight of the Lord. He did not depart from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which he made Israel to sin."* And within Hosea's lifetime, this unrepentant idolatry and sin that Israel was committing under evil kings like Jeroboam leads to exile in Assyria in 2 Kings 17. Not only do these two nations, this one nation split into two kingdoms, but the spiritual state of Israel is so bad that exile is coming, that the judgment of the Lord is coming.

The world that Hosea is speaking into, the nation that Hosea is speaking to is one filled with idolatry, filled with sin, completely unfaithful to the Lord and to his covenant. But the good news is, is that through this judgment, salvation will come. Through this judgment, the hope of salvation, will be made clear. That's what Hosea will do for us. That's actually what every one of the books of the Twelve will do for us. This is the context of the book of the Twelve, a wicked people, but yet a hope still arises. That is Hosea's context.

Next, we have Hosea's family in verses 2-9. Hosea's family. Some of us might be here and think, man, I am, I am in a dysfunctional family. Maybe some of us here, you know, I don't want any fingers to be pointed or anything, but maybe some of us here feel like you're the black sheep of the family, perhaps, or maybe your sibling is a black sheep of the family, like that guy, and he embarrasses me. Oh, my goodness. Maybe you go to a family reunion and you're like, wow, I need to not come here anymore. This is not good for me. Whatever dysfunctional family you may have had, or you might have, or whatever opinion you might have about that, I can almost guarantee you that Hosea's family is much more dysfunctional than yours.

In the verses that follow the Lord tells Hosea to do something that is actually quite bizarre when we think about it. And what we were about to see the Lord have Hosea do is something called a sign act, a sign act in the prophetic literature. A sign act is when a prophet does something in his life that portrays a present or future reality for the people of Israel or for the nations, perhaps. For instance, in Isaiah 20, the Lord has Isaiah walk around naked for three years in order to communicate to Egypt and Cush that the Assyrians would capture them and strip them naked. Or how about in Ezekiel, when the Lord has Ezekiel carve the siege of Jerusalem on a brick and then lay on his side for 390 days, equal to the number of years for the punishment of Israel, and then has him flip over and lay on his other side for 40 days for the number of years of the punishment of Judah. The Lord commands his prophets to do some pretty strange and difficult things in order to show a sign to the people as they watch the prophet do this weird thing that indeed judgment is coming or that something is going to be true either now or in the future. And the book of Hosea is basically one big sign act and the meaning of that sign act explained.

As we read in verse 2, the Lord commands Hosea to do something and then gives the reason why and that's the pattern of this text here. He gives him a command and gives him the reason why. He says in verse 2, *"When the Lord first spoke through Hosea, the Lord said to Hosea, 'Go, take yourself a wife of whoredom.'"* Or a fornication of sexual morality and children of whoredom. *"For,"* why, *"the land,"* or the people in the land, that would be a way of saying that *"commit great whoredom"* away from the Lord or *"by forsaking the Lord."* The Lord commands Hosea to marry, to wed himself to, to go into covenant relationship with, a prostitute, a sexually immoral woman, and to have children with her that will be of the same character as her. Why? For the purpose of showing the same kind of unfaithfulness that the people of Israel have in their covenant with the Lord. The kind of marriage imagery to speak of the covenant relationship of God and his people was also used in the book of Jeremiah where once again it is used to point toward the unfaithfulness of the people because of their sin and idolatry. God in his faithfulness and in his love and in his grace has bound himself to this people by the old covenant in Exodus 19 to make them his treasured possession if they would obey. But this people have been completely unfaithful to Him. They have been like a prostitute and like a whore going after other gods, binding themselves to idols.

And this book can be split up into two major parts, Hosea 1-3 which is really the sign act, the explanation of the sign act as we read today and then verses and then chapters 4-14 which really focuses on the meaning of that, the reference for that sign in Israel's unfaithfulness and the judgment that will come on them. So, Hosea's sign act is to take this sexually immoral woman and have kids with her and the really the rest of this section is not focused on the marriage of Hosea and Gomer. That's in chapter 3. Really the rest of this chapter is focused all on his kids, all on his kids and their names. Very meaningful names we will see. I want you to notice here though before we get into that how little this text says about Hosea. I've heard the book of Hosea preached and taught and seen books about it that the focus on Hosea is like this heroic husband or like the meaning of marriage or something. This book has nothing to do with that. I'm just going to be very frank. It has absolutely nothing to do with that because notice even in chapter 1 the name of Hosea is not mentioned in the entire book explicitly outside of verse 2. He's only referred to as he and him.

