

INTRODUCTION 引言

Love story is a popular theme in movies. As we watch, we imagine ourselves as the main characters. We hope to meet someone who loves us unconditionally and makes us happy forever. But would we love that person the same way? One-sided love is painful. The book of Hosea describes that situation. God asked prophet Hosea to marry Gomer, even though He told Hosea that she would be unfaithful. Why would God give such a command? Hosea's marriage was a living parable. Gomer's betrayal showed Israel's unfaithfulness to God. A shattered marriage reflected a broken covenant. When Hosea spoke to his people, Israel enjoyed peace and prosperity. But greed led to oppression of the poor, and people turned from the Lord to false gods. Meanwhile, Assyria grew stronger. Israel tried to survive by paying tribute to Assyria while secretly making alliances with other countries. Their idolatry was not only about worshiping foreign gods. It was replacing God's place in their hearts with something else. Their love for God had faded. The good news is that God is not like us. His love never changes. He always provides a way back for wandering children. What was true for Israel is true for us. God calls us home, whether we are Christians struggling with sin or people who do not yet know Him. The invitation is sent. How will you respond?

EXPLANATION 解釋

1. A Reproving Love 責備的愛

Hosea's story shows different sides of God's love. First, it is a reproving love. God reproved Israel in two ways. First, He took away people's false security. Look at Hosea 2:5-7: **5 ...For she said, 'I will go after my lovers, who give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, my oil and my drink.' 6 Therefore I will hedge up her way with thorns, and I will build a wall against her, so that she cannot find her paths. 7 She shall pursue her lovers but not overtake them, and she shall seek them but shall not find them...** Gomer ran from her husband looking for "true love," but pleasure without commitment never lasts. Israel did the same. They believed idols could give them peace, but idols only led them into bondage. Paying foreign nations for protection also failed. It was like raising a tiger as a pet — it grows, and one day it bites. Second, God took away their prosperity. Continue to read verses 8 to 9: **8 And she did not know that it was I who gave her the grain, the wine, and the oil, and who lavished on her silver and gold, which they used for Baal. 9 Therefore I will take back my grain in its time, and my wine in its season, and I will take away my wool and my flax, which were to cover her nakedness.** Gomer's search for love ended in disappointment, pain and shame. Israel abandoned Jehovah for Baal, a Canaanite storm god. But God would not let idols steal His glory. When He stops the rain, crops fail, animals suffer and people run out of water. Idols cannot deliver what they promise. Israel's idols were false gods and foreign nations. Today, one of the biggest idols is money. Money itself is God's blessing, but the love of money is a sin. It leads to pride when we boast about our house, car or handbag. It leads to greed when we always want more. It leads to jealousy when we think others have a "better" life. Sometimes God uses reproving love to wake us up. When people cannot stop chasing after money, their health may decline, family relationships may grow

distant, they also lose sleep worrying about investments or hackers. God is using those red lights to remind us to surrender our lives to Him. We should serve God and use money, not the other way around. Put God above everything. Each morning thank Him for a new day. Determine to live for His glory. Trust Him in uncertain situations. Find joy in Him in good and hard times. Thank Him for every blessing. Be content with what you have, whether a lot or a little. Look for ways to bless others with your money, possessions and time.

