



DAILY DEVOTIONAL FRIDAY BIBLE STUDY FOR NOVEMBER 4, 2011

## THE ALLURING GOD

*“Therefore, I am now going to allure her; I will lead her into the desert and speak tenderly to her...I will betroth you to me forever; I will betroth you in righteousness and justice, in love and compassion.” (Hosea 2:14, 19, NIV)*

IT IS HARD, WHEN YOU HAVE PLAYED WHERE THE FAIRWAYS ARE GREEN, the bunker edges trimmed, and the greens smooth, to find yourself on a bare, unlevel tee preparing to play a hole that has never seen the water it needs. The words “golf course” and “goat track” don’t belong together!

In the same way, it can be a bit startling to see words like “alluring” or “attractive” associated with God. Yet that is where we are headed today.

In one of Scripture’s more bizarre accounts, God called upon the man Hosea, beginning to speak His words through this willing servant. And in that beginning, God instructed Hosea to find an adulterous woman to make his wife. How sure was Hosea that he had heard from the Lord God? So sure that he actually did what God told him to do!

As time passed, Hosea’s wife Gomer conceived twice and had sons. Each of these, the Lord Himself named, calling the first Lo-Ruhamah (“not loved) and the next Lo-Ammi (“not my people”). God was turning His back on His beloved Israel, sending them this strong message: “You cannot wander from Me, serving the gods of your appetites, and not reap the consequence of My departure.”

But in the flip of a page, so to speak, God revealed to Hosea that this turning would not last, that the day would come when “not my people” would be called “my people” once more.

In the second chapter of Hosea’s recorded prophecies, we find out just how God would go about this. He would lure His people with kindness and love. And in this renewing, the betrothal would endure forever.

God continues to do the same. He reaches out in love, even to those who have said they want nothing to do with Him. Our loving Lord knows that our souls, if they will be wooed, will return to His grace.

### God first

*Read Hosea 1:6-2:23.* How is God shown to initiate the turning to love in this passage? What, if any, reason is given for His demonstration of love? What does this passage tell us about who truly takes the lead in our relationship with God?

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### God thoughts

*Read 2 Timothy 2:10-13.* How does this passage confirm the prophecies of Hosea? How does it connect the work of Jesus to the promise and demonstration of God’s redeeming love for us?

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### Loved and loving

*Read 1 John 3:1-6 & 16-18.* How do we know what love is? What has God’s love for us made us to be? How are we to respond to this love of God?

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