Hosea in chapter 1 does not, he is not the subject of a verb in chapter 1. It is all the Lord, and it is all Gomer. Hosea's emotions are never mentioned. His thoughts are never mentioned. His responses are never mentioned. Nothing about Hosea is really mentioned in this text after verse 3 outside of the Lord speaking to him. The reason rather the spotlight of this text, the reason this text is this is because it wants to point out the nature and the reality of the sin of the people of Israel by pointing out through the names of these children the kind of idolatry, the kind of living, the kind of relationship these people have with the Lord right now. And with each of these three children God gives them a peculiar name and then immediately explains why he names him that. He starts in verse 4. He says, *"And the Lord said to him,"* after Gomer conceived him a son, *"Call his name Jezreel, for in just a little while I will punish the house of Jehu for the blood of Jezreel, and I will put an end to the kingdom of the house of Israel. And on that day I will break the bow of Israel in the Valley of Jezreel."*

Now I think this might get a little lost on us but Jezreel and Israel sound kind of similar in English, but they sound really similar in Hebrew. Jezreel is Yizre'el and Israel is Yisra'el. And so read it like this, *"Call his name*



*Yizre'el, for in just a little while I will punish the house of Jehu for the blood of Yizre'el, and I will put an end to the kingdom of the house of Yisra'el. And on that day I will break the bow of Yisra'el in the Valley of Yizre'el.*" Very similar. He's making connection between this place Jezreel and he's saying that the same kind of thing that happened there will happen to the kingdom of Israel.

Back in 2 Kings 10 we see Jehu follow the Lord's orders in destroying, having an absolute bloodbath of the people at Jezreel because of their idolatry, because of King Ahab and King Jezebel. He kills all of them according to the word of the Lord but later in 2 Kings 10 Jehu says it says this about Jehu. *"He was not careful to walk in the law of the Lord the God of Israel, with all his heart. He did not turn from the sins of Jeroboam, which he made Israel to sin."* In other words, Jehu became in the end of his life a wicked king just like Jeroboam falling to the worship of idols just like the ones he destroyed. And now the Lord is saying you, all of you, Israel is like him. All of you have become worshipers of idols like King Ahab and the people at Jezreel and just as there was a bloodbath there, I will put a bloodbath among you. I will destroy you for your sin.

Second name, *"She conceived and bore again a daughter. And the Lord said to him, 'Call her name Lo-Ruhamah.'"* Which is to say no mercy or she has not received mercy. Why? For, get this, *"I will no more have mercy on the house of Israel, to forgive them at all."* Because of the idolatry and the sin and the spiritual adultery of the bride of God Israel has broken the covenant, has broken the marriage covenant, has broken that relationship such that they no longer receive one of the most fundamental blessings of that covenant which is mercy and forgiveness. In fact, in Exodus 34:6 that famous passage that we always talk about when the Lord reveals his glory to Moses. The Lord reveals his character, his name, and the first word he uses, *"The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful."* The same word used here.

They don't even receive, they don't even know, they don't even participate in the very first character trait of the covenant keeping God anymore because of their sin. That's how far they've fallen. But God says in verse 7, *"I will have mercy on the house of Judah, and I will save them by the Lord their God. I will not save them by bow or by sword or by war or by horses or by horsemen."* You have to read this in context because in the context of this prophet Hosea has not had to pronounce judgment on Judah yet, but he will actually later in the letter. Later in not the letter but the in the prophecy in the book. In Judah as we mentioned at the beginning has not yet gone into exile is not yet on the brink of exile, but they will be very soon. They will join Israel in this same kind of judgment where they will receive no more mercy because they have broken the covenant of God. Actually, Jeremiah talks about this in Jeremiah 3 and talks about it in the same terminology as Hosea. They will join Israel as those who will not receive mercy and forgiveness because of their sin and idolatry, because of their spiritual adultery, because they have broken the covenant of God.

