

# Hosea 3 Commentary

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Hosea's Unconditional Love for Gomer

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## OUTLINE OF HOSEA

### I. The Prodigal Wife, Hosea 1:1-3:5

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- B. Her Punishment, Hosea 2:1-13
- C. Her Restoration and Israel's, Hosea 2:14-23
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[Ryrie Study Bible](#)

Robert Chisholm points out that there are 5 "Judgment-Salvation" cycles in the book of Hosea:

CYCLES OF JUDGMENT AND SALVATION IN HOSEA	
JUDGMENT	SALVATION
Hosea 1:2-9	Hosea 1:10-2:1
Hosea 2:2-13	Hosea 2:14-3:5
Hosea 4:1-5:14	Hosea 5:15-6:3
Hosea 6:4-11:7	Hosea 11:8-11
Hosea 11:12-13:16	Hosea 14:1-9

**Hosea 3:1 Then the LORD said to me, "Go again, love a woman who is loved by her husband, yet an adulteress, even as the LORD loves the sons of Israel, though they turn to other gods and love raisin cakes."**

NET Hosea 3:1 The LORD said to me, "Go, show love to your wife again, even though she loves another man and continually commits adultery. Likewise, the LORD loves the Israelites although they turn to other gods and love to offer raisin cakes to idols."

LXE Hosea 3:1 And the Lord said to me, Go yet, and love a woman that loves evil things, an adulteress, even as the Lord loves the children of Israel, and they have respect to strange gods, and love cakes of dried grapes.

NLT Hosea 3:1 Then the LORD said to me, "Go and love your wife again, even though she commits adultery with another lover. This will illustrate that the LORD still loves Israel, even though the people have turned to other gods and love to worship them. "

KJV Hosea 3:1 Then said the LORD unto me, Go yet, love a woman beloved of her friend, yet an adulteress, according to the love of the LORD toward the children of Israel, who look to other gods, and love flagons of wine.

ESV Hosea 3:1 And the LORD said to me, "Go again, love a woman who is loved by another man and is an adulteress, even as the LORD loves the children of Israel, though they turn to other gods and love cakes of raisins."

CSB Hosea 3:1 Then the LORD said to me, "Go again; show love to a woman who is loved by another man and is an adulteress, just as the LORD loves the Israelites though they turn to other gods and love raisin cakes."

NIV Hosea 3:1 The LORD said to me, "Go, show your love to your wife again, though she is loved by another and is an adulteress. Love her as the LORD loves the Israelites, though they turn to other gods and love the sacred raisin cakes."

NAB Hosea 3:1 Again the LORD said to me: Give your love to a woman beloved of a paramour, an adultress; Even as the LORD loves the people of Israel, though they turn to other gods and are fond of raisin cakes.

NKJ Hosea 3:1 Then the LORD said to me, "Go again, love a woman who is loved by a lover and is committing adultery, just like the love of the LORD for the children of Israel, who look to other gods and love the raisin cakes of the pagans."

NJB Hosea 3:1 Yahweh said to me, 'Go again, love a woman who loves another man, an adulteress, and love her as Yahweh loves the Israelites although they turn to other gods and love raisin cakes.'

GWN Hosea 3:1 Then the LORD told me, "Love your wife again, even though she is loved by others and has committed adultery. Love her as I, the LORD, love the Israelites, even though they have turned to other gods and love to eat raisin cakes."

NRS Hosea 3:1 The LORD said to me again, "Go, love a woman who has a lover and is an adulteress, just as the LORD loves the people of Israel, though they turn to other gods and love raisin cakes."

YLT Hosea 3:1 And Jehovah saith unto me: 'Again, go, love a woman, loved of a friend, and an adulteress, like the loved of Jehovah, the sons of Israel, and they are turning unto other gods, and are lovers of grape-cakes.'

- **Go again:** Ho 1:2,3
- **her husband:** Jer 3:1,20 \*marg: Mt 26:50
- **even as the LORD loves the sons of Israel:** Ho 11:8 De 7:6,7 Jud 10:16 2Ki 13:23 Ne 9:18,19,31 Ps 106:43-46 Jer 3:1-4,12-14 31:20 Mic 7:18-20 Zec 1:16 Lu 1:54,55
- **though they turn to other gods:** Ps 123:2 Isa 17:7,8 45:22 Mic 7:7
- **ove raisin cakes:** Ho 4:11 7:5 9:1,2 Ex 32:6 Jud 9:27 Am 2:8 6:6 1Co 10:7,21 1Pe 4:3

**Hosea 3:2 So I bought her for myself for fifteen shekels of silver and a homer and a half of barley.**

NET Hosea 3:2 So I paid fifteen shekels of silver and about seven bushels of barley to purchase her.

LXE Hosea 3:2 So I hired her to myself for fifteen pieces of silver, and a homer of barley, and a flagon of wine.

NLT Hosea 3:2 So I bought her back for fifteen pieces of silver and five bushels of barley and a measure of wine.

KJV Hosea 3:2 So I bought her to me for fifteen pieces of silver, and for an homer of barley, and an half homer of barley:

ESV Hosea 3:2 So I bought her for fifteen shekels of silver and a homer and a lethech of barley.

CSB Hosea 3:2 So I bought her for 15 shekels of silver and five bushels of barley.

NIV Hosea 3:2 So I bought her for fifteen shekels of silver and about a homer and a lethek of barley.

NAB Hosea 3:2 So I bought her for fifteen pieces of silver and a homer and a lethech of barley.

NKJ Hosea 3:2 So I bought her for myself for fifteen shekels of silver, and one and one-half homers of barley.

NJB Hosea 3:2 So I bought her for fifteen shekels of silver, a homer of barley and a skin of wine,

GWN Hosea 3:2 So I bought her for 23 ounces of silver and 10 bushels of barley.

NRS Hosea 3:2 So I bought her for fifteen shekels of silver and a homer of barley and a measure of wine.

