

Hosea, Lost Tribes, and the Gospel to the Gentiles

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Shabbat shalom everybody. We are continuing our prophet series, the Homewardbound series. We've been tracing the story of the prophets throughout the Babylonian exile. That's where we started with the return of the Judeans after the Babylonian exile, the Jews to the land. We've walked with Isaiah as he dreamed of restoration. We wept with Jeremiah over the broken city. We stood in Ezekiel's visions of glory and then watched empires crumble in Daniel's shadow and example as the son of man took the center stage in [Daniel 7](#).

Stepping Back to an Earlier Prophet

And so today we figured we would step back in time. The intention of Homewardbound, of course, was to explore the prophets of the Babylonian exile. But there's another exile that took place before that, about a century, century and a half before that. We're going to travel back in time from the Babylonian exile and meet a prophet by the name of Hosea.

Hosea was asked by God to marry an unfaithful, chronically unfaithful woman, to then have children and name them the most devastating things that you could name a child and create a prophetic drama based around a household and a family. It's through Hosea's heartbreak being poured out that he would embody what it feels like to be God loving a people like Israel. Loving a people that keep running away. I'd rather eat some of Ezekiel's bread than that one. But here we go.

The thing about Hosea's story is there's a deeper question that we often overlook and that we're actually going to focus on today. Not necessarily all about Hosea, but also the prophecies of Hosea and how they impacted the way the New Testament authors thought and modeled the gospel.

The Deeper Question: Who Was Hosea Addressing?

The deeper questions that revolve around Hosea are: Who was Hosea prophesying to? And what ever became of them? Because what almost no one realizes is when Hosea is telling his

prophetic drama through the book of Hosea, he's not simply telling ancient Israel's story. We'll find out when we get into the New Testament that he's also speaking of a prophecy about you today in this room. It doesn't end at the end of Hosea. The prophetic words of Hosea were talking about us.

So without further ado, I'm going to jump in. This is a topic that's very close to my heart, but it's always been a topic that is taught in a way that's overexplained on purpose because it's everywhere in the Bible. It's everywhere. And there are so many points and references and ways to approach this topic. So I'm going to try to do it in as simple of a way as possible. Bear with me.

The Kingdom's Division

We're going to jump into the story of Israel. After King Solomon's death, the United Kingdom of Israel fractured. Remember, as a United monarchy, Israel didn't really last very long. So all tribes, all 12 tribes come into the land after the Exodus and we go through the horror story of the judges where they're getting established in the land and really wrestling with their roller coaster level of faith with God and intimacy with God. And then finally, they want a king because they want to be like everyone else. So they have a king, Saul. And then we have David. And then we have Solomon. And that's it. That's all the united monarchy of all 12 tribes in a central government lasted. Something to say about that.

All 12 tribes come in the land and then it falls apart. It only lasted three kings and then the entire nation split in two because that's a very human way of resolving conflicts, right? So they split in two and everything falls apart.

A Kingdom Split in Two

The northern section of the land went to the northern tribes as they are called and of course the southern tribes remained at the bottom. About 10 tribes went north and settled and about two to two and a half, if you will, stayed in the south.

These residents of course were known in the north as the Israelites. They took the name Israel with them up north. It's called the house of Israel, or scripture also calls them Ephraim referencing back to the younger of Joseph's sons. And the southern section is the land of Judah or Judea. And the residents there of course are called Jews for short because they're inhabitants of Judea no matter what tribe they're from.

But the land is divided. The nation is divided. God begins to send the prophets to both areas warning them that they're both messing up really bad, saying that they're remaining loyal to God but they're not. They need to straighten up. And if they don't, well, what's the curse of the law in Deuteronomy? What will happen to Israel if they refuse to stay loyal to God and become like all nations?

The Curse of the Law

Well, of all the curses, the climax comes in verse 64. Then the Lord will scatter you among all nations from one end of the earth to the other. There you will worship other gods, gods of wood and stone, which neither you nor your ancestors has known. This is the warning in the Torah that God says: Listen, if you are not going to stay loyal to me, then I'm going to kick you out of the land. This is my house. Just like on Yom Kippur, but on a bigger scale, I don't want you here. You're going to lose your inheritance. You're going to lose your blessing and you'll be kicked out.