Third, third name, verse 8, *"When she had weaned No Mercy, she conceived and bore a son. And the Lord said, 'Call his name Lo-Ammi.'"* Which is not my people. *"For why you are not my people, and I am not I am to you."* ESV has that as *"I am not your God,"* but the Hebrew word Elohim is not even present in the verse and rather very literally it sounds like I am not I will be to you. And if you have ears to hear that is a direct reference to Exodus 3:14 where Moses asked, *"What will I tell them?"* Whenever I go to them and ask them

to be let free what will I say how they know that you are with me. And he says tell them, I will be who I will be or *"I am who I am."* I am the covenant keeping God. I am their God. And in light of that what he says here is so much worse. *"For you are not my people, and I am not I am to you anymore."* You don't know me as I am. You don't know me as the covenant keeping God anymore. You don't know me that way because you have left the covenant. You have broken it. You don't know me in that intimate way that I first knew you. And Exodus 19:4-6 when the law is beginning to be instituted, when this covenant relationship has begun, the Lord says, *"if you will obey my voice and keep my covenant, then you will be my treasured possession."*

The old covenant friends is not something that is final. It's not something that is permanent. Israel is only considered God's people because of that covenant and if they break it as Lord says you won't be my treasured possession. You won't. They will be exiled from the land of promise, they'll be destroyed by their enemies, and they are no longer considered the people of God. They act like just like the rest of the world. They are just like the rest of the world and therefore they will be considered just like the rest of the world. They will be considered not the people of the word. There is no distinction in other words, all are under sin. Jeremiah 3:8 says the same thing, *"She saw that for all the adulteries of the faithless one, Israel, I had sent her."* That is Judah he's speaking of Judah here. Get this, the Lord says, *"I had sent her away with a decree of divorce."* Jeremiah 11:10 says the same thing, *"They have turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers, who refused to hear my words. They have gone after other gods to serve them. The house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken my covenant that I made with their fathers. Therefore, thus says Lord, 'Behold, I am bringing disaster upon them that they cannot escape.'"* Or even as the Lord says in Hosea 2:2, that we'll look at next week, *"she is not my wife, and I am not her husband."* Hosea's three children of fornication show to us that because of the infidelity and idolatry of the children of Israel the Lord will bring a bloodbath of his judgment on them in exile. He will no longer show them mercy by forgiving them and they are no longer his people because they have completely broken his covenant.

I just want you to notice the heinous nature of sin and the righteous judgment of God that pours out of this text. If you read the narrative of the Old Testament, you have seen Israel through it all. The Lord being faithful to them despite their idolatry. They are the treasured possession of the Lord, the means of the blessing of the nations, the example of heaven on earth, and yet they have fallen so far. The Lord Himself now shows them no mercy and does not recognize them as his people. And Israel had everything going for them, right? They had the covenants and the scriptures and the temple and all the temple ornaments and the presence of God and the prophets and the priests and the kings and yet they still failed. They could not keep themselves from their own sinful hearts no matter how much privilege they were given. If we see nothing else in these opening verses, we see the seriousness of sin on full display.

Left to ourselves sinful humans will only do that which is sinful and rebellious against the Lord. If the Israelites were so privileged and yet they are still damned how much more will the nations who had no privilege to know such things. The Lord will by no means leave the guilty unpunished whether from Israel or Judah whether Jew or Gentile. There is no distinction, the judgment of God will come on the unrighteous. And if you are a person here today that is convinced that following the law will bring you



righteousness before God, if you are here today convinced that you by yourself will be able to work yourself in the heaven, if you here today think that you have a good heart that you're naturally a good person that somehow that that will merit you favor before God learn today from this text that you're wrong. That the judgment of God will surely come on you if you do not believe in him, if you do not repent and believe in the Messiah. It'll only lead to certain judgment.

But for believers here today what's the point of all this talk of judgment Colby I thought this was Christian scripture. What is this all about? I thought you said this was written for me. I thought you said this was written for our instruction. So, what's the talk of judgment about if we will not face it. What's this talk of judgment on Israel and exile for if it already happened in the past. Friends, the prophets emphasize the seriousness of sin and the insufficiency of the old covenant and the heinousness of breaking the covenant of the Lord and the horrible reality of the words disowning of the people of Israel through exile all for one reason. So that the beauty and the light of the salvation of his Messiah would shine more clearly. That through the darkness of judgment the Messiah would shine. That the hope of salvation would be made clear.