- **So I bought her for myself for fifteen shekels of silver.** Ge 31:41 34:12 Ex 22:17 1Sa 18:25
- **a homer and a half of barley.**: Lev 27:16 Isa 5:10 Eze 45:11

Ryrie - Gomer, no longer considered Hosea's wife, had to be restored to that position through the customary practice of purchase. The price of a slave was 30 shekels of silver. Hosea apparently paid half in money and half in grain. fifteen shekels. About six oz (172 gm). A homer and a half = nine bushels (330 lit).

**So I bought her for myself for fifteen shekels of silver** - This is half the price of a slave (Exodus 21:32), an indication of the depth to which Gomer had sunk in her harlotry.

**and a homer and a half of barley.** Barley was the offering of one accused of adultery (Nu 5:15).

**Hosea 3:3 Then I said to her, "You shall stay with me for many days. You shall not play the harlot, nor shall you have a man; so I will also be toward you."**

NET Hosea 3:3 Then I told her, "You must live with me many days; you must not commit adultery or have sexual intercourse with another man, and I also will wait for you."

LXE Hosea 3:3 And I said unto her, Thou shalt wait for me many days; and thou shalt not commit fornication, neither shalt thou be for another man; and I will be for thee.

NLT Hosea 3:3 Then I said to her, "You must live in my house for many days and stop your prostitution. During this time, you will not have sexual relations with anyone, not even with me. "

KJV Hosea 3:3 And I said unto her, Thou shalt abide for me many days; thou shalt not play the harlot, and thou shalt not be for another man: so will I also be for thee.

ESV Hosea 3:3 And I said to her, "You must dwell as mine for many days. You shall not play the whore, or belong to another man; so will I also be to you."

CSB Hosea 3:3 I said to her, "You must live with me many days. Don't be promiscuous or belong to any man, and I will act the same way toward you."

NIV Hosea 3:3 Then I told her, "You are to live with me many days; you must not be a prostitute or be intimate with any man, and I will live with you."

NAB Hosea 3:3 Then I said to her: "Many days you shall wait for me; you shall not play the harlot Or belong to any man; I in turn will wait for you."

NKJ Hosea 3:3 And I said to her, "You shall stay with me many days; you shall not play the harlot, nor shall you have a man-- so, too, will I be toward you."

NJB Hosea 3:3 and I said to her, 'You will have to spend a long time waiting for me without playing the whore and without giving yourself to any man, and I will behave in the same way towards you.'

GWN Hosea 3:3 Then I told her, "You must wait for me a long time. Don't be a prostitute or offer yourself to any man. I will wait for you."

NRS Hosea 3:3 And I said to her, "You must remain as mine for many days; you shall not play the whore, you shall not have intercourse with a man, nor I with you."

YLT Hosea 3:3 and I say unto her, 'Many days thou dost remain for Me, thou dost not go a-whoring, nor become any one's; and I also am for thee.'

■ **You shall stay with me for many days** De 21:13

**Then I said to her, "You shall stay with me for many days. You shall not play the harlot, nor shall you have a man; so I will also be toward you."**

**Hosea 3:4 For the sons of Israel will remain for many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred pillar and without ephod or household idols.**

NET Hosea 3:4 For the Israelites must live many days without a king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred fertility pillar, without ephod or idols.

LXE Hosea 3:4 For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an altar, and without a priesthood, and without manifestations.

NLT Hosea 3:4 This shows that Israel will go a long time without a king or prince, and without sacrifices, sacred pillars, priests, or even idols!

KJV Hosea 3:4 For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim:

ESV Hosea 3:4 For the children of Israel shall dwell many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or pillar, without ephod or household gods.

CSB Hosea 3:4 For the Israelites must live many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred pillar, and without ephod or household idols.

NIV Hosea 3:4 For the Israelites will live many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred stones, without ephod or idol.

NAB Hosea 3:4 For the people of Israel shall remain many days without king or prince, Without sacrifice or sacred pillar, without ephod or household idols.

NKJ Hosea 3:4 For the children of Israel shall abide many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred pillar, without ephod or teraphim.

NJB Hosea 3:4 For the Israelites will have to spend a long time without king or leader, without sacrifice or sacred pillar, without ephod or domestic images;

GWN Hosea 3:4 In the same way, the Israelites will wait a long time without kings or officials, without sacrifices or sacred stones, and without ephods or family idols.

NRS Hosea 3:4 For the Israelites shall remain many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or pillar, without ephod or teraphim.

YLT Hosea 3:4 For many days remain do the sons of Israel without a king, and there is no prince, and there is no sacrifice, and there is no standing pillar, and there is no ephod and teraphim.

- **will remain for many days without king or prince:** Ho 10:3 Ge 49:10 Jer 15:4,5 Joh 19:15
- **without sacrifice :** 2Ch 15:2 Da 8:11-13 9:27 12:11 Mt 24:1,2 Lu 21:24 Ac 6:13,14 Heb 10:26
- **or sacred pillar:** Heb. a standing, or statue, or pillar, Isa 19:19,20
- **without ephod:** Ex 28:4 Lev 8:7 Jud 8:27 17:5 1Sa 2:18 14:3 21:9 22:18 23:6,9 1Sa 30:7 2Sa 6:14

- **household idols:** Ge 31:19 Jdg 17:5 18:17-24 2Ki 23:24 \*marg: Eze 20:32 21:21 \*marg: Mic 5:11-14 Zec 13:2

**For the sons of Israel will remain for many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred pillar and without ephod or household idols.**

**Henry Morris** - The "many days" thus prophesied have continued now for almost 2000 years. The children of Israel have been without a king and a prince ever since Nebuchadnezzar deposed and blinded King Zedekiah, after slaying his sons before his eyes (2 Kings 25:7). As far as is known, the children of Israel also abandoned their pagan images and teraphim when the Babylonians took them into captivity about 590 B.C. Furthermore, they have been without sacrifices and priestly ephods ever since the Romans destroyed the temple in A.D. 70.