Here's a map if you haven't seen one of the divided Israel. It almost looks like Judah would be more populated, but that's not necessarily the case. No, Israel. Israel was on top at that point. House of Israel or Ephraim.

The thing about Israel that we'll see is Israel was in a very strategic place to settle economically. They had the Phoenicians next to them. They had the neighbors up north. They became very rich very fast because of their geographic location and because the land up there is more fertile. If you've ever been to Israel, you know the Galilee area, northern Israel, it's green, it's beautiful, it's lush. Then you go south towards Jerusalem, things stop getting lush real quick, right? You start to go into the desert.

And so there are the two nations of Israel after they split. So you have a reference—the curse of the law. That's why Paul mentions this.

Covenant Blessings and Curses

If you choose to stay loyal to the covenant, you get blessings. If you choose not to, you get curses—exile from blessing. And that's the whole theme of the Bible. That's the theme. It revolves around exile.

That's why the authors of the Bible started the Bible out with the garden of Eden, Adam and Eve. It's why the Bible ends with a city that leaves its gates open 24/7 inviting all who would leave their sin to enter back in. Return to Shuva. Adam and Eve disobey and they are sent east

away from the presence of God. Judah disobeys God and they are sent east to Babylon. That's intentional because it's a story that keeps repeating itself.

By the time you get to the part of Judah going in exile, that's when you realize, oh, this isn't just a Judah Israel problem. It's a humanity problem. It's intentionally preparing you for the big solution to solve the big problem that comes later.

So, you have 10 tribes in the north and about two and a half tribes in the south. You now have two different kings, two different governments, both houses of Israel, if you will. Both claim to follow the God of Abraham, but their devotion would begin to drift away.

Two Nations with Divided Hearts

Judah worshiped in the temple in Jerusalem, of course, while Israel, instead of wanting to come and worship at the house of God, they set up rival shrines in Dan and Bethel where they built and installed golden calves. Oh, doesn't that sound familiar? It's a cycle. It's all repeating. All repeating. The Bible shows you repeating stories to drive a common point home, right?

And the point is they mixed the worship of Yahweh with the fertility cults of Baal. The covenant people had two nations with divided hearts.

Prosperity Without Faithfulness

And so around 750 BC, Hosea prophesied during Jeroboam II's reign, a very prosperous reign. He began to warn them. And during that time with Israel, the northern kingdom, the economy boomed. Borders expanded. Military victories were piling up. They had power and wealth. And if you measured success by those two things, Israel looked unstoppable.

But when you look underneath, you begin to see that the rich crushed the poor. That justice was corrupted. And Israel practiced spiritual adultery, worshiping Yahweh while pursuing Baal, seeking fertility from the Canaanite gods, all while maintaining the appearance of covenant faithfulness. It's the mixing that God does not like with his loyalty.

Act like a strong empire, flex your power. Right? You can do that or you can act like a kingdom of heaven. You can't do both. Whatever you do, don't act like one while saying you're the other. You're one or the other. You're a big brute empire that's very powerful or you're the kingdom of heaven. [Revelation 13](#) calls the mixing of that the mark of the beast. When you worship, you take your worship of empire and nationalism and it becomes synonymous with the worship of

God. It's amazing how after thousands of years, the Bible is still calling out Satan's strategy today, even here in the US. We definitely do it.

Assyria's Conquest

But within a generation, other empires began eyeing Israel. This looks like a pretty nice piece of land and people and wealth. We could take this out. Let's show them our power. If you're going to play chess, let's play chess. And Assyria put its sights on Israel and it implemented a devastating policy, its tactics for Israel.

See, unlike Babylon's deportation of the Jews to Babylon, which allowed them to preserve their Jewish identity, the Assyrians said, "No, we're not interested in that. Let's just scatter all of Israel everywhere throughout the empire and let's bring in foreigners and let's move them in to the homes of the people that were there and just mix everything up so that their identity can never be traced back and they lose it."

They Lose It All

They lose it all. And that's what they did. [2 Kings 17](#) describes Israelites taken from their homeland while people from Babylon, Ava, Hamoth settled in Samaria. The results—Israelites dispersed all the way from Mesopotamia to the cities of the Medes, losing their identity through intermarriage and assimilation. So 10 out of 12 tribes are gone. Poof. Gone. Gone. Again, when Judah was exiled, they weren't dispersed. They stayed together, right? They pass down the stories of their people and they ended up putting together what we call the Old Testament today as a result of that. They need to maintain their identity and teach their children. So that's why the stories were collected. Israel did not.

