

The Blessings of Abraham Reversed

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Preacher: Jon Hueni

[0:00] Turn with me now in your Bibles to Hosea, the ninth chapter, Hosea 9, as we continue our study through this prophet Hosea.

! We'll read the entire ninth chapter. This is God's Word. Do not rejoice, O Israel. Do not be jubilant like the other nations.

For you have been unfaithful to your God. You love the wages of a prostitute at every threshing floor. Threshing floors and wine presses will not feed the people. The new wine will fail them. They will not remain in the Lord's land. Ephraim will return to Egypt and eat unclean food in Assyria. They will not pour out wine offerings to the Lord, nor will their sacrifices please Him.

Such sacrifices will be to them like the bread of mourners. All who eat them will be unclean. This food will be for themselves. It will not come into the temple of the Lord.

[1:05] What will you do on the day of your appointed feasts, on the festival days of the Lord? Even if they escape from destruction, Egypt will gather them, and Memphis will bury them. Their treasures of silver will be taken over by briars, and thorns will overrun their tents.

The days of punishment are coming. The days of reckoning are at hand. Let Israel know this. Because your sins are so many and your hostility so great, the prophet is considered a fool, the inspired man a maniac.

The prophet, along with my God, is the watchman over Ephraim, yet snares await him on all his paths and hostility in the house of his God. They have sunk deep into corruption, as in the days of Gibeah.

God will remember their wickedness and punish them for their sins. When I found Israel, it was like finding grapes in the desert. When I saw your fathers, it was like seeing the earthly fruit on the fig tree.

But when they came to Baal Peor, they consecrated themselves to that shameful idol and became as vile as the thing they loved. Ephraim's glory will fly away like a bird.

[2:13] No birth, no pregnancy, no conception. Even if they rear children, I will bereave them of every one. Woe to them when I turn away from them.

I have seen Ephraim like Tyre planted in a pleasant place. But Ephraim will bring out their children to the slayer. Give them, O Lord. What will you give them?

Give them wombs that miscarry and breasts that are dry. Because of all their wickedness in Gilgal, I hated them there. Because of their sinful deeds, I will drive them out of my house.

I will no longer love them. All their leaders are rebellious. Ephraim is blighted. Their root is withered. They yield no fruit. Even if they bear children, I will slay their cherished offspring.

My God will reject them because they have not obeyed him. They will be wanderers among the nations. Two things that are very important to any nation are its land and its population.

[3:23] And we hear a lot about the land and the population in Hosea chapter 9. Now Hosea is prophesying to the physical descendants of Abraham.

And that's important for us to remember because God had made a covenant with Abraham in which he promised four things to Abraham. Two of the things promised to Abraham were a numerous offspring, the population, and secondly, a land.

It was when Abraham had no children that God promised him. I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore.

There's the population. And it was when Abraham had left his homeland to go whither he knew not where. And to be led by God into Canaan land, the promised land that God promised him to your offspring.

I will give you to your offspring. I will give this land. So these covenant promises of land and numerous offspring were then renewed to Abraham's son Isaac and to Isaac's son Jacob and to Isaac's 12 sons.

[4:48] And then to the whole nation of Israel, the covenant nation of God at Mount Sinai. It was woven right into their wedding vows, the promise that he would give them numerous offspring and the land.

Now, these two promises then figure in largely in the whole rest of scripture. It's hard to understand the Bible apart from understanding those two things promised.

And in fact, those two promises figure largely into the book of Hosea and especially Hosea chapter nine, where we're at this morning. So we're going to consider the land and numerous offspring.

And as we do, I want you to know that this has everything to do with you and your eternal destiny. First of all, the land.

About 700 years after the promise to Abraham, Joshua led Israel into the promised land of Canaan, that land flowing with milk and honey.

[5:59] When we come to Hosea nine, Israel has now been in the promised land for about 650 years, enjoying its fruitful harvest as gifts from God.