And that is exactly what the Lord shows Hosea next. He shows Hosea his hope. He shows us Hosea's hope in verses 10 to the end of the chapter and even to chapter 2:1. Those verses say, *"Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be like the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or number. And in the place that which was said to them, 'You are not my people,' it shall be said to them, 'Sons of the living God.' And the children of Judah and the children of Israel shall be gathered together, and they shall appoint for themselves one head."* Or one king or one leader. *"And they shall go up from the land, for great shall be the day of Jezreel."* It won't be bad anymore it'd be great. Say to your brothers you are my people. Say to your sisters you have received mercy. What a glorious turnaround. What a great reversal of everything we just read. God's people are gathered together. God's people are under his one head or ruler or king his Messiah his anointed one. They go up from the land which is a reference to the decree of Cyrus in Ezra 1 which says that the people when they are truly restored will go up to the new Jerusalem to the rebuilt Jerusalem. From children, from sons and daughters as we read about from Hosea's children that are completely unfaithful that are considered not my people to being called children of the living God.

God's plans for restoration have not been thwarted. His plans have still prevailed. The Word of God has not failed. The faithfulness of the Lord wins. But why am I so happy? Why should you be happy? It says children of Israel doesn't it? *"The children of Israel the number of them shall be like the sand of the sea.... Judah and Israel be gathered together."* Therefore, we shouldn't be happy. We should just be like well that's cool for them. Some people would actually say yes that's how you're supposed to read this. But I thank God for the Apostle Paul. Oh, I love Apostle Paul so much. Not for me you know for a ton of reasons but for especially this one. The best commentary on the Bible is the Bible itself.

And Paul when he quotes this text in Romans 9 that we read this morning. Quotes it and says this, *"even us whom he has called, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles? As indeed he says in Hosea, 'Those who are not my people I will call 'my people,' and her who is not beloved I will call 'beloved.'"* And then he quotes this text before us, *"And in the very place where it was said to them, 'You are not my people,' there*

*they will be called 'sons of living God.'"* Paul says according to his exegesis that this text is about us. Amazing! It's about believing Jews and Gentiles. But how Paul? How can you look at children of Israel and see Gentiles? How can you do it?

Well just as a tip for Bible reading whenever you get a paradoxical statement like we see in this chapter where we see such great judgment and yet such a strict change in verse 10, *"not my people.... No more mercy.... I am not I am to you anymore."* And then that is now conflicting with *"the number of the children of Israel be like the sand of the sea."* There be so innumerable they can't be numbered. We have to sit there and go wait I need to look at this again. I need to peel down on the details of these texts to understand how that's possible. How is a destroyed nation who is disowned have the number of the sand of the sea as their children. And when we pay attention to those details, we see what Paul sees. That in verse 10 those are the words of the blessing of the Abrahamic covenants of the covenant of God with Abraham. That covenant that unfolds over multiple chapters in the book of Genesis but starts in Genesis 12 where Abraham is promised *"that through him and his seed all the nations would be blessed."* And he's promised in Genesis 15, *"that the seed would be as the number of the stars."* And in Genesis 22:17 the Lord says, *"I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of the heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his,"* singular, *"enemies, and in your offspring so all the nations of the earth be blessed."* The expectation of the Abrahamic covenant is this worldwide blessing that comes through the seed of Israel.

The question that arises, who is Abraham's offspring? Who is his seed? Who is the great number of people? Is it the Israelites ethnically, no. Is it any ethnicity, no. Who it is that the children of Abraham are anyone who is like Abraham and believes in the one seed that will possess the gate of his enemies the Messiah as Genesis 22 says. And that is exactly what Paul says in Romans. In Romans 1-2 both Jew and Gentile are condemned before God. All on earth and there is no distinction. *"All have fallen short of the glory of God."* They are called not my people just like the Gentiles are. And so, whenever God calls the people out of this group of people called not my people it can be either Jew or Gentile. And now this people that he has its true people of God are anyone who believes from any nation whether Israel or the rest. Romans 2:27-29 says this, *"Then he who is physically uncircumcised but keeps the law will condemn you who have the written code and circumcision but break the law. For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, and not by the letter."*

