

Story Time pt5

Ryan Abernathy / General

Story Time / Hosea 1:1–11; Hosea 2:14–23; Hosea 3:1–5

The story of Hosea is a weird one. We don't typically associate God with words like whore or prostitute. And we for sure do not typically celebrate pastors and teachers who are married to people who are not faithful. And yet, here we are.

But the point of this story is not the salacious nature of the tale. It is an illustration of how God pursues us, even when we are repeatedly unfaithful. How He does not give up on us, even when we give up on Him.

Hosea, Joel 1. The Command to Marry Gomer (1:2–3a)

In other words, God specifically tells Hosea to enter into the same kind of marriage that Yahweh himself is in. Hosea is to experience the sorrows of God and thus speak in God's place to the nation. The Hebrew also implies that Israel's acts of adultery against God have taken the people progressively further away from him. Every act of apostasy and immorality has driven a wedge more deeply between them and their God

Go with me to [Hosea 1](#) to start off with.

God tells Hosea to take a wife, who is a prostitute and then to have children with her. And the kids names are a story within themselves.

Hosea, Joel 1. The Command to Marry Gomer (1:2–3a)

Even so, we must not think of her as a prostitute in modern terms—a call girl or streetwalker—but should think of her more as an immoral girl who depended on gifts from her lovers

Jezreel- a place where the people of God will be defeated

Hosea, Joel Birth (1:3b)

In the mind of an Israelite, Jezreel may have signified bloodshed in the same way that Chernobyl signifies nuclear disaster to a modern person

No Mercy or Not Loved- because God is no longer going to allow Israel being unfaithful to Him to go unpunished

Hosea, Joel Name and Explanation of Punishment (1:6b)

It is a dreadful name to give to a little girl. It communicates rejection by her father and says that he has abandoned her to all the troubles of the world. **For a culture as child-centered as Israel was, it is difficult to imagine a name more scandalous and offensive**

Hosea, Joel Name and Explanation of Punishment (1:6b)

The startling name Lo-Ruhamah calls attention to this estrangement between Yahweh and the people. The little girl was the text of Hosea's sermons. The people heard that terrible name and no doubt whispered to one another, "Hosea's wife is unfaithful; he must doubt that this child is his. He has rejected the poor thing!" and Hosea could respond something like: **"Do you trouble yourself over Lo-Ruhamah? I tell you, you are Lo-Ruhamah! Yahweh has turned his back on you!"** He would be like Nathan with David: "You are the man!"

Not My People- God is no longer going to allow the people of Israel to call Him their God, because they are not faithful to Him

Hosea, Joel Name and Explanation of Punishment (1:9)

With the naming of the child “Not my people,” God declares the covenant between himself and Israel to be null and void. The line “You are not my people, and I am not your God” reverses the familiar covenant language of Exod 6:7 and Lev 26:12. God is rejecting Israel and abandoning her people

These are not nice names. God is trying to get their attention by taking back the blessings that He has sustained, even thru their unfaithfulness.

Some of us often wonder why God allows people who we know are doing wrong- even people who others perceive as holy or with God’s favor- to get away with their sins for so long.

God has LONG patience. He will allow you a lot of leeway in hopes that His kindness will call you back....but do not be fooled at some point He is going to remove the blessing. (Recent revelations in Dallas churches- and also the delay but ultimate judgment shows that God is faithful to the victims)

So what happens when God reaches this point?

Well Chapter 2 starts off with the consequences. And they are not pleasant. For the first 13 verses of chapter 2 God details what is going to befall His forsaken people. **They have lived outside His will so now they will live outside His protection.**

Sometimes when His kindness is ignored, God allows the full consequences of our actions to fall on us.

I sometimes think we would sin less regularly if we really understood God’s wrath. The depiction we have of God’s wrath on the cross should be a reminder to all of us of what God has saved us from through Jesus.

And sometimes those of us who know Jesus are the most likely to forget. Salvation becomes more and more taken for granted and sin becomes enticing or exciting or even temporarily “helpful” all the while ignoring the cost Jesus paid for that sin.

And yet, when the wrath of God is on us, God is still willing to have us return- and opens His arms to our repentance.

Look at Hoses 2:14-23

Even in our sin-

- God pursues us- v14
- God is willing to give us His blessings back- v15
- And welcome us back to our former relationship- v16
- And wipes away the gods we have replaced Him with- v17
- And return us to peace with Him and others- v18

Hosea, Joel Prophecy of Restoration: Reversal of the Adultery (2:14–23) [A’]

God promises a new and tender courtship of the wayward woman and holds forth the possibility of a regeneration of the relationship through a return to the wilderness

And the full culmination of this is possible because of Jesus. That is what is being spoken about in v19-23

Hosea, Joel Excursus: The Ideal of the Wilderness

This is no mere reestablishment of the covenant rights of Israel; **it is the beginning of a relationship of love between God and his people such as they had not known before. It is a new covenant.**

Hosea, Joel Excursus: The Ideal of the Wilderness

What is especially important here is that it is **God’s “righteousness and justice,” not Israel’s, that redeem Israel**

And why does this happen? Because God redeems us. That is the picture in 3:1-5.

Hosea, Joel 1. The Command to Marry Gomer (1:2–3a)

After some time and the birth of three children, she abandoned him for other lovers. Then apparently she fell into destitution. Again at God's direction Hosea went after her and found her, redeemed her (perhaps from slavery), and took her home

The redemption of the unfaithful wife is via a payment. She is bought for a price.

So are you. And Jesus paid that price. And you are not beyond redeeming. Period.

Hosea, Joel 1. The Command to Marry Gomer (1:2–3a)

God has divorced Israel just as Hosea has divorced Gomer, but in both cases grace triumphs over righteous jealousy and the demands of the law. Like the cross itself, Hosea's action is a stumbling block. A man does not normally take back a woman who has behaved the way Gomer did. But we must acknowledge this as a revelation of grace through suffering

So many people see the Gospel as bad news or only as good news for people who they already perceive as "good."

Church no one is good. Not one (Romans 3:10-12) We are all in need of redemption. We are all in need of rescue and that is why Jesus endured that cross we talked about earlier.

And no matter what you have done or who knows, you too can be saved and forgiven and start again.

That's why Hosea was told to marry a whore. For you.

And further, no matter what has happened in your life TO YOU, is not disqualifying. **You can be used of God even if people have sinned against you horribly- Hosea was.**

Hosea, Joel 1. The Command to Marry Gomer (1:2–3a)

One would think that having married an immoral woman, and then having the marriage collapse because of the wife's gross infidelity, would be enough to disqualify anyone from claiming the role of God's spokesman. But the opposite is true. **Hosea offers his private tragedies as his credentials for serving as God's spokesman**

And that is the story we are to tell. We are to reach people who everyone else has turned from and given up on and written off.

That's us. We are to be Hosea to the world.