

Erlo Stegen:

Hos 2:19

19"I will betroth you to Me forever; Yes, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and justice, in lovingkindness and mercy;

It is not a small thing that the Almighty God shows this interest in us, insignificant humans. This should move us. It is only a fool who will turn down such an offer from Almighty God, to betroth us to Himself. In what godly fear ought we not to walk as the betrothed of God? The following stories illustrate this well.

During Livingstone's missionary work in Africa, a certain chief desired to become a Christian, having seen the difference in Livingstone compared with other white people he knew. He could see Livingstone was serving the Living God. Livingstone treated him and his people as brothers and truly cared for them. However, the chief's people were not interested and, even after invitation to come and hear God's Word, still only a few arrived. In the past, before the chief's conversion, all would come for the parties, dances and drinks the chief arranged. He then asked Livingstone for advice, whether he should have the people whipped and force them to come to the services. However, Livingstone told him to rather be faithful to God himself and let God deal with them, as they see his life. It wasn't long, and his people started to come to the services and give their lives to God. His faithfulness and example touched them and turned them to God.

Another well-known man made a conscious decision in his youth to have nothing to do with God or Jesus Christ. He decided to enjoy himself fully in the world. He studied, got married and gave himself to the pleasures of the world. Not long after his marriage his wife, whom he loved dearly, dropped him and walked off with another man. He married again, but his second wife mistreated him and made life very difficult. Things also did not go well at work and his life began falling apart. He was devastated. Then he remembered his decision against God, and realised that God was giving him over to a life without God. That brought him to his senses and he repented and gave himself fully to God. God had mercy on him and restored his life.

In another case a man murdered his wife in a drunken frenzy. On the day of his trial, the chief judge (with other judges also present), gave him a last chance to say anything in his defense that could change his death-sentence. After a chilling silence, the man spoke up and replied, "I have something to say, and I'll start with you who will pass the sentence upon me. So many times at parties and weddings we were all present and all of you lifted your glasses of liquor, condoning the drink of alcohol. Even my minister present here today followed suit. Our government allows bottlestores to trade in this country and makes liquor freely available." As he spoke, his minister got convicted and confessed his sin, that leads others into sin too.

Just imagine what Judgement Day will be like, if people speak and tremble in such a way during an earthly trial. Our lives must be blameless as the betrothed of God. God offers you His engagement ring, so to speak; what is your answer? You might be afraid that it will cost too much. Remember that the cost of disobedience is 10000 greater than the cost of obedience.