

Hosea 3:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

So I bought her to me for fifteen pieces of silver, and for an homer of barley, and an half homer of barley:

Analysis

Redemption price: 'So I bought her to me for fifteen pieces of silver, and for an homer of barley, and an half homer of barley.' Hosea redeems Gomer from slavery/prostitution, paying redemption price. Fifteen shekels of silver plus barley (worth about fifteen shekels) totals thirty pieces—half a slave's value (Exodus 21:32, thirty shekels) or a depreciated price, suggesting Gomer's degraded state. The Hebrew 'bought' (karah) means purchase/acquire. This enacts God's redemption of Israel: paying price to reclaim His unfaithful people. Barley, poorest grain, emphasizes humble means—Hosea wasn't wealthy, yet paid what he had. This foreshadows Christ's redemption: He purchased us 'not with corruptible things, as silver and gold...but with the precious blood of Christ' (1 Peter 1:18-19). The price—Christ's life—infinitely exceeds thirty pieces of silver, demonstrating love's extravagance. We were slaves to sin (Romans 6:17-18); Christ bought our freedom.

Historical Context

In ancient Near Eastern context, buying someone from slavery or prostitution demonstrated committed love—not abandonment but costly restoration. Hosea's act symbolized God's determination to redeem Israel despite their unfaithfulness. The modest price (half-value) may reflect Gomer's low state—devalued by sin, yet precious to Hosea. Christ paid ultimate price despite our worthlessness: 'while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us' (Romans 5:8). Historical redemption from Babylon required no payment (Isaiah 52:3), demonstrating grace—God redeems freely though we deserve abandonment. Yet Christ's redemption required price

paid to satisfy justice (Romans 3:25-26), demonstrating both grace (to us) and justice (in Christ's substitution).

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does Hosea's costly redemption of worthless Gomer illustrate Christ's costly redemption of worthless sinners?
2. What does the redemption price teach about both the seriousness of sin (requiring payment) and the magnitude of love (Christ paying it)?

Interlinear Text

בָּמָשָׁה	הַ	לִ	אֶאָכֶל	בְּ	שְׁנָנָה
So I bought	H0	H2568	her to me for fifteen	pieces of silver	
H3739			H6240		H3701
וְחַמְרָה	וְחַמְרָה	שְׁעָרִים:	וְלֹתֶן	שְׁעָרִים:	
and for an homer	of barley	of barley	and an half homer	of barley	
H2563	H8184		H3963	H8184	

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 34:12 (Parallel theme): Ask me never so much dowry and gift, and I will give according as ye shall say unto me: but give me the damsel to wife.

Ezekiel 45:11 (Parallel theme): The ephah and the bath shall be of one measure, that the bath may contain the tenth part of an homer, and the ephah the tenth part of an homer: the measure thereof shall be after the homer.

Leviticus 27:16 (Parallel theme): And if a man shall sanctify unto the LORD some part of a field of his possession, then thy estimation shall be according to the seed thereof: an homer of barley seed shall be valued at fifty shekels of silver.

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