**Hosea 3:5 Afterward the sons of Israel will return and seek the LORD their God and David their king; and they will come trembling to the LORD and to His goodness in the last days.**

NET Hosea 3:5 Afterward, the Israelites will turn and seek the LORD their God and their Davidic king. Then they will submit to the LORD in fear and receive his blessings in the future.

LXE Hosea 3:5 And afterward shall the children of Israel return, and shall seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and shall be amazed at the Lord and at his goodness in the latter days.

NLT Hosea 3:5 But afterward the people will return and devote themselves to the LORD their God and to David's descendant, their king. In the last days, they will tremble in awe of the LORD and of his goodness.

KJV Hosea 3:5 Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days.

ESV Hosea 3:5 Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the LORD their God, and David their king, and they shall come in fear to the LORD and to his goodness in the latter days.

CSB Hosea 3:5 Afterward, the people of Israel will return and seek the LORD their God and David their king. They will come with awe to the LORD and to His goodness in the last days.

NIV Hosea 3:5 Afterward the Israelites will return and seek the LORD their God and David their king. They will come trembling to the LORD and to his blessings in the last days.

NAB Hosea 3:5 Then the people of Israel shall turn back and seek the LORD, their God, and David, their king; They shall come trembling to the LORD and to his bounty, in the last days.

NKJ Hosea 3:5 Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the LORD their God and David their king. They shall fear the LORD and His goodness in the latter days.

NJB Hosea 3:5 but after that, the Israel- ites will return and again seek Yahweh their God and David their king, and turn trembling to Yahweh for his bounty in the final days.

GWN Hosea 3:5 After that, the Israelites will turn and look to the LORD their God and David their king. They will come trembling to the LORD for his blessings in the last days.

NRS Hosea 3:5 Afterward the Israelites shall return and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; they shall come in awe to the LORD and to his goodness in the latter days.

YLT Hosea 3:5 Afterwards turned back have the sons of Israel, and sought Jehovah their God, and David their king, and have hastened unto Jehovah, and unto His goodness, in the latter end of the days.

- **and seek the LORD their God:** Ho 5:6,15 Isa 27:12,13 Jer 3:22,23 31:6-10 50:4,5
- **and David their king:** 1Ki 12:16 Isa 55:3,4 Jer 30:9 Jer 33:17 Eze 34:23,24 Ezek 37:22-25 Am 9:11 Ac 15:16-18
- **they will come trembling to the LORD:** Ps 130:3,4 Jer 33:9 Eze 16:63 Ro 2:4
- **to His goodness in the last days:** Nu 24:14 De 4:30 Isa 2:2 Jer 30:24 Eze 38:8,16 Da 2:28 10:14 Mic 4:1 Ro 11:25

**Afterward** - This [time phrase](#) should always cause you to pause and ask the simple question "To what time is the writer referring?" This will usually force you to examine the context to answer the question.

**The sons of Israel will return** - Again and again God has called out for Israel to return but she has refused (Neh 1:9, Hos 11:5, Joel 2:12+, Zech 1:3, Mal 3:7+). Of course there has always been a remnant of Israel who heeded God's call to return to Him and by

grace through faith in Messiah they did return. There are reports in our day (2019) that increasing numbers of Jewish people are hearing God's call to return and they are heeding His call and are returning to Him! Hallelujah! Thank You Messiah, the Redeemer of Israel!

So as implied in the preceding paragraph Hosea's prophecy is a description of Israel repenting and returning with a whole heart to God. Any what will be the impetus for their return? It is not within themselves. Israel in her own, natural (fleshly, fallen) strength has no desire and no power to return to Jehovah. And yet Hosea says **the sons of Israel will return**. Hosea does not explain how this return will be spiritually energized so we have to look at other passages. Isaiah prophesies that **will return** because God wipes out her transgressions and redeems her (Isa 44:22). Jeremiah adds that she **will return** because God gives her a **heart to know** God (Jer 24:7), to know her Messiah and her Redeemer, Jesus Christ, which of course is a description of the New Covenant promised in Jeremiah 31:31-37+

"Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when **I will make (cut) a new covenant** with the house of **Israel** and with the house of **Judah**, (NOTICE THE NEW COVENANT IS NOT INITIALLY PROMISED TO THE CHURCH BUT TO THE NATION OF ISRAEL) 32 not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke (MOSAIC COVENANT), although I was a husband to them," declares the LORD. 33 "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, "I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 34 "They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the LORD, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more." 35 Thus says the LORD, Who gives the sun for light by day And the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night, Who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar; The LORD of hosts is His name: 36 "If this fixed order departs From before Me," declares the LORD, "Then the offspring of Israel also will cease From being a nation before Me forever." 37 Thus says the LORD, "If the heavens above can be measured And the foundations of the earth searched out below, Then I will also cast off all the offspring of Israel For all that they have done," declares the LORD. (See commentary)

#### Related Resources:

- [Covenant: Abrahamic versus Mosaic](#)
- [Covenant: New Covenant in the Old Testament](#)
- [Covenant: Why the New is Better](#)
- [Covenant: Abrahamic vs Old vs New](#)

#### Passages on **return to Me**...

Nehemiah 1:9 but if you **return to Me** and keep My commandments and do them, though those of you who have been scattered were in the most remote part of the heavens, I will gather them from there and will bring them to the place where I have chosen to cause My name to dwell.'

Isaiah 44:22 "I have wiped out your transgressions like a thick cloud And your sins like a heavy mist. **Return to Me**, for I have redeemed you."

Jeremiah 3:7 "I thought, 'After she has done all these things she will **return to Me**'; but she did not return, and her treacherous sister Judah saw it.

Jeremiah 3:10 "Yet in spite of all this her treacherous sister **Judah did not return to Me** with all her heart, but rather in deception," declares the LORD.

