LOVE ON THE BLOCK

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Hosea 1:2-3 KJV
And the LORD said to Hosea, Go, take unto thee a wife of whoredoms and children of whoredoms: for the land hath committed great whoredom, departing from the LORD. So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim...

Let's make it plain today. The message I have for you is about a love that refuses to let go. We like our Bible stories neat, clean, and wrapped up in a religious bow. We like the sanitized, comfortable, Sunday school versions of our faith. But if you peel back the pages of the book of Hosea, you don't get a fairy tale. You get a frontline fight for love. It is raw. It is gritty. And it holds up a mirror to the most uncomfortable truth in all of Scripture: God is desperately, relentlessly, and scandalously in love with a messed-up people!

God told the prophet Hosea to bypass the front pew, march down to the red-light district, and marry a woman of the streets named Gomer. Why? Because God was putting on a live-action demonstration of grace. You have to understand the assignment in this text: Hosea is a symbol of God - holy, faithful, and relentlessly patient. And if we are honest enough to take off our religious masks and our Sunday best today, Gomer is a symbol of us. She represents our rebellion. She represents our tendency to get delivered by the hand of God, only to turn around and run right back to our sin. The Bible calls it spiritual adultery - when we take the grace, the mercy, and the financial provision of a faithful God, and then go whoring after other gods! We chase the culture, we chase our flesh, and we chase the very idols that broke us in the first place.

But God says, "I love you too much to leave you to the streets." Here are four points that reveal the relentless rhythm of God's love and His incredible patience when dealing with our trauma and our treason.

1. THE SCANDALOUS SELECTION: GOD CHOSE YOU IN YOUR MESS

Scripture Reference:
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Grace doesn't go where it is safe; grace goes where it is needed! Hosea didn't pick Gomer because she had an 800 credit score, a spotless background check, or a polished pedigree. She didn't have a resume; she had a rap sheet. She had a reputation. But listen to me, nobody ends up on the streets by accident. The streets are just a symptom of a deeper scar. Gomer was carrying unhealed trauma. She had abandonment issues, father wounds, and survival tactics that made her hard, guarded, and reckless.

But look at the God-like character of Hosea. He didn't judge her coping mechanisms; he looked past her performance and saw her pain. He didn't demand she heal overnight. He stepped right into the absolute middle of her dysfunction and patiently claimed her as his own!

Here is something most preachers skip right over: Hosea didn't just give up his singleness; he surrendered his social standing. In that ancient culture, marrying a traumatized, street-walking woman like Gomer ruined a prophet's reputation. Hosea had to look foolish to the religious elite just to rescue her from the gutter!

Power Statement:
God took a hit to His own name just to clear yours!

2. THE PULL OF THE PAST: BIRTHING THE EVIDENCE OF OUR BETRAYAL

Scripture Reference:
Hosea 2:8 KJV
For she did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, which they prepared for Baal.

You would think that after being rescued, clothed, and protected by a good man, Gomer would settle down, get her mind right, and heal. But trauma creates a twisted comfort zone. When you've been used, abused, and tossed aside your whole life, unconditional love feels suspicious. Your traumatized mind tells you, "He's going to leave me eventually, so I might as well leave first." Gomer's unhealed trauma sabotaged her safe house! She went running back to the chaos she was addicted to, and she actually got pregnant and had babies that did not belong to Hosea!

She brought the living, breathing evidence of her betrayal right into the prophet's house. But before we look down our noses at Gomer, we better look down our own pew! Because if we are honest in here today, some of us are married to the Master, but we've been creeping with the culture! We are sitting in the church, but we are birthing things that do not belong to God!

We've given birth to bitterness!
We've given birth to jealousy!
We've given birth to toxic attitudes!
We've given birth to unforgiveness!
We've given birth to secret addictions!
We've given birth to self-sabotaging mindsets!
We've given birth to grudges we should have buried ten years ago!

And just like Gomer, we come strolling right into the sanctuary, lifting holy hands, bringing all our illegitimate issues right into the house of the Lord, expecting God to bless what He didn't even father!