2. A Redeeming Love 挽回的愛

God's love is a reproving love. Through discipline, He hopes to turn people back from sin. It reveals His redeeming love. Even though God's people disobeyed Him, He never gave up on them. In 2:14–15, God shares His plan: **14 “Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak tenderly to her. 15 And there I will give her her vineyards and make the Valley of Achor a door of hope. And there she shall answer as in the days of her youth, as at the time when she came out of the land of Egypt.”** God rescued Israel from Egypt in the past, prepared them in the wilderness, and brought them into the Promised Land. In the same way, He would free Israel from idols and from their enemies. In the book of Joshua, the Valley of Achor was where Achan sinned by keeping forbidden plunder. Yet God promised to turn that place of judgment into a door of hope. He would reverse the curse and restore His blessing. To show His redeeming love, God asked Hosea to do something shocking. Look at 3:1-3: **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.” 2 So I bought her for fifteen shekels of silver and a homer and a lethech of barley. 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.”** God told Hosea to buy back his unfaithful wife and love her again. This demonstrated what God would do for His rebellious people. God gave Hosea a command, but He also worked in Gomer's heart. See 2:7: **... ‘I will go and return to my first husband, for it was better for me then than now.’** She realized returning to Hosea was the wiser choice. Israel came to the same understanding. Refer to 6:1: **“Come, let us return to the Lord; for he has torn us, that he may heal us; he has struck us down, and he will bind us up.”** God helped both Gomer and Israel understand three truths: 1. Sin cannot give the lasting joy it promises. It ends in emptiness and pain. 2. Suffering caused by sin is God's discipline. 3. God's forgiving grace is always available. God shows us the same redeeming love today. The Holy Spirit convicts believers and nudges them back to Him. Those who listen will turn around completely—like the prodigal son. The party house eventually becomes a pigpen once the excitement fades. We wonder why we stay on the street when God is waiting for us to go home. If you have walked away from God, He is calling you back. His grace is enough to cover any sin. Do not delay. Admit your wrong, receive His forgiveness, turn away from sin, and return to Him.

3. A Relentless Love 不息的愛

God shows His reproving love when He disciplines us. He shows His redeeming love when He welcomes us home. Thirdly, He pursues us with a relentless love. God displays that emotion in 11:8-9: **8 How can I give you up, O Ephraim? How can I hand you over, O Israel? How can I make you like Admah? How can I treat you like Zeboiim? My heart recoils within me; my compassion grows warm and tender. 9 I will not execute my burning anger; I will not again**

destroy Ephraim; for I am God and not a man, the Holy One in your midst, and I will not come in wrath. Ephraim refers to the northern kingdom of Israel. Admah and Zeboiim were cities destroyed along with Sodom and Gomorrah. God loved His people, yet hated their sin. Parents understand this tension. When children rebel, love mixes with grief. Parents often take the first step to repair the relationship even when the child refuses to say “sorry.” God does this perfectly. He balances love for sinners and anger toward sin without error. His discipline is actually an expression of love. The opposite of love is not hatred, but indifference. It is when people say: “I don’t care.” In that sense, Israel still had hope because God was punishing them. That is why Hosea urges them to confess in 14:1–4: **1 Return, O Israel, to the Lord your God, for you have stumbled because of your iniquity. 2 Take with you words and return to the Lord; say to him, ‘Take away all iniquity; accept what is good, and we will pay with bulls the vows of our lips. 3 Assyria shall not save us; we will not ride on horses; and we will say no more, ‘Our God,’ to the work of our hands. In you the orphan finds mercy.’ 4 I will heal their apostasy; I will love them freely, for my anger has turned from them.** Israel had to recognize their wrong attitudes. Foreign nations could not save them. Idols were useless dolls crafted by hands. People needed to see themselves as helpless orphans in need of mercy. God was not looking for animal sacrifices, but for “bulls of lips,” meaning words of confession together with a sincere commitment to return to Him. Verse 4 shows God’s response to a remorseful heart: His anger turns away, He heals their spiritual sickness, and He loves them again. God welcomes a sincere confession—not a ritual, not a bigger offering, not an empty promise of “I’ll try harder next time.” What He wants is a broken spirit and a humble prayer: “God, have mercy on me, a sinner.” He loves us even when we do not feel the need for His love. In His love, God never ignores sin. We will face the consequences of our choices—heartache, broken relationships, financial loss, sickness, and more. But His judgment is not abandonment. God continues to pursue us with relentless love and patiently waits for us to turn back.