And it is harvest time. It's a time of rejoicing and great gladness. The farmer finally gets to reap what he's been working for all year long.

Now, in our day, there are just a few farmers. But in that day, almost everyone was a farmer. It was an agriculturally based economy. And so the nations all had their great celebrations at harvest time. Israel, too, had her celebrations. Indeed, God had religious feasts ordered for them. But here, Hosea forbids their celebration, saying in verse one, Do not rejoice, O Israel.

Do not be jubilant like the other nations. Why not? For you have been unfaithful to your God. You love the wages of a prostitute at every threshing floor.

[7:10] You've played the harlot in your harvest celebrations. Now, these celebrations at harvest time would include lots of food, lots of alcohol and, yes, prostitution.

But God is especially charging them here with spiritual prostitution, as we find in the book of Hosea. Often it's a spiritual prostitution that God is putting his finger on.

Idolatry is to God. Of spiritual prostitution. And it was happening at the threshing floors as Israel was setting up their shrines and idols to Baal there at the threshing floors.

They'd been unfaithful to God, their true husband, and had gone after Baal, the Canaanite God of fertility. And so they had trusted in him to give them good crops.

They had offered sacrifices to him. And so here at harvest celebration, at the threshing floors and in the wine presses, Baal was the one who received the credit and praise for the fruitful harvest.

[8:21] As God complained back in chapter two and verse eight, she, Israel, has not acknowledged that I was the one who gave her the grain, the new wine and oil, who lavished on her the silver and gold, which they use for Baal.

I blessed their crops and they use them to sacrifice Thanksgiving offerings to Baal. Well, that's what's going on here. And so God's going to stop the whole harvest celebration.

The party's over. Their threshing floors and wine presses will not feed them. The new wine will fail them. And why? Because they won't be around to enjoy them.

Verse three, they will not remain in the Lord's land. There's that first reference to the land. They'll not remain in the Lord's land.

Ephraim will return to Egypt and eat unclean food in Assyria, the place of their exile. So after being in the promised land for over 600 years, they're being kicked out.

[9:30] And all because of their unfaithfulness to the Lord, breaking his laws and his covenant, worshiping Baal. Now, this is shocking stuff for Israel here called Ephraim to hear.

They had just taken it for granted that they would always be in the land that had been promised to Abraham's descendants. And now Hosea is saying, you're out of here.

Well, they can't remain in the Lord's land. And why not? Because the Lord's land is holy. It is set apart to him. It's where the Holy One dwells on the earth.

Could you remember when Moses was in the wilderness and saw the bush that was burning but was not consumed? And when he turned aside to check it out, he starts coming closer and closer until he hears a voice from the burning bush that says, Moses, Moses, Moses, do not come any closer.

Take off your sandals for the place where you are standing is holy ground, holy land. And what made it holy ground?

[10:42] Well, it was the presence of God in that place. And that's what makes the promised land holy.

God had specially placed his name there. There the Shekinah glory dwelt in the temple. It was holy ground, the promised land was.

But Israel's sins had reached their limit. And the unholy bride of the Holy One can stay in the land no more. She's thrown out of the house.

Exiled from the land as punishment for her sins. So God's gift of the land of promise is now forfeited by their idolatry.

Now, she had been warned of this. It was all woven into her wedding vows at Mount Sinai, Leviticus 18:28. If you defile the land, it will vomit you out as it vomited out the nations that were before you.

[11:48] You ever had food poisoning? You ate something that didn't sit well with you? And your stomach says, that stuff doesn't belong in here.

And it's coming out. And that's what God said about his land, his holy land. Sin does not belong there. And if you learn the ways of the nations around you and practice their ways, you will be vomited out of the land.

So that was in their consciousness. It should have been. At least it was there when she was married to Jehovah. Now, being removed from the promised land would only lead to further trouble and defilement as they would be in exile among the other nations.

And here, especially Assyria. Verse 3b says that they would eat unclean food in Assyria. Being kicked out of the holy land means that you will be further defiled because there won't be any kosher food in Assyria to be eaten.

