

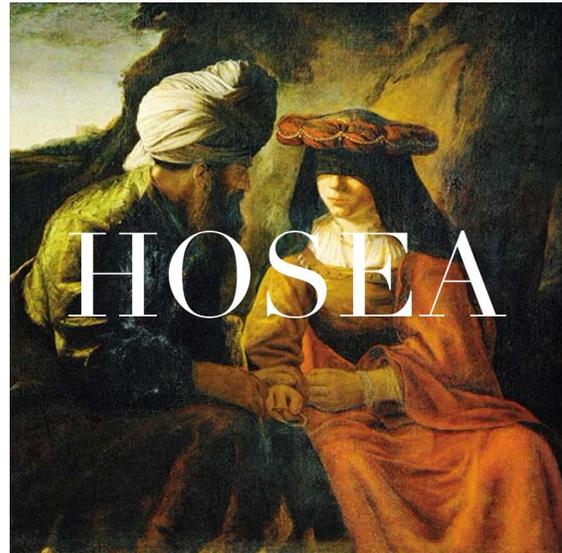
Hosea

Scripture: Hosea 1-14

Time Period: During the Northern and Southern Kingdoms

The story of Hosea

Hosea was a prophet to Israel who lived and prophesied just before the destruction of Israel in 722 BC. He preached to the northern kingdom. God told Hosea to marry a woman named Gomer who would not be faithful to him, yet he was to love her and be a father to their children. God used Hosea's life to show his people what they were like, and his relationship would be a picture of God's relationship with his people. Hosea's wife would love other men instead of Hosea just like the people of Israel would love and worship other gods instead of the one true God. God told Hosea to do something that was very difficult because it is hard to love someone who doesn't love you back, but Hosea obeyed God and married Gomer.



Gomer became pregnant and gave birth to a son and God said to name him Jezreel. That name had a special meaning, it was a warning to Israel they would be defeated by their enemies. Next, she had a daughter and God told Hosea to name the baby, Lo-ruhamah, meaning no mercy. This baby girl was a sign from God that He would not show mercy to the people of Israel anymore, but instead they would get the punishment their sin deserved. Then Gomer and Hosea had another son and God told Hosea to name him Lo-ammi, which means not my people. If you remember when God rescued the Israelites from Egypt he said, "if you obey my commands I will take you as my people I will be your God." But God's people did not obey Him.

Gomer was not faithful to Hosea, she often ran away into the arms of other men and committed adultery. Gomer was unfaithful as a spouse. In the same way God's people had turned away from God. Hosea wanted to give up on Gomer but God told Hosea to go after her, to pursue her even in her unfaithfulness. And so Hosea went and found Gomer, but this time she had sold herself to be a slave to another man. That didn't stop Hosea, instead he paid the price for her release, he rescued her from her sinful life and brought Gomer back home. Even though Gomer had not loved her husband like a wife should, Hosea loved her anyway. God put in Hosea's heart a deep love that will never give up, a love that resembled God's love for his people. God wanted the people of Israel to hear about the Prophet Hosea and his wife Gomer and to realize that the people of Israel were no different than Gomer. Israel did not love God like God's people should, but God loved Israel anyway. God loves with a love that never gives up. Hosea

proclaimed to Israel, “come let us return unto the Lord let us strive to know the Lord.” God's people were unfaithful to God but God is never unfaithful to his people. God said “in the place where you were told you are not my people you will now be called sons of the living God.” Yes God still loved Israel, God hated their sin, but he loved his people and was going to bring them back to himself. Just like Hosea paid a high price to buy back his unfaithful wife... God had a plan to get his people back no matter what. Hosea's relationship with Gomer reminds us of God's relationship with the people of Israel and the church. Even though God's people are unfaithful and love other things more than God, God still loves us.

Hosea's life was a proclamation of God's message to the people of Israel. Hosea was more than just a prophet who spoke truth with his mouth. He was also a living example of the incarnated truth and love of God.