

Hosea 2:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God.

Analysis

The climactic reversal: 'And I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God.' This verse completes the restoration promised in chapter 1. Each child's name reverses: Jezreel ('God scatters') becomes 'I will sow her unto me'—from judgment to planting for harvest. Lo-ruhamah ('no mercy') receives mercy (רחם, *racham*). Lo-ammi ('not my people') hear declared 'Thou art my people' (אַתָּה אַמִּי, *ammi attah*). The mutual confession—God saying 'my people,' they responding 'Thou art my God'—restores the covenant formula (Jeremiah 31:33). Paul quotes this verse in Romans 9:25, applying it to Gentile inclusion, demonstrating that God's covenant purposes transcend ethnic boundaries, fulfilled in Christ who creates one new humanity (Ephesians 2:14-16).

Historical Context

The reversal of the children's symbolic names would powerfully communicate hope to exilic Israel. The scattered people would be regathered and sown in the land as God's planting. Those who experienced divine judgment ('no mercy') would taste covenant love restored. The 'not my people' declaration revoked in Assyrian exile would be replaced with renewed covenant relationship. Peter applies this to the

church (1 Peter 2:9-10), showing that Gentile believers experience identical transformation from spiritual outsiders to covenant insiders through Christ. This demonstrates gospel grace: those furthest from God brought near through Christ's blood (Ephesians 2:13).

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does your identity as one who 'had not obtained mercy' but now has received mercy through Christ affect your humility and gratitude?
2. What does the mutual declaration ('my people'/'my God') teach about covenant relationship as reciprocal commitment rather than one-sided obligation?

Interlinear Text

וְזָרַעְתִּי יָהּ	לִי	בְּאֶרֶץ רֶץ	רַחֲמֵי מֵה	אֶת	לֹא
And I will sow	H0	her unto me in the earth	and I will have mercy	H853	H3808
H2232		H776	H7355		
רַחֲמֵי מֵה	וְאֵמַר	לֵאמֹר	עַמִּי	עַמִּי	
and I will have mercy	and I will say	H3808	Thou art my people	Thou art my people	
H7355	H559		H5971	H5971	
וְהָיָה וְאֵמַר	וְאֵמַר	אֵלֹהִי:			
H859	H1931	and I will say	Thou art my God		
		H559	H430		

Additional Cross-References

Zechariah 13:9 (References God): And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God.

Romans 3:29 (References God): Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also:

Zechariah 2:11 (Parallel theme): And many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto thee.

Psalms 22:27 (Parallel theme): All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.

Malachi 1:11 (Parallel theme): For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the LORD of hosts.

Hosea 1:6 (Grace): And she conceived again, and bare a daughter. And God said unto him, Call her name Lo-ruhamah: for I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel; but I will utterly take them away.

Psalms 68:31 (References God): Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God.

Jeremiah 31:27 (Parallel theme): Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man, and with the seed of beast.

Jeremiah 32:38 (References God): And they shall be my people, and I will be their God:

Jeremiah 16:19 (Parallel theme): O LORD, my strength, and my fortress, and my refuge in the day of affliction, the Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit.