Jeremiah 4:1 "If you will return, O Israel," declares the LORD, "Then you should **return to Me**. And if you will put away your detested things from My presence, And will not waver,

Jeremiah 24:7 'I will give them a heart to know Me, for I am the LORD; and they will be My people, and I will be their God, for they will **return to Me** with their whole heart.

Hosea 11:5 They will not return to the land of Egypt; But Assyria—he will be their king Because they refused to **return to Me**.

Joel 2:12+ "Yet even now," declares the LORD, "**Return to Me** with all your heart, And with fasting, weeping and mourning;

Zechariah 1:3 "Therefore say to them, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, '**Return to Me**,' declares the LORD of

hosts, "that I may return to you," says the LORD of hosts.

Malachi 3:7+ "From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from My statutes and have not kept them.

**Return to Me**, and I will return to you," says the LORD of hosts. "But you say, 'How shall we return?'

### **And seek the LORD their God**

**And David their king** - In my humble opinion (and I realize that this goes against most of the comments by the experts), if one reads this text literally, it is a clear reference to the man David, who will be resurrected at the end of this age (along with men like Daniel the prophet, etc - Da 12:13+, Jer 30:9+) and he will live and reign in the 1000 year millennial kingdom ruled by the Messiah, the King of kings. Notice in Ezek 37:25 the phrase "Jacob My servant" clearly is a reference to the literal Jacob which would support the next phrase "David My servant" also being a reference to the literal David. I am not sure why there is such "resistance" to letting the Biblical text say what it clearly, literally says. This interpretation in no way would take away from the honor and esteem that alone goes to the King of kings, the Lord Jesus Christ.

In English **AND** is a coordinating conjunction expressing two elements to be taken together OR in addition to each other. If this text is read literally, it implies two distinct entities, the **LORD** and **David**. It does not say "the LORD their God and the (greater) son of David their king." While I have not done an exhaustive study of this issue, I am not aware of any passage in the Bible that refers to Jesus Christ as "David." Take special note of the first verse of the most "Jewish" of the Gospels, the Gospel of Matthew which says "The record of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, **the son of David**, the son of Abraham." (Mt 1:1)

Below are all the NT uses of the phrase **Son of David**. Note the prevalence of this Name in the "Jewish" Gospel of Matthew, for the Jews were looking for "the Son of David" which was a Name they used for the Messiah. And notice that even at His (so called) "triumphal entry" into Jerusalem the Jews who were looking for a conquering king, hailed Jesus as the "Son of David" for they thought He had come to defeat the Roman rule. Notice they did not refer to Jesus as "**David the king**." And again notice how Jesus Himself alludes to His identity as the son of David in Mt 22:42-45)

Matt. 1:1; Matt. 1:20; Matt. 9:27; Matt. 12:23; Matt. 15:22; Matt. 20:30; Matt. 20:31; Matt. 21:9; Matt. 21:15;  
Matt. 22:42; Mk. 10:47; Mk. 10:48; Mk. 12:35; Lk. 3:31; Lk. 18:38; Lk. 18:39

Below are passages that mention David in the position of king in passages that refer to the Messianic Kingdom:

Jeremiah 30:9+ 'But they shall serve the LORD their God **AND David their king**, whom I will raise up for them.

Ezekiel 34:23 "Then I will set over them one shepherd, My servant David, and he will feed them; he will feed them himself and be their shepherd. 24 "And I, the LORD, will be their God, **AND My servant David** will be prince among them; I the LORD have spoken.

Ezekiel 37:24+ "**My servant David will be king over them**, and they will all have one shepherd; and they will walk in My ordinances and keep My statutes and observe them. 25 "They will live on the land that I gave to Jacob My servant, in which your fathers lived; and they will live on it, they, and their sons and their sons' sons, forever; and **David My servant will be their prince forever**.

Hosea 3:5 Afterward the sons of Israel will return and seek the LORD their God **AND David their king**; and they will come trembling to the LORD and to His goodness in the last days.

Isaiah 55:3-4 "Incline your ear and come to Me. Listen, that you may live; And I will make an everlasting covenant with you, According to the faithful mercies shown to **David**. 4 "Behold, I have made him a witness to the peoples, A leader and commander for the peoples.

Now before you write me, in the interest of full disclosure, there is a passage that would at least potentially support the interpretation that Jesus is **David**. Luke records...

He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him **the throne of His father David**; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end." (Lk 1:32-33+)

One could say from this passage since Jesus will receive the "throne of His father David" then David could not be king. And I will agree this passage would support those who say all of the Old Testament passages of the LORD and David refer to one person, the Lord Jesus Christ. I cannot argue against that logic, but again when one compares Scripture with Scripture, the bulk of passages when interpreted literally would favor a literal David ruling under the King of kings. And in support of this interpretation, to reiterate, not one passage in the Bible calls Jesus "David." Hosea, Jeremiah, Isaiah and Ezekiel are all writing to Jewish readers who apparently would have been familiar with the Messianic title "Son of David," and yet not one of these prophets uses that phrase in

passages that mention David as future king.

#### Related Resource:

- [Discussion of Identity of David in Jeremiah 30:9](#)
- [Another discussion of "Who is David about whom Jeremiah prophesies?"](#)

**And they will come trembling to the LORD**- This verse leaves off "**David their king**," which indirectly supports the premise that Hosea is referring to two distinct individuals, the first being the Messiah, the King of kings, to Whom the redeemed nation of Israel would rightly approach with trembling. The second individual would be **David the king**, to whom the redeemed Jews would not come trembling for he is but a man (even if resurrected and glorified! E.g., cf John in Rev 19:10<sup>+</sup> and Rev 22:8<sup>+</sup> in contrast with Rev 1:17<sup>+</sup> and Josh 5:15).

**And to His goodness** - The goodness of Jehovah.

Ps 119:68 You are good and do good; Teach me Your statutes.