So let me put it this way. When you're reading your Bible, when we read about what happened to the 10 northern tribes, the house of Israel, the only perspective we have from the Bible is from the account of the southern kingdom, which is just kind of cool. But this created a crisis. Like 80% of the tribes of Israel are gone. And the crisis is that the prophets consistently promised that God would restore all 12 tribes of Israel. Sometimes called Israel, sometimes called Ephraim. But those people—all the prophets are talking about how God is going to have a united monarchy again with God leading them as king. But how are we going to do that if they're gone? If you've ever heard of the lost tribes of Israel, this is what it's referring to if you're unfamiliar with the topic.

The Prophets' Impossible Promise

And here are some of the prophecies. Let's see. We have [Isaiah 11](#): "He will raise a banner to all nations and gather the exiles of Israel. He will assemble the scattered people of Judah, bring them all back." Right? [Ezekiel 37](#): "I will make them into a single stick of wood. They—Israel and Judah, or Ephraim and Judah—will become one in my hand." [Jeremiah 50](#): "In those days, at that time, declares the Lord, the people of Israel and the people of Judah will come together."

The pattern is clear. Full restoration and everything the prophets promised means all 12 tribes, not just Judah. But after the Babylonian exile, only Judah returned. The northern 10 tribes in their fullness never did. So Jewish thinkers wrestled with what to do about all these prophecies that God made. If God promised the 12 tribe restoration, but 10 tribes have been scattered and assimilated, how can God fulfill this promise? I mean, was he wrong? Did God fail? Did he have a little slip up? This wasn't academic speculation. I mean, this is integrity of the faith.

The Problem That Hosea Helped Solve

Which brings us back to Hosea. This is the problem that Hosea helped solve. Though the answer may end up shocking a lot of people. Hosea is sent specifically to speak to the northern kingdom to warn them that if they don't change their ways, they too will face the curse of the law. And God's assignment to Hosea is, "Hey, go and marry a promiscuous woman and have children with her. For like an adulterous wife, this land is guilty of unfaithfulness."

Can you imagine? I'm going to do it. I'm called. I'm anointed. I got the prophet. I got the gift. We're reporting for duty today. [sighs] It's fine. It's good. It's good. That's what God says.

Think about what God is asking. Enter a marriage knowing betrayal's coming. Have children who will grow up in a broken home. Let your personal life become a public sermon about covenant breaking. Hosea's life became a living parable. So Hosea began to have children and Hosea is like, "Yeah, this looks like a Billy. That looks like a Sally and that looks like a Hosea. Look at that. It's a cute one, right?"

God says, "Ha ha, that's good. But I already have some names picked out for your kids." Oh, yeah. What are those? Well, the first one you're going to call Jezrael, which means God scatters you everywhere. The second one is Lo-a—means no mercy because God is not going to have any mercy on you. And the third is Lo-ammi—not my people—and I shall name you not my people.

The Tension of Prophecy

People thought the prophets were crazy for a reason. And it's something that I want every one of us to struggle with. Because that's the point. Because if you saw people that resembled anything like most of the prophets out in the world, you would avoid them because they're crazy. We would all do it. If you saw them downtown, you wouldn't want to walk past them. And that's a tension that the Bible leaves unresolved. The point being: God can use them, use you, use rocks. Don't discount. Don't think yourself high above. Don't think yourself a judge to take control of someone else's narrative and paint it for them. It's not how God works.

But how do we know who's a true prophet or not? God doesn't give you a checklist. The names chart a progression. This is how God is going to punish Israel: warning about being scattered, withdrawing from mercy, and then extinguishing the people altogether, disowning them.

But then immediately God begins to speak restoration in verse 10, very next verse. Yet. Everybody say yet.

I love it when God says yet. "The Israelites will be like the sand of the seashore, which cannot be measured or counted. In the place where it was said to them, 'You are not my people,' they will be called children of the living God. The people of Judah and the people of Israel will come together and they will appoint one leader."

Yet. Yet. Love it. We have such a cheat code as Christians when we read the Bible, right? Because we could be reading this and be like, man, I wonder who that's talking about, but I know who the one leader is. We know him. Gets me excited.