Now, the dietary laws of clean and unclean food were meant to teach Israel that they were a people who were holy, who were set apart to the Lord.

[13:08] And they were to make clear distinctions between what is holy and what is unholy. And these food laws tested their willingness to obey God right down to the stuff that they put in their mouths and ate.

Remember, that was the test that Adam failed, wasn't it? A test of diet. And it's made a test of Israel to see, is she holy to the Lord?

Yes, look, she doesn't eat what the nations eat. She only eats what God says to eat. This, but not that. But when she goes away into Assyria, it will be seen that she is not the Lord's people.

She's eating like the rest of the nations. In fact, she has become to him as just one other nation, one of the many nations. She's lost her distinctiveness of being my people.

She is no longer my people, Jehovah says to her. So being removed from the promised land is more than just losing your land. It's losing your distinctive identity as God's people.

[14:14] And it would bring to an end the special diet of God's people that which would further defile them ritually. And it would bring to an end the acceptable sacrifices of worship at the temple.

Verse four. So that the bread that they offer up and sacrifice away from the temple would be as defiled. As the bread.

Of. Mourners who can whose contact with the dead left them ritually unclean. In other words, the Lord would not be pleased with them. And it would being kicked out of the land would also end her joyful religious feasts and festivals.

They're not there to participate in them any longer. Verse five. And it would leave them to be buried in the land of captivity rather than in the land of their fathers. Verse six.

And it would leave their tents and all that they had treasured. To be overgrown with nettles and thorns. The signal. The mark of God's curse. So Israel's sin has left her unfit for the holy land of promise.

[15:20] She must leave it. Do not rejoice. The party's over. The day of reckoning has come. Do you know one day the Lord will say the same to this wicked world?

The party's over, folks. Come away to judgment. Are you ready for that day? This is the God we meet in Hosea and he has not changed.

Now, before we consider the second promise concerning numerous offspring, the population, Hosea wants them and us to know that all this is happening as punishment for her sins.

This punishment is coming and it's deserved. So we've seen the land. Now we're looking at the punishment. It's coming and it's well deserved.

Verse seven. The days of punishment are coming. The days of reckoning that is paying back are at hand.

[16 : 24] Let Israel know this. You see, Israel couldn't believe that this would happen to them. They were the Lord's people. After all, they thought they'd always be in the land. They thought they were exempt from judgment.

And God says, tell them it ain't so. Tell them that's not the case. The day of reckoning has come. Do you know it's a mercy to be warned of judgment while there's still time to repent? It's a mercy to have a shot fired across the bow of the ship.

Before the shot comes and hits the ship. It's a warning of coming judgment. Israel is here being warned. It's a mercy before it's ever forever too late.

But Israel does not take the warning to heart. And instead, they call the bearer of bad news an idiot. You see that at the last part. Verse 7. Because your sins are so many and your hostility so great.

[17 : 31] The prophet is considered a fool. The inspired man, a maniac. Hosea is putting his finger on the real problem. Why are they calling the prophet a fool?

Well, he says it's because of their sins are so many. They love their sins so much. That rather than repent of them. They'll call the one pointing out their sins an idiot.

So what do you do with a prophet who's giving you a message of judgment that you don't like?

That's pointing out your sins and saying, if you don't repent of these sins, you will be damned forever.

Well, you just dismiss him as a fool. As a maniac. A raving madman. Like they did Paul as he's discoursing about righteousness and self-control and the judgment to come.

Paul, much learning has made you mad. You just dismiss the messenger as they did the Lord Jesus, whose words were so exposing of sin and so warning of the judgment to come.

[18 : 37] And they said of him. And they said of him, he's demon possessed and raving mad. Well, that's Israel's response to God's warning through Hosea, calling them to repent for judgment is at hand.

They hate anyone who would warn them to part with their beloved sin or else be lost. You know, those who point out wrongdoing have never been treated well.