#### Related Resource:

- [Good, goodness of God](#)

**In the last days** - This critical [time phrase](#) begs the question "When are **the last days**?" We could look at other Biblical uses of this time phrase (see resource below), but the context in this case is very instructive. Clearly, Hosea says these are **days** when Israel returns to the LORD and seeks the LORD. These prophetic descriptions do not describe Israel today but await a future fulfillment when Messiah returns to defeat all his foes and set up His earthly kingdom, where even "amillennial" believers will be found!

#### Related Resource:

- In depth discussion of [the Last Days](#).

**John Walvoord** summarizes ([below](#)) the interpretation of the identity of David in passages like Hosea 3:5...

**A third solution of the problem is more simple and seemingly in keeping with the prophetic references throughout Scripture, namely, that by David is meant the resurrected David who shares with Christ as prince some of the governmental duties of the millennial kingdom.** It should be clear from many Scriptures that the reign of Christ is shared with others. As Newell has written: "David is not the son of David. Christ, as Son of David, will be King; and David, His father after the flesh, will be prince, during the Millennium" (William R. Newell, *The Revelation*, p. 323). In the light of many prophecies which promise saints the privilege of reigning with Christ, it would seem most logical that David the king raised from the dead should be given a place of prominence in the Davidic kingdom of the millennial reign of Christ. As indicated in Revelation 19:16, Christ is "KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS." This would certainly imply other rulers (cf. Isa. 32:1; Ezek. 45:8-9; Matt. 19:28; Luke 19:12-27).

**Dwight Pentecost** on the identity of **David** in the Millennium ([see full discussion below](#))

**A third interpretation is the literal interpretation, which holds that David means the historical David, who comes into regency by resurrection at the second advent of Christ.** Newell represents this view when he says: We must not confuse in our minds this situation. We must believe the plain words of God. David is not the Son of David. Christ, as Son of David, will be King; and David, His father after the flesh, will be prince, during the Millennium. (William R. Newell, *The Revelation*, p. 323)

**There are several considerations which support this interpretation.** (1) It is most consistent with the **literal principle of interpretation**. (2) David alone could sit as regent in the millennium without violating the prophecies concerning David's reign. (3). Resurrected saints are to have positions of responsibility in the millennium as a reward (Mt. 19:28; Lk 19:12-27). David might well be appointed to this responsibility since he was "**a man after God's own heart**." It would be concluded that in the government of the millennium David will be appointed a regent over Palestine and will rule over that land as prince, ministering **under** the authority of Jesus Christ, the King. The prince thus might lead in worship, offer memorial sacrifices, divide the land allotted to him among his faithful seed without violating his position by resurrection.

**David Guzik** - In that day **God will also raise up for them David to reign as king**. Most commentators take this as a reference to the Messiah, the Son of David and not **David** the Son of Jesse. **Yet there are good reasons to believe that this and similar**

**passages speak of David the Son of Jesse.** This promise seems impossible, yet is repeated several times in the prophets of the Old Testament (Isaiah 55:3-4, Ezekiel 34:23-24, 37:24-25, Hosea 3:5). This speaks of the reign of the resurrected David the Son of Jesse over Israel in the Millennial earth. We have indications that as Gods people rule with Jesus over the millennial earth (Rev 2:26-27, Rev 20:6), people will be entrusted with geographical regions according to their faithfulness (Luke 19:12-19). It seems that Davids glorious portion will be to rule over Israel. (Jeremiah 30 Commentary)

## WHO IS DAVID IN HOSEA 3:5, ET AL PASSAGES? DWIGHT PENTECOST

**Dr. Dwight Pentecost** in his classic prophetic work [Things to Come: A Study in Biblical Eschatology](#) has the following discussion on the identity of David in the prophetic passages such as Hosea 3:5 (and others noted above)...

**David is regent in the millennium.** There are a number of references which establish the regency of David in the millennium (Isa. 55:3-4; Jer. 30:9; 33:15, 17, 20-21; Ezek. 34:23-24; 37:24-25; Hos. 3:5; Amos 9:11). There is no question but that the Lord Jesus Christ will reign in the theocratic kingdom on earth by virtue of the fact that He was born in David's line and possesses the royal and legal rights to the throne (Matt. 1:1; Luke 1:32-33). **The question involved in the passages cited is whether the Lord Jesus Christ will exercise the government over Palestine directly or indirectly through a regent.**

There are several answers given to this question, which is important in developing the government of the millennium.

### 1. The first answer is that the term David is used typically, and refers to Christ

Ironside presents this view when he says: I do not understand this to mean that David himself will be raised and caused to dwell on the earth as king...the implication is that He who was David's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself is to be the King, and thus David's throne will be re-established. (H A. Ironside, Ezekiel the Prophet, p. 262.)

This view is based on the fact that (1) many prophetic Scriptures predict that Christ will sit on David's throne and **any reference to rulership is assumed** to apply to Christ, and (2) Christ's name is closely associated with David's in the Word, so that He is called the **Son of David** and is said **to sit on David's throne**.

The objections to this view arise

(1) from the fact that Christ is never called David in the Scriptures. He is called the Branch unto David (Jer. 23:5), Son of David (15 times), Seed of David (John 7:42; Rom. 1:3; 2 Tim. 2:8), Root of David (Rev. 5:5), and Root and Offspring of David (Rev. 22:16), but never David.

(2) The appellation "my servant, David" is used repeatedly for the historical David.

(3) In Hosea 3:5; Ezekiel 37:21-25; 34:24; Jeremiah 30:9 and Isaiah 55:4 Jehovah is clearly distinguished from David. If in these passages David typically referred to Christ, no distinction could be made, nor would one need be so carefully drawn.

(4) There are statements concerning this prince which preclude the application of the title to Christ. In Ezekiel 45:22 the prince is said to offer a sin offering for himself. Even if these are memorial sacrifices, as shall be shown, Christ could not offer a memorial sacrifice for His own sin, since He was sinless. In Ezekiel 46:2 the prince is engaged in acts of worship. Christ receives worship in the millennium, but does not engage in acts of worship. In Ezekiel 46:16 the prince has sons and divides an inheritance with them. Such could not be done by Christ. For these reasons it seems that the prince referred to as David could not be Christ.