But catch the patience of Hosea - he didn't throw her out! He absorbed the pain of her acting out, just like God absorbs the pain of our spiritual rebellion. And here is a detail we miss in the text: even when Gomer was out there running the streets and raising babies that weren't his, Hosea was secretly the one paying her bills! The text lets us know she didn't even know it was him giving her the corn, the wine, and the oil! While she was operating out of her trauma and chasing her abusers, her husband was patiently,

quietly, and faithfully funding her survival!

Power Statement:
He was paying your bills while you were playing the streets!

3. THE AUCTION BLOCK: THE HIGH PRICE OF BUYING BACK YOUR OWN

Scripture Reference:
Hosea 3:1-2 KJV
Then said the LORD unto me, Go yet, love a woman beloved of her friend, yet an adulteress... So I bought her to me for fifteen pieces of silver, and for an homer of barley, and an half homer of barley:

Hear me well today: the world will use you, trigger your trauma, and then put you on the clearance rack. The streets do not love you back! Gomer's lovers eventually bled her dry, used up everything she had, and abandoned her. And she found herself standing on a slave auction block. She is battered. She is broken. She is wearing the visible bruises of her trauma. The world chewed her up and spit her out.

Look at the sheer heartbreak of Hosea and Gomer's relationship right here. Hosea walks up to a filthy slave block to buy a woman who is already his wife. She already had his last name! But because her trauma told her to sell herself back to the streets, he had to reach in his pocket and buy back what rightfully belonged to him. Look at his God-like patience: he didn't stand at the auction block with his hands on his hips and say, "I told you so." He didn't lecture her; he liberated her! That is exactly what God did for us! We were His by creation, but we sold ourselves to sin, so He patiently and violently bought us back by redemption at a place called Calvary!

But catch this overlooked detail: the price Hosea paid - fifteen pieces of silver and some barley - was exactly half in cash and half in cheap animal feed. It was the standard, discounted market price for a damaged slave. The world had devalued her so much that she was sitting in the bargain bin of society. She wasn't a premium prize anymore; she was damaged goods.

Power Statement:
The streets called you damaged goods, but God still took you off the market!

4. THE WILDERNESS OF INTIMACY: ISOLATION FOR ELEVATION

Scripture Reference:
Hosea 2:14-15 KJV
Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her. And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope: and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt.

Healing a traumatized mind requires intensive care! You can't just slap a scripture on a deep wound and call it a day. In the second chapter of Hosea, God reveals His master plan for Gomer's mind healing. He says He is going to allure her, bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably to her. Notice the strategy. God didn't drag her back to the city where all her old triggers, her old pimps, and her old enablers were waiting. He took her out to the wilderness to detox her from the trauma! He had to patiently sit with her in the isolation, holding her while the poison of her past left her system.

But do not miss this prophetic detail in the geography! God gives her the "valley of Achor for a door of hope." Achor literally means trouble. It was the site of Israel's greatest historical shame, trauma, and disaster! God didn't make her run from her pain. He patiently walked her right back to the very location of her deepest trauma, looked it squarely in the face, and turned it around so she could heal from it and watch Him open up her door of blessing! He turned her trouble into her triumph!

Power Statement:
God flipped the exact thing that tried to bring PAIN and used

it to produce PURPOSE!

A little boy carved a wooden boat. He sanded it smooth, painted it, and took it down to the creek to see if it would float. It floated so well that the current caught it and carried it farther than he could reach. He ran along the bank until he lost sight of it.

Some time later, he was walking past a store when he saw his boat in the window. He recognized it immediately. He went inside and said, "Sir, that's my boat. I made it."

The shopkeeper told him how much it cost. So the boy went home, gathered his money, came back, and bought his boat. On the way out, he held it close and said:

"Little boat, you're mine twice. The first time, you were mine because I made you. Now you're mine again because I bought you back."

Then bring it home to Hosea 3:2 and 1 Peter 1:18–19:

Hosea paid in silver and barley. Peter says Jesus redeemed us with His precious blood. The God who made you knew what it would cost to bring you home. And grace came back for you anyway.