The person who did it perfectly was the Lord Jesus. And he said in John 7, 7, the reason the world hates me is because I testify that what it does is evil. So it calls me demon possessed and a madman.

Rather than acknowledge sin and guilt and repent, they attack the messenger who's bearing the bad news. They could not withstand the force of the wisdom and the spirit by which Stephen spoke. And so they attacked him with false accusations and with rocks and stones. When you don't like the message, you attack the messenger.

[19 : 51] That's what Israel's doing with Hosea. Isn't it something we've we've seen all that Hosea is suffering from his wife in the domestic scene.

Now we see what he's suffering from the nation, calling him an idiot. Well, God has a different title for his prophet. In verse 8, the prophet, along with my God, is the watchman over Ephraim.

He's the sentinel posted to keep watch. And whenever he sees danger, he sounds the alarm. That's what my prophet Hosea is. He is a watchman for me.

And yet Israel is here rejecting the voice of the very watchman who is spotted coming danger and is alerting them. And I ask who is really the fool after all?

Is Israel not a fool to dismiss the word of their watchman as take it as if it were nothing? Is that not madness just to go right on their way as if no judgment was coming?

[20 : 58] Anyone here dismissing the message of coming judgment? Every one of you must stand before the judgment seat of Christ and answer for the things done while in the body.

What are you doing with that message? Are you just plowing right ahead as if it was the speech and the babbling of a fool? Or are you taking it to heart and beneath the cross of Jesus preparing for that day of judgment?

Well, that's part of the wickedness for which Israel will be taken out of the land. That's why the land is going to vomit them out because of the way she treats God's prophets. But there are other sins that are held before them to show that this punishment of kicking them out of the land, it's well

deserved.

The prosecutor's building this case and he takes us on a travel log to three cities in Israel that were infamous for their sin. First of all, verse nine, they have sunk deep into corruption as in the days of Gibeah.

God will remember their wickedness and punish them for their sins. Now, Judges chapter 19 tells the whole sordid story of gang rape and sexual murder of the Levite's concubine.

[22 : 22] The Levite from Ephraim is traveling with his concubine and we just say, what is a Levite doing with a concubine? And the last verse of the book tells us every man was just doing what was right in his own eyes.

And that's how bad it was. The spiritual leader had a concubine and he's traveling. And as he came to evening, he would not stop in Jebus, a foreign city, because he didn't know the people there.

He wanted to stop in a hospitable place within Israel. And so they press on and then they come to the city of Gibeah, a city within Israel. But when they get there, they go to the town center.

And instead of receiving hospitality, no one invites them home. An old man who'd been out in the field later that evening comes through and he finds them there and he says, oh, please don't stay here in the center of town.

Come home with me. And they're at home eating and drinking. And while they were eating, some of the wicked men of the city surrounded the house, pounding on the door.

[23 : 25] They shouted to the old man who owned the house, bring out the man who came to your house so we can have sex with him. The whole story sounds a whole lot like Sodom and Lot and the two visitors that came to his house.

But what Hosea is pointing out is that this is not the pagan city of Sodom or Gomorrah. This is a city in the Holy Land.

This is Gibeah of God. And she has nothing to learn from Sodom or Gomorrah in her morals.

And the owner of the house goes out and pleads and please, friends, don't do that. Here's my virgin daughter.

Here's his concubine. And the concubine is shoved out and they abuse her all night. And at morning, she's let go and she falls on the threshold of the door. In the morning, the Levite wakes up and says to her, come on, get up.

[24 : 32] It's time to go. And she doesn't move. And he puts her on the donkey and he takes her home. And he cuts her dead body up into 12 parts and sends it out to the 12 tribes of Israel, calling them to think, to think about what was happening.

And everyone who saw it said, such a thing has never been seen or done. Not since the day that the Israelites came up out of Egypt. Think about it.