Despite everything, God is going to restore. But notice the three details here. He's going to multiply them like Abraham's seed. It's Abraham's covenant language. More sand in the seashore, right? More stars in the sky.

How Restoration Happens

This happens in the place where they were scattered, not where they will be returned. And then all 12 tribes will be reunited under one leader. See, Judah is going to return. They're not going to return. They're going to multiply where they're scattered. It's an important detail.

This is a long haul—punishment and restoration. The question: How do you restore scattered, assimilated people who have lost their identity, fulfilling the promise that they'll become children of the living God where they were scattered? Again, this isn't about bringing exiles back to Jerusalem. This is about restoration happening in the nations.

Before we go into that, let's understand what's causing God's restoration in the first place. Hosea helps us with this as well. God says, "I desire hesed—mercy, not sacrifice, an acknowledgement of God rather than burnt offerings." Yeshua quotes this verse twice, in [Matthew 9](#) and [Matthew 12](#), because it's central.

The Heart of Covenant Love

God desires hesed. Hesed—it's easy to say mercy or love or grace, but it's deeper than that. It's a covenant love term. Covenant loyalty, faithfulness to the maximum extent. Love that doesn't walk away when things go wrong or get hard. It's a commitment that pursues complete restoration when reconciliation seems impossible. It's hesed.

God's restoration is not based on ethnic qualifications or bloodline purity or performance. It's based on relationship, on faith, on covenantal commitment. This is what is key to understanding how Gentiles are incorporated into this plan.

Hosea gives us a glimpse into God's raw heart when God is even vulnerable. Look at this: "When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son. It was I who taught Ephraim how to walk, taking them by the arms. But they did not realize it was I who healed them. I led them with cords of human kindness, with ties of love."

See, God is grieving here and he's remembering. And I love how the prophets and the Holy Spirit inspired the authors of the Bible to talk about God's emotions so much, because the way that they talk about God's emotions—and I say that as a limitation for us to perceive God because he's infinite, right? We always got to do that. But if you notice, God has a lot of ups and downs. He's portrayed as having a lot of big emotions, which maybe for some of you you can relate to, but in one moment, God will say, "I hate this. I'm so mad." Blah, blah, blah. But in the next, it's like, gosh, but I remember them as my child and I love them and I want this back. How do I get it?

And so if you ever see God really, really, really mad and like almost cruel with his emotions, keep reading because you'll see the authors do that intentionally and it's not meant to be clipped out like many people do. Look, God's a jerk. God's this. No, God had emotions too, right?

God's Overturned Heart

And here God is being very vulnerable. He's grieving. Even in judgment, love remembers with this affection.

And then verses 8 and 9—get this: "How can I give you up, Ephraim? How can I hand you over, Israel? My heart is changed within me. All of my compassion is aroused. Here we go. I will not carry out my fierce anger, for I am God and not a man, the holy one among you."

This is a turning point. God's heart is overturned. That's what it says there in Hebrew. It's in turmoil. It's flipping back and forth between being so angry, but this is his people, his love, his child.

And he commits not to carry out fierce anger. Why? Because he refuses to let go. Drives everything that follows in this redemptive story.

But how is this acted out? Words are cool, right? God's going to restore them. But how does this work? How is God going to show compassion? Well, Assyria comes and then Assyria wipes out almost all of the people. And now everyone's kind of thinking like, "Well, that was awkward because I thought that wasn't going to happen." What is God going to do to show his covenant loyalty and to keep the promises of being a father with a full house?

Paul's Teaching on Israel and the Gentiles

The answer to that is actually found in the New Testament with Paul. Paul writes about this in Romans chapter 9 through 11, but it's a snippet of Romans here. Plot twist. Paul says, "Even us whom he also called, not only from the Jews, but also from the Gentiles, as he says in Hosea, I will call them my people who are not my people. And in the very place where it said of them, you are not my people, they will be called children of the living God." So Paul's writing to the Romans. And during this time there is a huge ordeal with the Jewish believing population and the gentile believing population. And the Jewish population got kicked out, but when they came back the gentile population kind of took over a little bit and it was the new crowd and there was some tension.

