

Gomer

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Historical setting

- a. The prophet Hosea in Northern Israel
100 years after Ahab, Jezebel, & Elijah
- b. Israel still accepted idol worship (Baal, Asherah, etc.)
rather than (or in addition to) to worshipping God.

Hosea 1:2-3

- c. Gomer and her "night job."
- d. ² *When the LORD first spoke to Hosea, the LORD told him, "Marry a prostitute..."* ³ *So Hosea married Gomer...* "
- e. That marriage was illustration for Israel.
² *"...The people in this land have acted like prostitutes and abandoned the LORD."*

God used Hosea's experience with an unfaithful wife to teach the people of Israel how He felt about their unfaithfulness against Him.

All through the Bible, God describes of His relationship with His people as "marriage," and He often describes idol worship as "adultery."

See: Isaiah 1:21
Isaiah 54:5,6
Jeremiah 31:31,32
Jeremiah 3:1,2
Matthew 12:39
Matthew 16:4
Ephesians 5:21-33
Revelation 21:2

Hosea 2

- f. Israel's (& Gomer's) messed up mind. (v. 2, 5, & 8)

Hosea addresses chapter 2 to his children.

² *"Plead with your mother; plead with her.
She no longer acts like my wife.
She no longer treats me like her husband.
Tell her to stop acting like a prostitute.
Tell her to remove the lovers from between her breasts.*

This is a picture of Israel.

⁵ ***Their mother acted like a prostitute...
She said, 'I'll chase after my lovers.
They will give me food and water,
wool and linen, olive oil and wine.'***

⁸ ***"She doesn't believe that I gave her grain, new wine, and olive oil.
I gave her plenty of silver and gold,
but she used it to make statues of Baal.***

Picture this:

Hosea marries Gomer, a prostitute. But she becomes bored with married life. She misses the excitement she had as a prostitute. So she leaves home and moves back with her pimp.

Hosea still loves his wife and he is concerned about her. So he sends her food, clothes, and money. The Gomer receives the gifts, thinking they are from her pimp. She thanks the pimp, not her husband.

God says, "That's what happens to Me when I give the people of Israel all they need, but they thank the false gods (Baal and Asherah)!"

g. God's steps to restore Israel:

h. v.6-7 "a hedge of thorns" - tempters lose interest in her

⁶ ***"That is why I will block her way with thornbushes
and build a wall so that she can't get through.***

⁷ ***She will run after her lovers, but she won't catch them.
She will search for them, but she won't find them.
Then she will say, 'I'll go back to my first husband.
Things were better for me than they are now.'***

This is like the story of Lost Son (Luke 15:11). When his money ran out, so did his friends. When the son looked into the face of a pig, he felt like he was looking at his own face in the mirror. The son realized his life was better at home with his father.

God's message through Hosea was that the people of Israel must wake up and realize that the false gods of their neighbors cannot help them. They must turn back to the True God.

For many people, the only time they "wake up" to turn back to God is when trouble hits them. That's what happened to the Lost Son. That's what happened to Gomer. That's what happened to Israel (see the Old Testament book of Judges for a Israel's repeating cycle: Sin - Suffer - Sorry - Saved; see Judges 2:10-23).

i. v.9-12 He will hold back His blessings.

As you read this text, remember God is speaking to Israel using the picture language of Gomer's experience. Israel's "lovers" were idols, false gods.

- ⁹ *That is why I [God] will take back my grain when it has ripened and my new wine when it's in season.
I will take away the wool and the linen
that I gave her [Israel] to cover her naked body.*
- ¹⁰ *I will show her naked body to her lovers,
and no one will rescue her from my power.*
- ¹¹ *I will put an end to all her celebrations:
her annual festivals, her New Moon Festivals,
her weekly worship days—all her appointed festivals.*
- ¹² *I will destroy her grapevines and fig trees.
She said that they were gifts from her lovers.
I will turn her vineyards into a forest, and wild animals will devour them.*

j. v.14-15 He will get alone with her again & rebuild the relationship that she abandoned.