### 2. The second answer is that David refers to a literal son of David who will sit on the Davidic throne

This view recognizes that Christ can not do all that is stated concerning this prince and holds that it will be fulfilled by a lineal descendant of David.

It would seem, too, from a careful comparison of this passage with the latter part of Ezekiel's prophecy, that a lineal descendant of David's line (called "the prince") shall exercise regency on earth over the restored nation, under the authority of Him whose capitol city will be the new and heavenly Jerusalem. (H. A. Ironside, Notes on the Minor Prophets, p. 33) The references in Jeremiah 33:15, 17, 20-21 would seem to indicate that a son

is anticipated who will fulfill this office.

There are several objections to this view.

(1) No Jew is able to trace his family lineage after the destruction of Jerusalem.

Ottman writes: *Whatever may be the traditional belief of a Jew as to his family and his tribe, no man can bring legal documentary proof that he is of the tribe of Judah and lineage of David and rightful heir to David's throne. Therefore, the only living man who today can bring forward an unbroken genealogy, directly and incontrovertibly from David, is Jesus of Nazareth, born King of the Jews, crucified King of the Jews, and to come again King of the Jews.* (Ford C. Ottman, *God's Oath*, p. 74.)

(2) If another must come after Christ, it is to say that Christ was not, Himself, the complete fulfillment of the Davidic promises.

(3) **Literal interpretation** would demand that **David** mean what the word implies under normal usage.

**3. A third interpretation is the literal interpretation, which holds that David means the historical David, who comes into regency by resurrection at the second advent of Christ.**

Newell represents this view when he says: We must not confuse in our minds this situation. We must believe the plain words of God. David is not the Son of David. Christ, as Son of David, will be King; and David, His father after the flesh, will be prince, during the Millennium. (William R. Newell, *The Revelation*, p. 323)

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(1) It is most consistent with the **literal principle of interpretation**.

(2) David alone could sit as regent in the millennium without violating the prophecies concerning David's reign.

(3). Resurrected saints are to have positions of responsibility in the millennium as a reward (Mt. 19:28; Lk 19:12-27). David might well be appointed to this responsibility since he was "**a man after God's own heart.**" It would be concluded that in the government of the millennium David will be appointed a regent over Palestine and will rule over that land as prince, ministering **under** the authority of Jesus Christ, the King. The prince thus might lead in worship, offer memorial sacrifices, divide the land allotted to him among his faithful seed without violating his position by resurrection.

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## THE DOCTRINE OF THE MILLENNIUM

John F. Walvoord, Th.D.

### THE RIGHTEOUS GOVERNMENT OF THE MILLENNIUM

The cumulative evidence for the millennial reign of Christ presented in preceding discussion serves as a logical introduction to the prophecies of the Old and New Testaments fulfilled in the millennial reign of Christ. The doctrine of the millennial kingdom of God is one of the major revelations of Scripture pertaining to God's program. As a theme for theological investigation, it has attracted a host of writers who have developed the kingdom theme from various standpoints.

J. Dwight Pentecost has summarized the various viewpoints on the kingdom of God as follows: "To some the kingdom of God is synonymous with the eternal state, or heaven, into which one comes after death, so that it has no relationship to the earth whatsoever. To others it is a non-material or 'spiritual' kingdom in which God rules over the hearts of men, so that, while it is related to the present age, it is unrelated to the earth. To still others the kingdom is purely earthly without spiritual realities attached to it, so that it is a political and social structure to be achieved by the efforts of men and thus becomes the goal of the social and economic evolution to which men press. To others with the same general concept, it has to do with a nationalistic movement on the part of Israel that will reconstitute that nation as an independent nation in the political realm. Then there are those who view the kingdom as synonymous with the visible organized church, so that the church becomes the kingdom, thus making the kingdom both spiritual and political. In addition there are those that view the kingdom as manifestation, in the earthly realm, of the universal sovereignty of God, in which He rules in the affairs of men, so that the kingdom is conceived as being both spiritual and material in its concept ("Biblical Eschatology," unpublished Doctor's dissertation, p. 550).

Premillennarians of course recognize the validity of more than one aspect of the kingdom. They insist, however, that the millennial

form of the kingdom of God is not fulfilled by the eternal state, nor a present rule of God in the hearts of men. The doctrine of the millennial kingdom as held by premillenarians contradicts the amillennial concept, which identifies to a large extent the kingdom of God with the soteriological divine program and denies thereby any future earthly political kingdom of the Messiah subsequent to His second advent. It should be obvious, however, that the millennial kingdom, though in some respects the consummation of much kingdom truth in Scripture, is not the sum total of God's kingdom purpose. There is, of course, a validity to the concept of an eternal kingdom to be identified with God's government of the universe. In contrast, however, to this universal aspect, the millennial kingdom is the culmination of the prophetic program of God relative to a theocratic kingdom or rule of the earth. This in one sense began in the creation of Adam in the Garden of Eden, continued through human government, was manifested in the kingly line which ruled Israel, and has its consummation in the millennial kingdom which in turn is superseded by the timeless eternity which follows. Though there is a rule of God in the present age which can properly be described by the word kingdom, it is not the fulfillment of those prophecies that pertain to the millennial reign of Christ upon the earth.

The millennium government and earthly kingdom. One of the most significant facts relating to the millennial doctrine distinguishing it from the amillennial point of view is the teaching that the millennial kingdom is a rule of God on earth, thereby distinguishing it from a purely spiritual reign in the hearts of men through centuries of human history and distinguishing it from the will of God as expressed in heaven or in eternity future. The evidence for this is so abundant that it is strange that learned men have been able to deny this plain teaching of the Word of God. Psalm 2:8 records the invitation of the Father to His blessed Son: "Ask of me, and I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."