Consider it. Tell us what to do. And Hosea is saying, not just that that's something that happened many hundreds of years ago in your history. But that's how far you presently are sunk in corruption. As in the days of Gibeah. Should I not punish the nation for this?

The second place on the travelogue. Verse 10. When I found Israel, it was like finding grapes in the desert. When I saw your fathers, it was like seeing the early fruit on the fig tree.

[25 : 38] But when they came to Baal Peor, they consecrated themselves to that shameful idol and became as vile as the thing they loved. And here God is remembering the first love of Israel.

That honeymoon time with them. When he first found them and married them. He says it was like a hot, weary traveler going through the desert and finding lush, juicy grapes.

Ah, this is delightful. This is pleasing. Or it was like those early figs on the fig tree. The first fruits of the harvest. It's promising.

So promising. Of better things to come. And yet the whole mess was disappointing. It was pumping up expectation and then slamming it.

Much like a husband taking a bride to himself. And on his wedding day, he's so pleased and he's so expectant of a whole lifetime with this woman.

[26 : 47] Only to find her in the arms of another man. And the whole thing is dashed to pieces. And God says, that's what you did to me at Baal Peor.

I was married to you. But at Baal Peor, Numbers chapter 25. The men began to indulge in sexual immorality with the Moabite women who invited them to the sacrifices to their gods.

And you remember what the sacrifices and the religious activity of Baal worship was. And so come along and let's have more of this immorality at our worship over here under the groves.

And so the people ate and bowed down before these gods. And so Israel was joined. Joined to the Baal Peor. And Hosea is saying it's still the case.

You're still in bed with Baal. This punishment of being kicked out of the land. It's no small thing that Israel's done. Gibeah.

[27 : 59] Baal Peor. And they became as vile as the thing that they love. They're in loving their idols. You know, you become like what you worship. Israel loved and worshipped Baal Peor and their idols.

And they became as worthless as the idols they worshipped. And God was, God detested the idols. And he detested them.

Well, there's one more stop on this travelogue. Verse 15. Because of all their wickedness in Gilgal, I hated them there.

Because of their sinful deeds, I will drive them out of my house. I will no longer love them. All their leaders are rebellious. And evidently, Gilgal was one of the strategic centers for Baal worship in the land.

Whatever the wickedness there at Gilgal, it was as well known to the Israelites as it may be unknown to us what it was. But the fact that all he has to do is mention the wickedness of Gilgal would seal the deal that they deserve to be kicked out of the house of God.

[29 : 11] Out of his land. And to be hated and no longer loved. And we remember back in chapter 1 when Gomer had her second child. And God said, That's why God himself will drive them out of the land.

Out of his house. Out of his dwelling. Where he had put his name in Israel. In Canaan. These punishments are well-deserved paybacks for her behavior, her sin.

That's the point he's making. Well, the punishment of God not only removes them from the promised land, but it also reverses the promise of the multiplied population or the numerous offspring.

So we come to that third point. The numerous offspring. Remember, one of the promises to Abraham was that he would have descendants as many as the stars of the heaven and the sands of the seashore.

But here, at the end of this chapter, Israel's covenant breaking brings upon themselves the loss of population.

[30 : 25] And that becomes the theme of these final verses. The loss of population. Ephraim's glory, her praise, the thing in which she prided herself was her many people.

And this northern kingdom had grown rapidly in the 8th century BC. But notice verse 11. Ephraim's glory will fly away like a bird. No birth, no pregnancy, no conception.

So there's a bird at my feeder. And I look away for a moment and look back and it's gone. It was there and I saw it.

But I see it no more. Just that quickly, Israel's glory, her swelling numbers will be decimated. And that in various ways.

First of all, through infertility, there will be no conception, no pregnant, and no conception means no pregnancy. And no pregnancy means no birth. Say that can decimate a population real quick.

[31 : 33] Verse 12. Even if they rear children, I would bereave them of everyone. Woe to them when I turn away from them. They've turned away from me, but they've not yet seen the distress that will follow when I turn away from them.