How about Romans 9:6-8 we read this morning, *"But it is not as though the word of God has failed."* In the Old Testament because of the unfaithfulness of Israel, why Paul? *"For not all who are descended from Israel,"* ethnic Israel, *"belong to Israel,"* believing Israel *"and not all our children of Abraham because they are his offspring, but 'Through Isaac shall your offspring be named.'"* This means that is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as the offspring of Abraham. And he says it really explicitly in Galatians 3:27-29 where he says, *"For in Christ Jesus you Gentile Galatians are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for all are one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise."*

You are the children of Abraham. You are the children of Israel. That's what Paul is saying. That's not me doing fancy things with the text. That's just what Paul says. It's beautiful and that's why I'm happy today because Hosea's hope now is ours. Hosea's hope is ours. The number of the children of Israel of Abraham shall be like the sand of the sea and instead of being called you are not my people it shall be said of us. It is said of us because of the one head that we are under because of Jesus Christ because of him. You are my people sons of the living God. It's all about Christ. It's all about what he's done for us. And in his name, we are considered the people of God. And this is exactly what we will learn throughout all of the book of the Twelve. Don't forget that now and treat all of the other restoration passages differently. They're for you believer. They're for everyone in the new covenant.

As Amos 9:11-12 explicitly says hear this, *"In that day I will raise up the booth of David that is fallen and repair its breaches, and raise up its ruins and rebuild it as in the days of old,"* why, *"in order that the remnants of mankind in all the nations who are called by my name, might seek the Lord."* You know why I'm happy about reading this text today? Because it is for us. It is for us. We have the promise of this text that says that we are sons of God. We have received mercy that we can say to one another you are my people and to your sisters you have received mercy. That we have a head, a head who is our king. A head who is our Savior who has gathered us to himself by grace. And that we have the promise that we will go up from the land, that we will go up to the rebuilt Jerusalem which is the new Jerusalem which comes down from heaven from above that we read about in Revelation 22.

Hosea has showed us in his great introduction to the book of the 12 that the light of salvation in Christ shines most clearly through the darkness of judgment and sin. And as we learned from rebellious people of Israel sin is serious and God is righteous. And left to our own striving under the law we would never be saved. But thanks be to God by his grace through faith in Christ that he has allowed for us to be a part of his people and be considered sons of God. To have received the forgiveness of sins, to have received righteousness by faith, to have received salvation through the judgment that Jesus faced for us on the cross.

Two applications I want to leave you with today before we close. Number one is to live on that truth today. Live on it! Feed on it! I have received mercy! I am no longer under judgment! That should give life to your bones as you drive home from church think about that. That I am no longer not my people I am now considered son of the living God. And my life is now completely changed. I have received the unmerited mercy of God and I'm now part of his people under his King forever and ever. Live on it. Remind yourself of it every day. That that is who you are now in Christ.

Second tell one another this. As Hosea says in verse 2 or chapter 2:1 the Lord commands, *"Say to your brothers, 'You are my people,' and to your sisters, 'You have received mercy.'"* Remind one another daily, weekly, monthly. Go up to one another whenever we're downcast spiritually, whenever we're going through a hard time, whenever things are going well even. To walk up to one other and to say you are God's people you have received mercy. Remember that today believer. You are no longer under the just judgment of God in Christ Jesus because of the judgment that he has taken on our behalf. And you today

are the recipient of mercy. And let us remind ourselves of that every day until we die. For the glory of God. Let's do it for the glory of God. We are the people of God and we have received mercy.

Let's pray together.

Father, we thank you for the all-sufficient merit that is now our own by your sheer grace. And Father, we thank you that we can be considered your people. That we are your people. That is true of us today. And Father I ask that as we look at texts like this as we look at the text of Hosea in the book of the twelve that your righteousness would shine, that the seriousness of sin would be impressed on our hearts, that we would feel helpless before you in our own right in our own standing. And that your salvation would be exalted in our eyes and in our hearts. And that we might cling more firmly to the Messiah that you have sent to save us. Father, we thank you so much for this gift.

We pray us in Jesus' name, amen.

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