For a while they had to have a contemporary service and then a conservative service right after it. You see that, but that's the type of tension. And so there was a lot of fighting, and Paul, sitting and trying to get in the middle of it, is saying, "Have y'all forgotten about everything? Come together because there's room for everybody. We all got a spot in the tree." But he's starting to quote Hosea and he's talking about Gentiles but he's referencing the prophecies about Israel, the northern kingdom, and how it applies to Gentiles coming to faith. When Gentiles believe in Yeshua, he's asserting that they're being incorporated into Israel. They're being made a part of God's restored people. We keep going.

It's Never Been About Biology

We have chapter 9:6-8. This is the foundation of it all. Not all who are descended from Israel are Israel. Nor because they are his descendants are they all Abraham's children. It is not the children by physical descent who are God's children. But it is the children of the promise. From the beginning, being God's people has never simply been about what? Biology. And this is something that John the Baptist and Yeshua himself states very clearly to the religious leaders and the Pharisees. Remember the conversations—very cringey in how direct they were. They said, "You think because you have some of what is it? [Matthew 3:9](#), right?" Yeah. "Do you think you can say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father. I tell you that out of these rocks, this gravel on the ground, God can raise up children for Abra.'"

And they had to have a talk with a few people, leaders even, that thought their identity, their bloodline, something about their culture gave them intimacy with God without faith, without anything else. Yeshua says, "No, you have some of Abraham's DNA. That's great, but you think that makes you significant because God can just as easily give this gravel on the ground the same DNA and they'll praise. They'll worship." You forget how big our God is. And you forget how big the story is.

The Promise Chosen, Not the Bloodline

Abraham had Ishmael and Isaac. They were both biological sons, but only one, Isaac, was called the child of promise. Why? Nothing to do with DNA. Both had Abraham's DNA, but because Isaac was born according to God's promise through faith. Isaac had Esau and Jacob, twins, identical descent, but God chose Jacob. [Romans 9:11](#) says, "Before the twins were born or had been anything, it wasn't by works. It's by who he calls." Righteousness comes through faith, not descent. When Gentiles come to faith in Yeshua, they're incorporated into God's Israel, which has always been defined by faith in God's promises. That's the crux.

So what Paul is doing here is he's saying God is a keeper of his promises, and all of that generation are scattered all over the world. And sure, someone in here may have 1/100th of a Simite Simeonite grandfather or Benjamite grandfather, but God's going back to Abraham and that's how he's going to solve the problems of this issue, solve the promises. Where was all of Israel scattered to? All over the world. And I guess we're just going to have to invite the whole world to come in the house. That's it. And that's what Paul is telling these two groups of people arguing over little stuff, more or less identity and who has authority with identity. Yeah, everybody has room. It's a big mansion, right?

What Paul Is Not Saying

So, let me clarify what Paul is not saying because we live in an era. He's not denying ethnic Israel exists. [Romans 9:4-5](#) lists all of the benefits of being a part of ethnic Israel. He's not saying Gentiles should become Jewish. No, he wrote a whole huge section on that. And he's not saying that God rejected ethnic Israel. [Romans 11:1](#)—by no means. Absolutely not. What Paul is saying here, and why I think it's significant to us today as believers in Yeshua, is that being part of God's Israel has always been conditioned on faith, covenant loyalty. Therefore, through faith in Yeshua, the nations, the Gentiles are fully incorporated as one people of God defined by faith and not bloodlines or performance or a sponsor, just like a Babylonian man named Abram.

The Seed of Abraham Through Faith

[Galatians 3:28-29](#) makes this explicit when—bigger plot twist. [Galatians 3:28-29](#). There is neither Jew nor Gentile for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you're likened under Abraham's seed and heirs according to—Oh, I misread it. If you belong to Christ, then you are. Everybody say, "I am." >> I am. >> You are Abraham's seed. You have the inheritance. You have the promises. You have the blessings. You have the authority. You have the king.

What Paul is referencing here is he's referencing the blessings in [Genesis 12](#) that were made to Abram, right? When—where God first makes this covenant promise to Abram. And yeah, what's he say? "I will make of you a great nation and I will bless you and make your name great so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you and him who dishonors you I will curse and in you all the families of the earth will be blessed." That's a foundational passage that Paul puts forth, quotes, and then reinterprets in [Genesis 3](#), explaining that the promise finds its ultimate fulfillment in Messiah. That's who this blessing is going to come through. Supposed to come through Abraham, supposed to come through Israel, mankind. We do a good job at not doing the things that God wants us to do. And so it came through one man, one Jewish man named Yeshua. And all those that find their loyalty and faith in him get that. They get the blessing.