They will have children only to lose them, which is a worse evil than never having had them in the first place. Verse 13.

I've seen Ephraim like Tyre planted in a pleasant place, but Ephraim will bring out their children to the slaughter, to the slayer. Assyria.

That ruthless army is coming. And those that have their children in Ephraim, the northern kingdom, will only bring them out to the slaughter. So God has his ways to reduce the population.

Infertility. Secondly, warfare. He'll slay them. Verse 14. We see another manner in which he'll reduce them. Give them, O Lord, what will you give them?

[32 : 36] Give them wombs that miscarry and breasts that are dry. And a miscarrying womb was one of the curses for breaking the covenant back in Deuteronomy 28, 18.

We have it stated for us in verse 16. Ephraim is blighted. Their root is withered. They yield no fruit. Even if they bear children, I will slay their cherished offspring.

And so the family tree of Ephraim is seen to be a blighted tree withered at the root that yields no population increase. In one way or another, God is reducing their numbers.

Only a remnant will be spared. And this is a fitting judgment for the nation who was turning to Baal and trusting in Baal, the God of fertility, to make the wombs and the land fertile and fruitful.

And so their punishment will be not only to be chased out of the promised land, that fruitful land of milk and honey, but they will also have their numbers seriously decreased.

[33 : 50] So the blessings of the covenant God made with Abraham are here being replaced with the curses of that very covenant for all covenant breakers. God had said to Moses in Deuteronomy 28, You who were as numerous as the stars in the sky will be left but few in number because you did not obey the Lord your God.

And just as it pleased the Lord to make you prosper and increase in number, so it will please him to ruin and destroy you. And then the Lord will scatter you among the nations from one end of the earth to the other.

There we have it. The two things. decrease your number and chase you out of the promised land to wander among the nations. And now 700 years after, Hosea has this unhappy task of letting Israel know that these judgments are just about to overtake them.

Verse 17, he closes, My God will reject them. Ephraim, that's Ephraim, the name for Israel, because they have not obeyed him.

They will be wanderers among the nations. You see, sin defiled the land and the land vomited them out to be wandering vagabonds, people without a land.

[35 : 18] Now, if that's all that we had to say, it would be a sad story indeed. But homelessness and few descendants do not have the last word in Hosea or in any of the other prophets or the scriptures.

Now, this chapter in God's word is not just for a few history buffs out there that enjoy learning about the ancient people of Israel. I told you at the beginning that this chapter has to do with your eternal destiny.

It has everything to do with you and me. So what is that? How does this have any bearing upon you and me? That's the question we come to now as we come to apply this chapter of God's word.

Well, I told you two of the four things that God had promised to Abraham. The land and the numerous offspring. Let me tell you about another thing that God promised to Abraham.

He said to Abraham, all the peoples on earth will be blessed through you. All the peoples on earth will be blessed through you. And then we come to Matthew 1.1, the very beginning of the New Testament.

[36 : 41] And it begins with a genealogy of Jesus Christ, who is set forth as the son of David, the son of Abraham. Jesus Christ is the promised seed of Abraham from whom blessing would come to all peoples over all the earth, to every nation, every tribal group, every language.

Not just to Jews, but salvation blessing would come from this promised seed of Abraham to all the nations. Galatians 3.29.

You've got it there before you on your handout. If you belong to Christ, this is New Testament. Paul is speaking to believers in the New Testament.

If you belong to Christ, Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, his offspring, and heirs according to the promise.

If you belong to Christ by faith, you're one of those stars in the heavens. You're one of those grains of sand on the seashore that mark out this great number of God's people.

[37 : 58] You're one of them. And as such, you are heirs according to the promise. The promise of the land, the promise of a numerous offspring, the promise of salvation, blessings, and God's protection.

And so, the Bible is telling us it is by the Lord Jesus Christ, his life and his death, that these promises of Abraham have been secured for all his believing people, Jews and Gentiles alike. Just earlier in Galatians 3, we read, Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us. He redeems us in order that the blessings given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus.

