

Hosea

Hosea 1:1-2:4

Hosea 2:14-23

This sermon is rated MA 15+

Israel was falling into sin again, there was rampant idol worship and disobedience and turning away from the Lord. Israel's kings were wicked from the time of Jeroboam. they were continuously leading the people from the Lord and attributed their success and prosperity to other gods. Against this background God uses the family life of the prophet Hosea as parallels of Israel own unfaithfulness to the Lord and judgement

The prophet was instructed to marry an adulteress or an unfaithful woman, he married Gomer the daughter of Diblaim and she bore him a child, Jezreel, which means "God scatters" from the reading in chap 1:v2-3 this child belonged to Hosea and subsequently she had two other children Lo-Ruhammah-not loved and Lo-Ammi-not my people and from the names themselves, it sound like Hosea was not the father of Lo Ruhammah and Lo-Ammi. God uses the marriage, births and names of the children to signify Israel's unfaithfulness and God's judgement

Let us look at the names in detail and what it symbolized for the kingdom of Israel and its kings

Jezreel- which means God scatters= through this name God announced judgement on the ruling kings of Israel - Jeroboam the ruler was a wicked king so God was to put an end to the wicked dynasty of Jehu which happened in 753 ending with the murder of Zechariah the king. You can read it in 2 Kings 15:8-10

Lo ruhammah- intense meaning not loved- that God does not love his people because of their unfaithfulness.

Lo Ammi-not my people - God says you are not my people and I am not your God.

Because God's care was as a husband to his wife, the unfaithfulness of Israel brought judgement upon the nation. As adultery destroys the sanctity and the marriage covenant. Israel destroyed the relationship to the Lord through her worship of other gods.

But it is not the end of story here, wife commits adultery, is rejected end of story.

God is still cares for his Israel, his rejection is temporary

- he does not want to be angry forever with Israel.
- He wants her to repent and turn to him again,
- he reminds Israel of the covenant and his care from the formation of the nation and what he will do to bring Israel back
- He reminds the nation their condition before the Lord raised them and made them his own.

If Israel does not stop being adulterous, God warned that he will take away her

- protection,
- prosperity
- festivity/celebration/joy

One of the duties of the husband in the Jewish culture is to clothe and cover his wife. He was to guard her modesty and her honour. God found Israel naked and with nothing in Egypt, He gave Israel the covering and the covenant. The covenant was that she should have not other gods beside the Lord (Exodus 20:2-3). But Israel sought after Baal, So she will have nothing no honour no covering and protection from her enemies and the environment.

There will be no protection for Israel because of her unfaithfulness

1. Israel wants to go after her lovers-her other gods, she praises them as being her provider of food water linen oil drink. All that is good Israel thinks comes from her idols. (4:12). God's response is that there will not be fruitfulness in the land but thornbushes, because she has not acknowledged God as the provider of her prosperity but rather attributed it to Baal. God will take away everything (2:9) her vineyards will be ruined and wild animals will roam the land.

IN the days of her prosperity Israel did not give the best to her Lord but to Baal, whom she burned incense and celebrated with everything she had and forgot the Lord who found her in Egypt

There will be no more prosperity for Israel

Because she celebrated her idols more than the Lord, There will be no celebration for Israel in exile all her festivities will be stopped and she will be desolate.

There will be no festivity for Israel

Why is God doing all this:

*Then she will remember whom she has forgotten (2:13)
and that she will say " I will go back to my husband as at first"*

Everything that God did was to turn Israel to himself again not to destroy but that Israel might repent there is even a future promise of redemption for Israel and reconciliation for Israel through the coming of the great leader who will make them the sons of living God. All she needed to do was to turn to the Lord and be faithful to him So that there can be a day of Jezreel, sowing not scattering

Message for Today

We are all aware of the fact that we should not be unfaithful to our spouses in a Christian marriage but what about unfaithfulness to God,

- are there idols in our life that we attribute our success or our prosperity to.
- Do we read horoscopes and follow them, belief in superstition and lucky charms.
- Put our faith in psychic readings and other idols.
- Do we think that God is not capable of taking care and provide for us that we need to look to other supernatural sources to help us.

One of the products of post modernism is the narcissism -the self worship, people becoming their own gods. That too is unfaithfulness.

Dear friends in the Lord, God looks for faithfulness in his people, people that will acknowledge God as their source of every blessing, people who will worship him alone, people who will trust him even when life is difficult and hope in him alone.

The same God who scatters can also sow in our lives,

Today we can begin to rebuild our relationship with by saying sorry with our whole heart and inviting him to be the Lord of our lives.

But before that in between judgements we see the compassionate heart of God- he promises restoration and redemption in the future for whole of Israel through him who will be the true king of all the land of Judah and Israel .