And we are now called to fulfill that blessing to all the families of the earth. Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith and announce the gospel in advance to Abraham when he said, "All nations will be blessed through you." Paul's saying that Abraham knew about you. Maybe didn't understand it, but that's how the Gentiles are wrapped in. If you are in Christ, you are part of God's Israel. And whoever blesses you will be blessed. Whoever curses

you will be cursed. And through you, all nations will be blessed because of who our king is. That's what Paul is saying when he interprets [Genesis 12](#) as a follower of Yeshua. You are not like Abraham's seed. You are through faith. How? If you belong to Christ.

God's Restored People

Peter echoes this in [1 Peter 2](#), quoting Hosea to gentile believers. And then he uses [Exodus 19](#) covenant language that was originally spoken to Israel at Sinai. And he says, "You are a chosen priesthood, a royal—sorry, a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation. Once you who were not a people, but now you are a people of God." Oh, that's what Hosea said about Israel when they're redeemed. But Peter's talking to Gentiles.

The Olive Tree and Wild Branches

[Romans 11](#)—Paul, the whole chapter is beautiful. He takes this metaphor of an olive tree. And he says that there's one tree, Israel, but it has roots. And the roots belong to God. That's how the nourishment comes up. There's one tree, but it has natural and wild branches. And some of the natural branches have been broken off, but they can be restored. But there are these wild branches that are coming and being grafted into it, stuck into it. And now they are receiving the nourishment of the roots, the full benefit of the roots, just like the natural branches. And you have this wild tree that is just amazingly fulfilling this whole metaphor.

And then what's he saying? What's he go on to say? All of Israel will be saved. That's the reference. All of Israel. In verse 26, he's talking about restored Israel, both Jews and Gentiles, through faith.

Full Citizenship Through Faith

[Ephesians 2](#), he's speaking to Gentile believers and he says, speaking to those in Ephesus, the believers in Ephesus, you were excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants. You know who you are. You know how we thought this worked. But now in Christ Jesus, you who were once far off have been brought near. You are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people. You have full citizenship through faith in King Yeshua. We who were far off have been incorporated into God's Israel. We've been made recipients of all the covenant promises. We're not second-class citizens. We're full participants in the people of God. All of the blessings, all of the inheritance.

And what's amazing is we always like to kind of focus this on us, right? Me, me, me. I get the blessing. I now have the identity, or I can make sense of my identity, of how God views me and his family. But let's turn it around and what does this say about God? The people have been scattered since 750 BC, 2,800 years. And he hasn't stopped finding them and bringing them home. That's the character of the king that we serve.

A Command to Gentile Believers

Now what this demands? Well, first thing is it demands, and Paul references this: Don't be arrogant towards Jews. Watch your mouth. Stop it. Stay in your lane. [Romans 11:18](#) says, "Do not consider yourself superior to those other branches. We're wild branches. Look at us. We're exotic. You're not better. You're not worse, but you don't. Stop. Stop. You're messing with the metaphor."

No Division in God's House

No, you're not better. Be humble. Also demands that there's no ethnic divisions in the house of God. [Galatians 3:28](#), all are one in Yeshua. We love to put labels on people. We love to draw lines in the sand. We forget whose team we're on. Because a lot of us have a tendency to want to make our own team apart from God's team and do the same thing that Israel and Judah did, and that's leaving God's name on it but it's my team. No, that is incompatible. It also demands to recognize that this is an open invitation to all regardless of background. If God pursued scattered Israel across centuries, we can't decide who's too far off now. And it also demands that as followers of Yeshua, we embody the hassid love. The persistent, forgiving, reconciling love that God showed Israel must characterize our relationships as well.

The Great Commission to All Nations

When Yeshua gave the great commission, he commissioned continuation of God's ancient plan to restore all of Israel by calling people from every nation through faith. That's the great commission. All authority in heaven and earth have been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples everywhere, all nations, every person coming to faith, every transformed life, every believing community among nations fulfills Hosea's prophecy. Jews, Palestinians, Chinese, Korean, both North and South, Scottish, Dutch, and even those from the mighty mountains of Tenoshidlan. All are not simply invited, but required in order to fulfill the promises of God. We have to bring them all in. We imagine realizing the plan. Yeshua is there. He's presenting the

plan. Everybody, we got to get them all. Pokemon. Just get them all. We don't have time to decide.