CONCLUSION 結論

God launched an all-out mission to reclaim His people. He wants to rescue every lost sheep. That reminds me of an incredible rescue in Thailand in 2018. Twelve teenage soccer players and their 25-year-old assistant coach entered a cave to explore. Heavy rain soon followed, flooding the passage behind them. Their exit was blocked, and they became trapped about 1.2 miles from the entrance — roughly the distance from our church to the nearby movie theater. Experts from around the world came to help. After nine days, two divers finally reached the boys. But the danger was far from over. Continuous rain, zero visibility due to muddy water, and tight passageways made the rescue extremely difficult. Several plans were proposed, but they were too risky, too time-consuming, or simply impossible. Time was running out. More rain was coming, and the oxygen level inside the cave was dropping. Finally, the team made a bold decision: they would sedate each boy and have a diver carry him out. The plan worked, though it took about three hours to bring out just one person. After 15 long days, all thirteen were rescued. In total, about 10,000 people helped in some way. Most of them did not know the boys. None of them was paid. They offered their time and risked their lives because every person was worth saving. Our Heavenly Father paid an even greater price. He gave us His Son. Jesus died on the cross for your sins. He offers forgiving grace. He is calling you home. Would you accept Him?

INTRODUCTION 引言

愛情故事是電影中常見的主題。我們一邊看，一邊把自己代入主角的位置。我們盼望遇見一個無條件愛我們、能讓我們永遠幸福的人。但我們是否也會同樣去愛那個人呢？單戀是痛苦的。何西阿書正是描述這種情形。神要求先知何西阿娶歌篾為妻，雖然祂事先告訴何西阿，這位妻子會對他不忠。為什麼神會給出這樣的命令？因為何西阿的婚姻是一個活生生的比喻。歌篾的背叛象徵以色列對神的不忠；破碎的婚姻反映了被毀壞的盟約。當何西阿向百姓傳達信息時，以色列正在享受太平與繁榮。但貪婪導致貧窮人被欺壓，百姓也離棄耶和華，轉向假神。與此同時，亞述的勢力不斷增強。以色列為求生存，向亞述進貢，同時又暗中與其他國家結盟。他們的偶像不只是敬拜外邦神明，而是用別的東西取代神在他們心中的地位。他們對神的愛已經冷淡。好消息是：神不像我們。祂的愛永不改變。祂總是為偏行己路的兒女預備回家的路。以色列的經歷同樣適用於我們。無論是跌倒的基督徒，還是尚未認識神的人，祂都在呼喚我們回家。邀請已經發出，你會如何回應？

EXPLANATION 解釋

1. A Reproving Love 責備的愛

何西阿的故事向我們展示了神的愛的不同表達方式。首先，祂的愛是管教的愛。神用兩種方式管教以色列。首先，祂奪去人們虛假的安全感。請看何西阿書 2:5-7：**5 他們的母親行了淫亂，懷他們的母做了可羞恥的事，因為她說：我要隨從所愛的；我的餅、水、羊毛、麻、油、酒都是他們給的。6 因此，我必用荊棘堵塞她的道，築牆擋住她，使她找不着路。7 她必追隨所愛的，卻追不上；她必尋找他們，卻尋不見...**。歌篾離開丈夫，尋找所謂的「真愛」，但沒有承諾的快樂不能長久。以色列也一樣。他們以為偶像能給他們平安，但偶像只會帶來捆綁。向外邦求保護也沒有用，就像養一隻老虎當寵物——牠會越長越大，終有一天會咬你。第二，神奪去他們的繁榮。請繼續看 8-9 節：**8 她不知道是我給她五穀、新酒，和油，又加增她的金銀；她卻以此供奉巴力。9 因此到了收割的日子，出酒的時候，我必將我的五穀新酒收回，也必將她應當遮體的羊毛和麻奪回來。**歌篾追求愛情的結果是失望、痛苦和羞辱。以色列離棄耶和華，去拜巴力——迦南人認為掌管風暴的神明。但神不會讓偶像奪走祂的榮耀。當祂停止降雨，農作物就枯萎，牲畜受苦，人也缺水。偶像不能兌現它們的承諾。以色列的偶像是假神和外邦勢力。今天，人們最大的偶像之一是金錢。金錢本身是神的祝福，但貪愛金錢卻是罪。金錢使人驕傲，炫耀房子、車子或名牌包；它使人貪婪，永遠想要更多；它使人嫉妒，總是覺得別人活得「更好」。有時神用管教的愛來喚醒我們。當人停不了追逐金錢時，健康可能走下坡，家人關係可能疏遠，也可能因為擔心投資或駭客而失眠。神用這些警號提醒我們要把生命交給祂。我們應當事奉