You say, what is the land and the numerous, what does it have to do with me? I'm not, I'm not a descendant of Abraham. And Paul says, you are wrong.

If you are in Christ, you are Abraham's descendant and heirs of the promise. So let the world fight about that little parcel of land over in Palestine and let the nations make their claims on the land. [39:16] It's all yours. It all belongs to you. Because you are one of Abraham's offspring to whom the promise was made.

And it all comes from Christ who takes the curses that belong to us, covenant breakers, and gives us the blessings that belong to him, the perfect covenant keeper.

It's in Christ that all the blessing of land and offspring become ours and have meaning for you and me. So let's look back at these two things, the land and the numerous offspring. First of all, the land. It was shortly after Hosea's prophecy ended that the northern kingdom of Israel were driven out of the land into a Syrian exile. Some 150 years later, the southern kingdom of Israel would also be vomited out of the land into Babylonian exile.

And after 70 years in exile, a remnant, a small portion of God's people were brought back into the promised land under Ezra and Nehemiah.

[40:23] You can read of it. 50,000 coming back with Ezra, but only into a tiny territory. And this return to the land did not exhaust the glorious prophecies that had been spoken about this great return and all the wonderful things that would happen when the people would return to the land.

There was something more to the promise. There's a greater reality, a greater fulfillment than just the few people that trickled back into the small portion of Canaan.

And it becomes clear to us when we remember that the promised land was an Old Testament type of a New Testament reality. Just as the Old Covenant priest was a shadow of the New Covenant, High Priest Jesus Christ.

And the Old Covenant lambs that were slaughtered was just a shadow of the New Covenant Lamb of God that actually takes away sins.

These things were shadows of the substance that comes in Christ. They were types of the greater reality. That's true of the promised land. It's a type.

[41:38] It has an antitype. It has a greater reality that it points to. And as we come to the New Testament, we find that the idea of promised land and holy land is not limited to some strip of land over in Palestine, but that it has expanded to embrace the whole cosmos.

the whole world. Romans chapter 4 and verse 13. It was not through law that Abraham and his offspring received the promise that he would be heir of the world.

Abraham and his offspring, Paul says, received a promise that they would be heir not of the land over there, but of the world, the cosmos. And when the Lord Jesus is talking to the followers of his kingdom, he says, blessed are the meek, for they will inherit not the land, but the earth.

The earth. We don't have to fight and push our way around to get our little piece of this earth. It's all ours, Jesus is saying, if we're meek, if we're poor in spirit.

In the Old Testament, the promise that was attached, the promise to children that was attached to the fifth commandment, if they would honor their father and mother, is so that you may have, you may live long and that it may go well with you in the land.

[43:01] The Lord, your God is giving you Deuteronomy five. But when Paul in Ephesians chapter six, quotes this same command for new covenant Gentile children, he adjusts the promise to the new covenant reality foreshadowed in the old and says so that it might go well with you and you may enjoy long life, not in the land, but on the earth, the earth.

And that's in line with Romans eight that has the whole creation groaning under the bondage of decay and frustration, eagerly waiting the removal of the curse.

It's like the land is sick to its stomach of this wickedness. When will it end? When will we be free from the frustration and decay that the curse has brought upon us?

What will happen? The redemption, the bodies of the sons of God, the whole earth. And so what's emerging is that the promised land was a type of the greater reality.

The fulfillment is the whole earth is to become a holy place where God's holy people live with him forever and ever. And when we come to the last two chapters of the Bible, it leads us into this blessed land.

[44:19] And it's like paradise restored, isn't it? There's the tree of life. And what is it? It's a new heaven and a new earth, a new earth.

And there's no longer any curse. What a land. No more death or mourning or crying or pain for the old order of things has passed away and the one seated on the throne said, I'm making everything

new and forever God will be with his people in that new heaven and new earth.