- ¹⁴ *“That is why I’m going to win her back.
I will lead her into the desert.
I will speak tenderly to her.*
- ¹⁵ *I will give her vineyards there.
I will make the valley of Achor [Disaster] a door of hope.
Then she will respond as she did when she was young,
as she did when she came out of Egypt.*

This is a prophecy about God sending Israel back into captivity. The first captivity was in Egypt (*Exodus 1*). The second captivity for Northern Israel was to Assyria (*2 Kings 17*), and the second captivity for Southern Israel (Judah) was to Babylon (*2 Kings 24*).

God says through Hosea, that God remembers the time after the Exodus, while Israel was in the desert for 40 years. God pictures that time as a "honeymoon" time, when He was alone with Israel. God taught the people His Law and they did not have other nations around them tempting them with idols. God says that He would use the next captivity time like another "honeymoon" to get alone with Israel and teach the people again.

When Gomer goes back home to her family, Hosea also needs to take some time alone with her, to rebuild their relationship (as we will soon see in chapter 3)..

k. v.16-20 A deeper relationship

Again, as you read this text, remember that God is speaking to Israel in picture language.

- ¹⁶ *“On that day she will call me her husband,” declares the LORD.
“She will no longer call me her master.*
- ¹⁷ *I won’t allow her to say the names of other gods called Baal.
She will never again call out their names...*
- ¹⁹ *“Israel, I will make you my wife forever.*

*I will be honest and faithful to you.
I will show you my love and compassion.
²⁰ I will be true to you, my wife.
Then you will know the LORD.*

l. *Application in our prayers for straying loved-ones.*

We can use Hosea chapter 2 as a model for our prayers for family members -- an adulterous husband or wife, or a rebellious teenager.

*Lord God,
Please block her way with thornbushes
and build a wall so that she can't get through.
Make it so that she will fail to find the pleasure she seeks in her sin.
Make her friends lose interest in her so she feels their rejection.
Open her eyes to see her true situation so that she will say,
"I will go back home, because things were better for me than they are now."
And when she returns, show me what changes I need to make in my life.
Show me how to rebuild my relationship with her.
Amen.*

Hosea 3

m. v.1 Hosea's turn to do for Gomer, as God would do for Israel.

¹ *Then the LORD told me, "Love your wife again, even though she is loved by others and has committed adultery. Love her as I, the LORD, love the Israelites, even though they have turned to other gods..."*

Even when we turn away from God to flirt with the devil, God still loves us and He wants us to come back to Him.

n. v.2 Hosea's ransom for Gomer.

² *So I bought her for 23 ounces of silver and 10 bushels of barley.*

Christ bought us back (redeemed us) from our bondage to Satan, "not with gold or silver, but with His holy precious blood, and His innocent suffering and death." (Luther's Small Catechism, Apostles' Creed, 3rd Article; see 1 Peter 1:18,19)

o. v.3-4 Gomer's (and Israel's) time to wait.

³ *Then I told her, "You must wait for me a long time. Don't be a prostitute or offer yourself to any man. I will wait for you."*

This is a picture for Israel.

⁴ *In the same way, the Israelites will wait a long time without kings or officials, without sacrifices or sacred stones, and without ephods or family idols.*

God allowed the Babylonians to destroy the temple in Jerusalem. Then He kept Israel in Babylon for 70 years.

p. v.5 Returning to the King from David's family.

⁵ *After that, the Israelites will turn and look to the LORD their God and David their king...*

David lived and died 200 years before Hosea's time. Here God is talking about the Messiah, Christ Jesus, the "son of David."

...They will come trembling to the LORD for his blessings in the last days.

The Messiah first came as a Suffering Servant. However, on the Last Day He will come again as the mighty King, ruler over all. See what Jesus told the court at His trial:

⁶² *The chief priest stood up and said to Jesus, "Don't you have any answer to what these men testify against you?"*

⁶³ *But Jesus was silent.*

Then the chief priest said to him, "Swear an oath in front of the living God and tell us, are you the Messiah, the Son of God?"

⁶⁴ *Jesus answered him, "Yes, I am. But I can guarantee that from now on you will see the Son of Man in the highest position in heaven. He will be coming on the clouds of heaven." (Matthew 26:62-64)*

Lesson for us:

God used the lives of Hosea and Gomer to teach one simple lesson: GRACE!