Isaiah 11 paints the graphic picture of the reign of Christ on earth, a scene which cannot be confused with the present age, the intermediate state, or the eternal state if interpreted in any normal literal sense. As presented it describes the millennial earth. The righteous government of Christ is depicted in Isaiah 11:14: "But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth; and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked." The description which follows describes animals such as wolves, lambs, leopards, kids, calves, young lions, all of which are creatures of earth and not of heaven, and further pictures them in a time of tranquillity such as only can apply to the millennial earth. The sweeping statement of Isaiah 11:9 confirms this judgment: "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea." In the verses following, various countries of the earth are mentioned as having some part in the dealings of God at that time and therefore confirm that the earth is in view, not heaven. For similar passages see Isaiah 42:4; Jeremiah 23:3-6; Daniel 2:35-45; Zechariah 14:1-9.

By no theological alchemy should these and countless other references to earth as the sphere of Christ's millennial reign be spiritualized to become the equivalent of heaven, the eternal state, or the church as amillenarians have done. A righteous reign of Christ on earth is of course precisely what one would have expected from previous study of the Abrahamic covenant with its promises to the earth, the Davidic covenant relative to the Son of David reigning on the throne forever, and the many promises pertaining to Israel's regathering and re-establishment in their ancient land. The theocratic kingdom, therefore, of which the prophets spoke is an earthly kingdom which can find its fulfillment only in a literal reign of Christ upon the earth.

#### **Jesus Christ the supreme King of the millennial kingdom.**

In Psalm 2:6, in spite of the opposition of the kings of the earth, God declares His purpose: "Yet I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." This purpose will be fulfilled in the millennial kingdom in the reign of Jesus Christ as the Son of David. As Lewis Sperry Chafer has succinctly stated: "Every Old Testament prophecy on the kingdom anticipates His kingly office: (a) Christ will yet sit on the throne as David's heir (2 Sam. 7:16; Ps. 89:20-37; Isa. 11:1-16; Jer. 33:19-21). (b) He came as a King (Luke 1:32-33). (c) He was rejected as a King (Mark 15:12-13; Luke 19:14; cf. Gen. 37:8; Ex. 2:14). (d) He died as a King (Matt. 27:37). (e) When He come again, it is as a King (Rev. 19:16; cf. Luke 1:32-33)" (L.S. Chafer, Systematic Theology, VII, 233).

#### **The fact that Christ will reign over the earth is of course imbedded in practically every prophecy concerning the millennial kingdom.**

The absolute character of His reign is indicated in Isaiah 11:3-5. This central prophecy is confirmed by the angel to Mary in announcing the coming birth of Christ in these words: "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:32-33). It should be clear from the details surrounding these predictions that these prophecies are not being fulfilled in the present age, nor are they a description of the sovereignty of God in the heavenly sphere. Many other Scriptures can be cited to substantiate the reign of Christ as King in the millennium of which the following are representative: Isaiah 2:1-4; 9:6-7; 11:1-10; 16:5; 24:23; 32:2; 40:1-11; 42:3-4; 52:7-15; 55:4; Daniel 2:44; 7:27; Micah 4:1-8; 5:2-5; Zechariah 9:9; 14:16-17. These passages if interpreted in the ordinary literal meaning lead to the conclusion that Christ is the King who will reign over the earth in the millennial period.

**A legitimate problem has arisen in the interpretation of the reign of Christ concerning how this relates to various**

## **prophecies which speak of David as King in the millennial kingdom.**

References to this concept are found in Jeremiah 30:9; 33:15–17; Ezekiel 34:23–24; 37:24–25; Hosea 3:5, with more indirect references in Isaiah 55:3–4 and Amos 9:11. Several solutions have been offered to resolve this problem.

**One of the most common is to take references to David as indicating Christ Himself as the greater David.** Keil and Peters, as well as Ironside, support this view, (cf. Karl Friedrich Keil, *The Twelve Minor Prophets*, I, 72; Peters, *The Theocratic Kingdom*, III, 572; and Ironside, *Ezekiel the Prophet*, p. 262). There are obvious difficulties, however, in this point of view in that **Christ is never referred to as David** elsewhere in the Bible though He is frequently called the **Son of David, Seed of David, etc.**

**A second view held by some interpreters is that the reference in some passages is to a future literal son of David who will sit on the Davidic throne, but who is not to be identified as Christ.** Passages such as Jeremiah 33:15–21 are cited in support of this view. From many standpoints, however, this is less desirable than the first view. As many have indicated, no one today aside from Christ could prove His kingly lineage among the people of Israel. It is most unlikely that there should be another person closely related to Christ who is a descendant of David other than David himself.

**A third solution of the problem is more simple and seemingly in keeping with the prophetic references throughout Scripture, namely, that by David is meant the resurrected David who shares with Christ as prince some of the governmental duties of the millennial kingdom.** It should be clear from many Scriptures that the reign of Christ is shared with others. As Newell has written: “David is not the son of David. Christ, as Son of David, will be King; and David, His father after the flesh, will be prince, during the Millennium” (William R. Newell, *The Revelation*, p. 323). In the light of many prophecies which promise saints the privilege of reigning with Christ, it would seem most logical that David the king raised from the dead should be given a place of prominence in the Davidic kingdom of the millennial reign of Christ. As indicated in Revelation 19:16, Christ is “KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.” This would certainly imply other rulers (cf. Isa. 32:1; Ezek. 45:8–9; Matt. 19:28; Luke 19:12–27).

## **Characteristics of divine government in the millennium.**

From a governmental standpoint, the reign of Christ in the millennium will have three important characteristics. First, it will be a rule over the entire earth. It was God’s intent from the beginning of the creation of man that the earth should be ruled over by man. Adam sacrificed his right to rule when sin entered the human race, God’s purpose, however, is fulfilled in Jesus Christ. In Psalm 2:6–9 God declares His purpose to set His king in Zion who will have as His possession “the uttermost parts of the earth.” In Daniel 2:35 a stone which fills the whole earth is an anticipation of the universal rule of Christ. Daniel 7:14 is explicit: “And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.” This idea is repeated in Daniel 7:27 and becomes a frequent theme of prophecy (cf. Ps. 72:8; Mic. 4:1–2; Zech. 9:10). The title of Christ given in Revelation 19:16, “KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS,” makes it plain that He is supreme ruler over the entire earth.