Gatekeeping the Kingdom

And this is what [Matthew 23](#), the whole chapter is all about when he berates the religious leaders for gatekeeping the kingdom of God. You don't wash your hands enough. Sounds like 2021, right? You're too clean. You're not covenant-looking enough. Now we understand what's on the line. Either God's a liar or he's not. That's what this is about. Stop making God a liar. Stop gatekeeping because you don't understand how God could call or meet or heal someone like that. Stop refusing to cross over the open door because you don't think God can save or heal or reconcile or bring back someone like you. We don't have time for that. Get in here and let's praise God and let's establish this family again, right?

A Witness Through Actions

We're supposed to be making such a big impact by our actions, not our evangelism, not our fancy websites or tracts. We're supposed to be making a big enough action that even the branches, the natural branches that may have been broken off—the Jewish people who are unbelieving—that even they would say they have something that we want and that we're supposed to have. And the fact that they're not should be a key indicator that whatever efforts we're putting into it might need to be adjusted. We mess up the witness of God so many times in so many ways. And it's not just to Jews, it's to everybody because we truly have a tendency to make God in our image and think that God agrees with how we want to do things for his kingdom, and then we end up worshiping a completely different God. That's not the God, right? And it's something that we struggle with. I'm sure it's easy to do. Stay humble and stay committed and God will always continue to use you.

Two Sons and Reconciliation

This really puts a spin on the story of the prodigal son, doesn't it? You have one son that leaves and he loses his identity completely, but then he comes back to the father. While his older brother, who never really left the father, is jealous but he also shows in the story how he struggles the same way his brother does with intimacy with the father despite being so close. The story is about two sons that need reconciliation, not just one. That's what it's talking about—this theme, this story.

Hosea Reveals God's Character

So ultimately, Hosea reveals the character of God. Through Hosea's painful marriage, through the devastating names of his kids and all the therapy he's going to have to pay for, through the cycles of judgment and restoration, we see a God whose love refuses to let go. This is the God that is revealed in Yeshua: love that absorbs betrayal and pain rather than responding with violence, love that pursues reconciliation at infinite cost, love that dies to make scattered people whole. The cross is the ultimate fulfillment of Hosea's marriage. Every day, God calls scattered people home. Those who are not my people are becoming children of the living God.

Grafted Into Israel

Through faith in Messiah, we've been grafted into the olive tree that Paul talks about, incorporated into Israel. And this should fill us with gratitude and humility, receiving these unearned promises as pure grace. So if you're feeling scattered, if you're feeling too far gone, hear Hosea's promise. You can come home. All it requires is faith in the master of the house, the true king of Israel.

The Way Home Is Always Open

And if you've experienced that love, extend it to others. Create that space for the scattered to come home. This is an ongoing reality. This prophecy that is coming about every day. God calls people from every tribe and every nation to be restored. Will you hear the call? Will you extend the invitation? Will you live as someone who's grafted into the olive tree who wants others to experience the same grace? The way home is always open. The love that pursued scattered Israel never fails. And this promise is available to anybody—Jew or Gentile.

Closing Prayer and Blessing

And so with that, please stand as we conclude worship. Alvina Mo, our father and our king. Father, we thank you for this opportunity to dive into your word and review the story of your promises and the magnificence of your plan, and to show us who you are and how much you care. Father, I thank you for the Holy Spirit that is within every single one of us today. But I ask you to give us strength to allow it to work, that we would begin walking like Abraham, walking in faith, listening to your word. That our lifestyle and our actions and our words would be representative of the king that we serve, the family that we're a part of, and that we would never

make that a vain thing. We thank you, Father, for your mercy, your grace, and we thank you for King Yeshua. In his name we pray. Amen.

Here, O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is one. Blessed is the name of his glorious kingdom for all eternity. Now may the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you. May the Lord lift up his countenance toward you and give you his peace. In the name of our sar shalom, our prince of peace, Yeshua Hamashiach, we pray. Amen and amen. Shabbat shalom family.

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