

•Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready.

Revelation 19:7

•Hosea lived at the same time as Isaiah and Amos. It is from these three prophets then that we learn what the characteristics of this age were. As Dickens did of eighteenth-century Europe: it was **“the best of times” as well as “the worst of times.”**

•To many It was an age of luxurious materialism, **apparent religious devotion and activity**, freedom, and even an apparent national security in which politics, law, and religion all seemed to play into the favored people’s hands.

•**But**, It was the worst of times, because the hearts of the people were empty, **religion was shallow**, and corruption was rampant on every hand. The law was manipulated to the advantage of the rich, and **much if not most of the religious activity was mere show.**

•God had blessed his people; prospered them both materially and spiritually. But they had begun to live for pleasure. They had abandoned hard work, morality, and integrity in order to live for themselves.

• **We’re more focused on Programs than Presence. Style than Substance. Gifts than Glory.**

God tells Hosea- “Go, take yourself a wife of harlotry and children of harlotry, for the land has committed great harlotry by departing from the Lord.” Hosea 1:2

•*Some think she was one of the temple prostitutes...* Waiting to pick off unsuspecting victims checking their religious boxes.

•**Hosea- Salvation/Deliverance. Gomer- Complete.**

•People saved but feel incomplete. You came out of a life but your mind didn’t come with you!

•**She gives Hosea a try.** She changes her life and lifestyle.

• **Gomer- Completed.** *Every time she heard her name she heard what she wasn't. Her life is a pursuit of fulfillment. Is this all? Is this completion? Maybe I was named wrong?*

- **Her body is in one place but her mind is in another. You tried to get your body saved but not your mind. I gave this up...**
- **If you don't change your mind your body will end up right back where you started.**

• There's someone here today who's past is in conflict with your present.- *You can change your clothes without changing your mind. Change your Job, Relationship... Her mind is keeping her from completion/fulfillment and in frustration.*

- *As a pastor I find myself trying to preach peoples bodies into places their minds don't want to go.*

• She feels busy but not doing anything. Producing but feeling unproductive.

SHE can't see herself the way Hosea did. He didn't just choose her out of obedience. **HE LOVED HER!**

• *Do you have any idea how God sees you? If you did would you still be longing for your old life?*

She starts going back. People going back to the familiar.

• **Pressure has a way of pushing you to the past.-** *She starts missing. Grocery runs last longer and longer.*

• *She's getting pregnant. But now the kids don't look like him? First child was Hosea's. But second and third?*

• **Your past keeps producing things that aren't of God. So you show up at church on Sunday asking God to bless the mess you created!**

• **Jezreel-scattered/Lo-Ruhamah-Not Loved/Lo-Ammi-Not My People.**

•**And then she's gone-** *From Prestige to Prisoner. From Honor to Harlot. From Celebrated to incarcerated.*

•**Watch what God does when we refuse to come back to him.**

“Therefore I will block her path with thornbushes; I will wall her in so that she cannot find her way. She will chase after her lovers but not catch them; she will look for them but not find them. Then she will say, ‘I will go back to my husband as at first, for then I was better off than now’ ”

•If you take the talents God has given you and then run away from Him , God will first come gently to remind you that he is the source of the gifts you squander. But if you will not come to your senses through such a reminder, God will bring you up short so that you will not attain your desires.

•***You try to sin and it doesn't work. You run but you're miserable.***

God told Hosea- Go get her back.

•***1The Lord said to me, “Go, show your love to your wife again, though she is loved by another man and is an adulteress. Love her as the Lord loves the Israelites, though they turn to other gods and love the sacred raisin cakes.” Hosea 3:1***

•**At last a beautiful woman is put up for sale.**

•*She's standing there, broken, bound, powerless. She's for sale to the highest bidder. “A hundred dollars ... a hundred and twenty dollars!” The men are bidding for the body of a wife, a mother... One who had been chosen! Her clothes were removed, and the men of the city were there to see her nakedness and bid for her.*

•**The low bidders were beginning to drop out, but one man continued bidding: “Fifteen pieces of silver and a bushel of barley!”**

•**SO I BOUGHT HER BACK!**

- ***God kept Bidding- He outbid your addiction, failure, your problems and your past. He outbid your hurts and hang ups. He outbid your sins and secrets. Outbid hell & the devil...***
- **SO I BOUGHT HER BACK!** *Her mind, identity, favor, gifts, life, future.*
- ☑ **Now notice, at this point Hosea owned his wife. She was his property. He could do anything he wished with her.**
- ***“You are to live with me many days; you must not be a prostitute or be intimate with any man, and I will live with you” (v. 3).*** The King James Version says, **“So will I also be for thee.”** That is how God loves us. That is what Jesus did on your behalf.
- ☑ **THERE’S MORE TO THE STORY!**
- ***I am going to change Jezreel with the meaning ‘scattered’ to Jezreel Plant/sow- I am going to take my people and plant them in their land again.”***
- ***“I am going to change the name Lo-Ruhamah to Ruhamah. Instead of ‘not-Loved,’ she will be ‘LOVED.***
- ***I will change Lo-Ammi to Ammi, ‘not-my-people’ to ‘MY people’; they will be my people again in that day.”***
- **Valley of Achor (*Trouble*)-** I will give you a valley, in the valley of Achor, **I will give you a door of hope. You’re coming out of this!!!**
- **THERE’S MORE TO THE STORY!**
- Today, I challenge you. Quit hiding behind your troubles and mistakes and look for God’s door of hope in your situation. You can’t escape His love and He won’t give up on you!
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