That's the fulfillment, folks, of that promise to Abraham to give to his descendants the land of promise. Yes, there was a spot in Canaan and that was the type.

But the fulfillment is far greater, even as Jesus is far greater than the lambs that were slaughtered. So the land is the whole earth renewed by God, purged from the curse where God and his people dwell forever.

And Hebrews tells us that's what Abraham was looking to all along by faith. Hebrews 11, 9 and 10 by faith, Abraham made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country.

[45 : 32] He lived in tents as did Isaac and Jacob who were heirs with him of the same promise for he was looking forward to the city with foundations whose architect and builder is God.

They were longing for a better country, a heavenly one. Yes, they received the promise of the typical promised land of Canaan, but they saw by faith to the reality a better country, a heavenly one.

And so Peter says in keeping with his promise, 2 Peter 3, 13, we, we new covenant believers are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness, the reality of all that was pictured for us in the Old Testament promised land.

The land that is to be given to the restored Israel of God is to be theirs forever and ever. The land under the pure blessing of God, no more curse, just the eternal sunshine of God's favor falling on that land forever and ever.

And that's what's given to everyone who belongs to Christ. They're heirs of the promises to Abraham. And nothing impure will ever enter into it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

[46 : 58] So it's a prepared land for a prepared people. Well, who are these people? What about that? Well, the numerous offspring. Remember that promise? Very quickly, Hosea speaks of depopulation of Israel as God's judgment for their sins.

And yet, Hosea says in chapter 1 and verse 10, yet the Israelites will be like the sand on the seashore. These same ones whose wounds are dried up and whose root is withered, they will be like the sands of the seashore which cannot be measured or counted in the place where it was said of them, You are not my people.

They will be called sons of the living God. And so, the old covenant people of God shadow out a greater new covenant reality.

And God has some surprises in store for how this is going to get done. How will people who are not my people become sons of the living God? Well, Paul and Peter, Paul and Romans 9, 25 and 26 and Peter and 1 Peter 1, 11, quote Hosea 1, 10 and say, it will be by the Gentiles who were not my people becoming sons and daughters of the living God.

There will be Gentiles pouring in to the Holy Land. Abraham's offspring are comprised of Jews and Gentiles, slave and free, male and female, if you belong to Christ, whatever your nationality, you are Abraham's offspring and heirs according to the promise.

[48 : 32] And so, Isaiah can speak of a barren woman who would give birth to a multitude of children. Israel, barren, and yet giving birth as many would be born again in Zion from Jews, from Gentiles.

And so, wild olive branches will be grafted into the olive tree. Here, let's bring this Gentile. Here, let's bring that Gentile, this one, and let's graft them in. Let's increase the population of the Israel of God, this newly constituted people of God.

And you see them all together around the throne in Revelation chapter 7 and verse 9, and they comprise a number that no man can count like the stars of the sky and the sands of the seashore.

You see, Hosea 9 has everything to do with you and with me. Do you belong to that people? Are the promises of Abraham in their broadest fulfillment, do they belong to you?

If you're in Christ, they do. Then rejoice, even as you see what's happening in Hosea 9. rejoice in what Christ will do. Israel failed and forfeited it all.

[49 : 47] Christ triumphs and wins for us what we never could win for ourselves. This is your future, believers. A new heaven and a new earth with Christ and his multitude of people forever and ever rejoice and sing.

If you're not in Christ, this is what you forfeit. It's what you forfeit for your idols, the things you put in his place, the things that keep you from repenting of your sins and giving yourself up to Jesus

Christ.

May you come to him this morning. Lord Jesus, our righteousness, it is you who have purchased for each of your children such a glorious destiny.

And yet there are so many in the world and some even here who are muckraking with their heads bowed down looking at the earth and ignoring this precious crown of life that hangs over their heads.

Show them again this morning what they forfeit for their idols. Draw them to this Savior to see and to trust in his wonderful grace that he would be cursed for us, that we might be blessed forever and ever.

[51:09] We ask in his name, Amen.