

Hosea 2:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the LORD.

Analysis

I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness—(וְאֶבְשַׂתִּיךְ לִי בָּאמֹנָה)—The fourth betrothal promise adds אֶמְנָה (emunah), steadfastness and reliability, completing the dowry of God's character. This divine faithfulness contrasts Israel's chronic unfaithfulness throughout Hosea. **And thou shalt know the LORD** (יֵדַעַת אֶת־יְהוָה)—the verb יָדַע (yada) means intimate, experiential knowledge, the same word used for sexual union (Genesis 4:1). Israel's adultery was failure to 'know' Yahweh; the restored marriage brings true covenant intimacy. Paul echoes this in Ephesians 5:32, calling Christ and the church a 'great mystery.'

Historical Context

Hosea's ministry occurred during a generation that had lost true knowledge of YHWH, substituting ritualistic observance and syncretistic Baal worship for genuine covenant relationship. The promise 'I will betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the LORD' addressed this fundamental crisis—Israel maintained elaborate religious ceremonies at Bethel and Dan while lacking experiential knowledge (Hebrew: yada) of God's character. Written before the 722 BC exile, this prophecy anticipated the New Covenant promise of Jeremiah 31:34, where intimate knowledge of God would define His restored people, fulfilled ultimately through the Spirit's indwelling presence in believers.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does Hosea 2:20 deepen your understanding of God's character, particularly His holiness, justice, and mercy?
2. What specific attitudes, thought patterns, or behaviors does this verse call you to examine and change in light of the gospel?
3. How does this passage point forward to Christ and His redemptive work, and how should that shape your worship and obedience?

Interlinear Text

אַתָּה יְדַעַת בְּאֶמֶת הִכְרַת לְאַתָּה יְדַעַת
את יְדַעַת בְּאֶמֶת הִכְרַת לְאַתָּה יְדַעַת
I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness and thou shalt know H853
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יהָה
the LORD

Additional Cross-References

1 John 5:20 (Parallel theme): And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

John 17:3 (Parallel theme): And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

1 John 4:6 (Parallel theme): We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.

Jeremiah 24:7 (References Lord): And I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the LORD: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart.

Colossians 1:10 (References Lord): That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;

Hosea 2:19 (Parallel theme): And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies.

Jeremiah 9:24 (References Lord): But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.

Matthew 11:27 (Parallel theme): All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

John 8:55 (Parallel theme): Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying.

Ezekiel 38:23 (References Lord): Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself; and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the LORD.