The second important characteristic of the millennial rule of Christ is that His government will be absolute in its authority and power. This is demonstrated in His destruction of all who oppose Him (cf. Ps. 2:9; 72:9–11; Isa. 11:4). Such an absolute rule, of course, is in keeping with the person and majesty of the King in whom is all the power and sovereignty of God.

The third important aspect of the government of Christ in the millennium will be that of righteousness and justice. Most of the millennial passages emphasize this as the outstanding feature of the millennium. Isaiah 11:3–5 assures the poor and the meek that their cause will be dealt with righteously in that day. The wicked are warned to serve the Lord lest they feel His wrath (Ps. 2:10–12). It seems evident from many passages that no open sin will go unpunished.

The subjects of the millennial rule of Christ at the beginning of the millennium will consist in those who survive the searching judgments of both Israel and Gentiles as the millennial reign of Christ begins. From many Scriptures it may be gathered that all the wicked will be put to death after the second coming of Christ; and only saints who have lived through the preceding time of trouble will be eligible for entrance into the millennial kingdom. This is demonstrated in the judgment of the Gentiles in Matthew 25:31–46, where only the righteous are permitted to enter the millennium. According to Ezekiel 20:33–38, God will also deal with Israel and purge out all rebels, that is, unbelievers, permitting only the saint’s among Israel to enter the millennial kingdom. The parables of the wheat and the tares (Matt. 13:30–31) and of the good and bad fish (Matt. 13:49–50) teach likewise that only the wheat and the good fish, representing the righteous, will survive the judgment. Confirmation is also found in Isaiah 65:11–66:16; Jeremiah 25:30–33. As the millennium continues, however, children will be born to those who are thus ushered into the millennial reign of Christ. Before many generations the children born to these tribulation saints will far outnumber their parents. They too will be subject to Christ’s

reign and if openly rebellious will be put to death (Isa. 66:20, 24; Zech. 14:16–19). While it is obvious that even under the rule of Christ there will arise from children born in the millennium those who merely profess to follow the King without actually being saints, the true character of these is manifested at the end of the millennium in the final revolt. Meanwhile they are forced to obey the King or be subject to the penalty of death or other chastisement.

The place of Israel in the government of Christ. In contrast to the present church age in which Jew and Gentile are on an equal plane of privilege, the millennium is clearly a period of time in which Israel is in prominence and blessing. Though many passages speak of Gentile blessing as well, Christ will reign as the Son of David, and Israel as a nation will be exalted.

Passages of the Old Testament which have been studied previously anticipating a future day of glory for Israel find their fulfillment in the millennial reign of Christ. The regathering of Israel, a prominent theme of most of the prophets, has its purpose realized in the re-establishment of Israel in their ancient land. Israel as a nation is delivered from her persecutors in the time of tribulation and brought into the place of blessing and restoration.

**J. Dwight Pentecost** gives an excellent summary of the important place of Israel in the millennium in the following statement:

"Israel will become the subjects of the King's reign (Isa. 9:6–7; 33:17, 22; 44:6; Jer. 23:5; Mic. 2:13; 4:7; Dan. 4:3; 7:14, 22, 27). In order to be subjects, Israel, first, will have been converted and restored to the land, as has already been shown. Second, Israel will be reunited as a nation (Jer. 3:18; 33:14; Ezek. 20:40; 37:15–22; 39:25; Hos. 1:11). Third, the nation will again be related to Jehovah by marriage (Isa. 54:1–17; 62:2–5; Hos. 2:14–23). Fourth, she will be exalted above the Gentiles (Isa. 14:1–2; 49:22–23; 60:14–17; 61:6–7). Fifth, Israel will be made righteous (Isa. 1:25; 2:4; 44:22–24; 45:17–25; 48:17; 55:7; 57:18–19; 63:16; Jer. 31:11; 33:8; 50:20, 34; Ezek. 36:25–26; Hos. 14:4; Joel 3:21; Mic. 7:18–19; Zech. 13:9; Mal. 3:2–3). Sixth, the nation will become God's witnesses during the millennium (Isa. 44:8, 21; 61:6; 66:21; Jer. 16:19–21; Mic. 5:7; Zeph. 3:20; Zech. 4:1–7; 4:11–14; 8:23). Seventh, Israel will be beautified to bring glory to Jehovah (Isa. 62:3; Jer. 32:41; Hos. 14:5–6; Zeph. 3:16–17; Zech. 9:16–17)" ("Biblical Eschatology," unpublished Doctor's dissertation, pp. 651–52).

The lesser role of Gentiles in the millennium is the subject of many Old Testament Scriptures such as the following: Isaiah 2:4; 11:12; 16:1–5; 18:1–7; 19:16–25; 23:18; 42:1; 45:14; 49:6, 22; 59:6–8; 60:1–14; 61:8–9; 62:2; 66:18–19; Jeremiah 3:17; 16:19–21; 49:6; 49:39; Ezekiel 38:23; Amos 9:12; Micah 7:16–17; Zephaniah 2:11; 3:9; Zechariah 8:20–22; 9:10; 10:11–12; 14:16–19 (cf., Pentecost, *ibid.*, p. 652). Outstanding in these Scriptures is the fact that, first, the Gentiles will share many of the spiritual and economic blessings of the millennial reign of Christ. Second, they will, however, occupy a subordinate role to Israel (Isa. 14:1–2; 49:22–23; 61:5–9). Third, as indicated previously, only Gentiles who are declared righteous by the King will be allowed entrance into the millennial kingdom at its beginning. (Source: [The Righteous Government of the Millennium](#))