

TUESDAY**Hosea's Harlot Wife**

- God created us for relationship
 - His desire = dwell among His people
- immediately after FALL of humanity, introduced covenant
 - RBF = to revive us/ reconcile us
- Called nation His *firstborn* covenant *son* (Exodus 4:22).
- Later referred to national Israel as His wife, His Bride = to express intimacy of covenant relationship
 - Identified as their loving Husband who provided all their needs
 - expected **covenant fidelity** in return.
- Everlasting covenant of righteousness by faith carries
 - covenant requirement/obligation – faithfulness
 - Sin = unfaithfulness
- During time of great wealth = God's people betrayed Him / apostatized = turned their backs on God
 - Serving Canaanite idols= broke covenant w/God
- Lord considered **idolatry** = **spiritual adultery** unfaithfulness to their exclusive relationship w/ Him.

Jeremiah 3:8 ...backsliding Israel had committed adultery, I had put her away and given her a certificate of divorce [symbolic language for annulling covenant relationship for act of unrepentant adultery]

- Adultery = unfaithfulness marriage = breaks marriage covenant
- Idolatry = unfaithfulness to God/ breaks everlasting covenant

Leviticus 21:7 = forbids priest from marrying harlot

- But Hosea not a priest = lived in Northern Kingdom
- primarily addressed Israel for period of about 35 years [from 760BC – 725BC] = before Israel taken captive by Assyrians
- in desperate times of spiritual prostitution by His people, God instructs His prophet Hosea to = find harlot / marry her

Hosea 1:2 When the LORD began to speak by Hosea, the LORD said to Hosea: "Go, take yourself a wife of harlotry And children of harlotry, For the land has committed great harlotry By departing from the LORD."

- Theme of book = Hosea's marriage to Gomer was to depict God's marriage to Israel and His loyal love for His covenant people
- Hosea/Gomer = dramatization of Israel's sin/unfaithfulness
 - Gomer = ungrateful wife = after bearing him 3 children = Gomer rejects Hosea's love = runs off w/another man
 - TEXT SILENT = Can imagine Hosea's emotional pain/ anger/ humiliation = over adulterous affair = **Hosea rejects HER**
- Just as God's ppl had rejected His divine love, and gone after Baal = God rejected them = **2 Chronicles 15:4 forsake Him/He forsakes you**
- Hosea's story illustrates pain of human sin/ rebellion

LIFE PARABLE = Laodicean message to people who were enjoying great prosperity before fall of Northern Kingdom

- God lovingly chose Israel / wife = repeatedly cheated on Him
- Grasp feelings of devastation our infidelity to Christ might stir in the courts of heaven
- Most amazing part = depiction of God's passionate love for His people = has Hosea go to great lengths to redeem wayward wife

Hosea 3:1-3 (AMP) ¹THEN SAID the Lord to me, Go again, love [the same] woman [Gomer] who is beloved of a paramour and is an adulteress, even as the Lord loves the children of Israel, though they turn to other gods and love cakes of raisins [used in the sacrificial feasts in idol worship]. ²**So I bought her for fifteen pieces of silver and a homer and a half of barley [the price of a slave].** ³And I said to her, You shall be [betrothed] to me for many days; you shall not play the harlot and you shall not belong to another man. So will I also be to you [until you have proved your loyalty to me and our marital relations may be resumed].

- Hosea forgave Gomer's unfaithfulness, ransomed her= bought her back from slavery
- Betrothed Himself to her = that she might prove her loyalty
- Represented God's passionate love for His people = how God put away Adulterous Israel
- God punishes for redemptive purposes—seeks to turn hearts back to Him / seeks to redeem / reconcile / reunite
- Pursues us = Redeems us = betroths us to Christ period of purification & testing loyalty before marriage intimacy

Revelation 17:1–2 ...one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, “Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, ²with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication.”

Revelation 18:1–4 ¹After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory. ²And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, “Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird! ³For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury.” ⁴And I heard another voice from heaven saying, “Come out of her, **my people**, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues.

[LESSON QUOTE] When we see the final cry to humanity, calling God's people to come out of Babylon, it is noteworthy that He is calling *His own people*, and not strangers. He knows them intimately. He loves them. And as the world pitches toward its worst hour, He is still offering the redemption price that He had paid in order to purchase us back with His own blood. The cross of Christ, more than anything else,

should show us just how earnestly the Lord wants to save His wayward people.

- Errors of Israel in OT = largely repeated by Christ's NT church.

[Lesson quote] God's covenant people went wildly astray prior to their exile, bringing the idolatrous practices of neighboring nations into God's covenant nation. In the early fourth century, the Christian church, sensing a potential advantage, courted the emperor of Rome, Constantine, and invited him to start settling the disputes of the church. In each case, God's people wandered outside of their relationship with Him in order to find "solutions" for perceived problems.