

Hosea — Garden

The little back corner of my yard I like to call a garden is a strange labor of love. I've never had much of a green thumb, but in spite of that I find so much joy in the process anyway. After last year's rodent infestation, I gave it this year to mostly rest. Where I unsuccessfully harvested cucumbers, bell peppers, tomatoes, green beans, and zucchini last year, I simply tilled the ground and scattered wildflower seeds for my pollinator friends.

That piece of ground has transformed. Oranges and pinks. Purples and blues. And the sunflowers are still growing, reaching closer to the sky as August comes to an end. The fuzziest of bumblebees can be found, and even more more recently, the hummingbirds are visiting.

Next season, it will transform again. Flowers may bloom. Vegetables may be attempted again. They come, and then they'll go—again.

Never in my life have I read and imagined the book of Hosea as a garden. A garden like those that are tilled and worked and watered and seeded and weeded to bloom. That transform each season into something new; discovering something that can and will bear fruit.

**That transform
each season into
something new;
discovering
something that can
and will bear fruit.**

The colors and fragrances allure us, calling to our spirits by name.

Each blossom, bloom, and berry serves as gift.

Doorways of hope waiting for us to venture through.

And being reminded of how God first loved us, betrothing us to Himself.

We bury our hands in the dirt, fertilize and till, renewing our promise to the creation that surrounds us. Dropping the bow and the sword for the hoe and the plow.

Reminding us that with each rhythm and season, our identity is transformed closer and closer to who God created us to be.

**The process of
acknowledging our guilt
and seeking God's face
is messy work—just like
working in the garden.**

It's painful and backbreaking. There's sweating and blistering. Seasons of growth and harvest. Seasons of drought and dormancy. There's life and there's death.

There's so much more beauty to this book of prophecy when we look at it through this lens of problem and solution and transformation. When this book is about so much more than just failure but also about the promise that lies in our covenant with God and identity in Him.

And I will betroth you to myself forever. I will betroth you to myself in righteousness and in justice. And in steadfast love and in mercy. I'll betroth thee to myself in faithfulness, and you shall know the Lord.

PRAYER

*Forgive us for our mistakes —
when we miss the mark, cause harm,
and choose power over people.
Let us press on to know You,
acknowledging our own guilt,
choosing to seek You above all.
Transform us, transform our world,
to one that sows peace over chaos
and drops weapons for plows.
Breaking forth like the dawn,
ever betrothed
to You.*

Amen

THE FOUR PILLARS

BEMA Discipleship is built on four pillars; a **Four-Pillared Perspective** to help us remember **to elevate the words of God** (not ours) and help us identify the principles that we see recurring in the story of God's people.

Here are some applications for this episode echoing the ideas of the four pillars:



TEXT

What stands out to you from the Text that you want to carry with you as you read the prophets? What could you meditate over or memorize? The verses in Chapter 2? Something else?



COMMUNITY

How does your community see Hosea differently now that you look at it through transformation and the image of a garden? How might it transform your community?



DISCIPLESHIP

Who are you bringing alongside you to model problem, solution, and transformation? Who can you look to that reminds you to acknowledge your guilt and seek God's face?



WRESTLING

How might this image of a garden make you wrestle with this book differently than you have before? What does this teach you about God, who He is, and His love for you?



Are you a music listener?

Listen along to our BEMA Music Playlists on Spotify.

Song suggestions? Send them to bemabesorah@gmail.com.



BEMA SESSION 2



MEDITATION & PRAYER

REFLECTION, APPLICATION & IMPACT

There are three emphases that we are always thinking about in terms of application at BEMA. These may be stated explicitly at times, but often we will want you to do the work of finding ways to connect the dots to the things we are learning. Much of this is what makes the work of BEMA distinct as a ministry of Impact Campus Ministries.

CREATING A SPACE SPIRITUAL FORMATION

*True success is developing intimacy with God. In Session 1, we encountered the idea of “Creating Space for God” in our lives. We believe that **if we do our part of creating that space, God will fill it** as He desires. You’re already doing this as you dive into the Text and jump into a place to discuss. God will meet you in these places! Look for places the Holy Spirit can do work in and through you as you go about your everyday life.*

CONSIDERING CAMPUS YOUNG PEOPLE FOCUS

*We believe that young adults are shaping the **future of this world**. Jesus modeled a ministry of discipling young adults, and that approach has and will work. If you are a college student who is listening, we want this material to be directly helpful to your pursuits. If you are not a college student, we want to challenge you to come alongside one and work together.*

SACRED STATION THEOLOGY OF WORK

*This isn’t only for church or Bible study; this is about what we do every day. How we do our job and how it may take advantage of or bring life to others is something God says is central to our presence in the world. Justice is very much something God cares about. Does our physical work (our 9–5 job) bring shalom or chaos? Does it exploit creation? The way we manage our employees, interact with customers or coworkers, care for our children, or create products can provide relief to others. **The work we do every day is sacred and matters!***