

Hosea



GOD'S FAITHFUL LOVE
FOR HIS FAITHLESS PEOPLE

September 9, 2017

Pastor Ben Hicks

The Folly of Idolatry

Hosea 2:2-15

Have you ever felt betrayed? Have you ever felt betrayed? How did you respond? How did you want to respond? Often when we've been wronged, we lash out in anger, seeking to inflict the same pain in others that we have felt ourselves. In tonight's passage we read of a God who feels betrayed, and is angry. And while his actions do hurt, they are intentional and redemptive, not just mean or vindictive. Because in this passage, God is not just lashing out, he is disciplining, and he is doing so because he wants his wife back.

God pursues us when we pursue idols.

I. Israel's foolish pursuit (v 2)

A. Israel looked to Baal for provision (v 5).

Baal was the Canaanite God of storm, meaning that Baal was the one who sent the rains in the mind of the Canaanites.

B. Israel attributed God's provision to Baal (vv 8, 12)

When God blessed Israel, as he had been during this time period, those very blessings were viewed as an incentive to keep worshipping idols.

C. Israel used God's provision to worship Baal (vv 8, 13)

Here we have the height of betrayal, where the very gifts that God have given his people now sat on altars to Baal.

II. God's firm response (vv 4, 13)

A. God promises to make Israel go without (vv 3, 10)

1. He promises to withhold the rain (v 3)
2. He promises to take material blessings (v 9)

B. God promised to frustrate Israel's idolatrous pursuits (vv 6, 22)

The most gracious and loving thing God could do is make sure we fail when we pursue our idols.

C. God promises to win back Israel's affections and bless her (vv 14-15)

Shockingly, God's response to Israel's forgetting him is not to forget her back, but to woo and eventually bless her!

“What am I to you, that you should command me to love you and, if I do not, you should be angry with me and threaten great miseries?”

- Augustine of Hippo, *Confessions*

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