神、使用金錢，而不是倒過來。把神放在首位。每天早晨為新的一天感謝祂。立志為祂的榮耀而活。在不確定的情況中信靠祂。在順境與逆境中都以祂為樂。為祂的所有祝福感恩。無論多或少，都要知足。並尋找機會用你的金錢、物質和時間去祝福他人。

2. A Redeeming Love 挽回的愛

神的愛是一種責備的愛。藉著管教，祂盼望人能從罪中回轉。這也顯明祂的挽回的愛。縱使神的子民悖逆，祂從未放棄他們。在 2:14-15 中，神向他們宣告祂的計畫：
14 「後來我必勸導她，領她到曠野，對她說安慰的話。15 她從那裡出來，我必賜她葡萄園，又賜她亞割谷作為指望的門。她必在那裡應聲，與幼年的日子一樣，與從埃及地上來的時候相同。」神曾經拯救以色列脫離埃及，在曠野中塑造他們，並帶領他們進入應許之地。同樣，祂也要使以色列脫離偶像與仇敵的捆綁。在約書亞記中，亞割谷是亞干犯罪的地方，他私自留下被禁止的戰利品。然而神應許要把這審判之地變成「指望的門」，祂要使咒詛變成祝福。為了顯明祂挽回的愛，神要求何西阿做一件令人震驚的事。請看 3:1-3：**1 耶和華對我說：「你再去愛一個淫婦，就是她情人所愛的；好像以色列人，雖然偏向別神，喜愛葡萄餅，耶和華還是愛他們。」2 我使用銀子十五舍客勒，大麥一賀梅珥半，買她歸我。3 我對她說：「你當多日為我獨居，不可行淫，不可歸別人為妻，我向你必這樣。」**神要求何西阿買回他不忠的妻子，再次愛她。這正是神要為祂悖逆的子民所做的事。神給了何西阿命令，同時也在歌篴心中動工。請看 2:7：**…我要歸回前夫，因我那時的光景比如今還好。**她明白回到何西阿身邊才是更明智的選擇。以色列也有同樣的領悟。請看 6:1：**來吧，我們歸向耶和華！他撕裂我們，也必醫治；他打傷我們，也必纏裹。**神讓歌篴和以色列明白三件事：1. 罪不能給人所承諾的長久喜樂，最終只帶來空虛與痛苦。2. 因罪而受的苦是神的管教。3. 神的赦免之恩永遠敞開。今天，神也向我們顯明同樣挽回的愛。聖靈會責備信徒、提醒他們回轉。願意聽從的人會完全轉向神——就像耶穌比喻中的浪子。當歡樂消失後，宴樂之地就變成豬圈。我們會驚訝自己為何仍留在街上，而神正等著我們回家。如果你曾經遠離神，祂正在呼喚你回來。祂的恩典足以遮蓋任何罪。不要再拖延。承認你的錯，接受祂的赦免，離棄罪惡，回到祂面前。

3. A Relentless Love 不息的愛

當神管教我們時，祂顯出祂責備的愛；當祂接納我們回家時，祂顯出祂挽回的愛；第三，祂以不息的愛追尋我們。神在 11:8-9 中表達了這樣的情感：**8 以法蓮哪，我怎能捨棄你？以色列啊，我怎能棄絕你？我怎能使你如押瑪？怎能使你如洗扁？我回心轉意，我的憐愛大大發動。9 我必不發猛烈的怒氣，也不再毀滅以法蓮。因我是神，並非世人，是你們中間的聖者；我必不在怒中臨到你們。**以法蓮指的是北國以色列。押瑪和洗便是與所多瑪、蛾摩拉一同被毀滅的城市。神愛祂的子民，卻恨惡他們的罪。父母都懂這種矛盾——孩子反叛時，愛與憂傷交織。就算孩子不肯說「對不起」，父母常常會先伸出和解的手。神做得更完美。祂毫無偏差地平衡了對罪人的愛與對罪的

憤怒。祂的管教其實是愛的表現。愛的反面不是恨，而是冷漠——是那句「我不在乎」。從這角度來看，以色列仍然有盼望，因為神還在懲罰他們。因此，何西阿在 14:1-4 勸他們認罪：**1 以色列啊，你要歸向耶和華你的神；你是因自己的罪孽跌倒了。2 當歸向耶和華，用言語禱告他說：求你除淨罪孽，悅納善行；這樣，我們就把嘴唇的祭代替牛犢獻上。3 我們不向亞述求救，不騎埃及的馬，也不再對我們手所造的說：你是我們的神。因為孤兒在你耶和華那裡得蒙憐憫。4 我必醫治他們背道的病，甘心愛他們；因為我的怒氣向他們轉消。**以色列必須承認自己的錯誤。外邦勢力救不了他們；偶像不過是人手做的玩偶。人們需要承認自己像無助的孤兒，需要神的憐憫。神所要的不是祭壇上的牲畜，而是「嘴唇的祭」，意思是真誠的悔改加上重新委身與神的決定。第 4 節顯示神對痛悔之心的回應：祂的怒氣轉消，祂醫治人們屬靈的疾病，祂再次愛他們。神接納真誠的認罪——不是儀式，不是更多的奉獻，也不是空洞的「下次我會更努力」。祂要的是破碎的心和謙卑的禱告：「神啊，憐憫我這個可憐的罪人。」祂愛我們，就算我們不覺得需要祂的愛。在祂的愛中，神從不忽略罪。我們會承受錯誤選擇的後果——心痛、破碎的關係、財物損失、疾病等等。但祂的審判不是拋棄。神繼續以不息的愛追尋我們，耐心等候我們回轉。

CONCLUSION 結論

神發動了一場全面的行動，要領回祂的子民。祂渴望拯救每一隻迷失的羊。這讓我想起 2018 年泰國那場令人難以置信的救援行動。十二名青少年足球隊員和他們 25 歲的助理教練進入一座洞穴探險。隨後暴雨傾盆而下，水淹沒了他們身後的通道，使出口被堵住。他們被困在離洞口約 1.2 英里的地方——大約是我們教會到附近電影院的距離。世界各地的專家都前來協助。九天後，兩名潛水員終於找到這些孩子。但危機遠未結束。持續的降雨、混濁的水使能見度近乎於零，以及狹窄的通道，使救援變得極其困難。人們提出了好幾個方案，但都太危險、太耗時，或根本行不通。時間一分一秒流逝，更多的雨即將到來，洞穴內的氧氣含量也在下降。最後，救援隊做出一個大膽的決定：他們用麻醉藥使每個孩子進入睡眠狀態，再由一名潛水員逐一帶出洞穴。這個計畫成功了，雖然救出一個人需要大約三個小時。經過漫長的 15 天，十三人全部獲救。總共有約一萬人以不同方式參與救援。大多數人不認識這些孩子，也沒有得到任何報酬。他們付出時間、冒著生命危險，只因為每一個生命都值得被拯救。我們的天父付出更大的代價。祂把自己的兒子賜給我們。耶穌為你的罪死在十字架上，祂提供赦免的恩典。祂正在呼喚你回家。你願意接受祂嗎？