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IntroductionThe purpose of this essay is to deal with acritical exegesis of the book of Hosea chapter 3: 1-5. A brief authorship andbackground of the book this book will be given.  Hosea is one of books among the twelve minorprophets according to the canonical arrangement.

The book is accredited to Hosea’son of Beeri’ as the author (1: 1). There is no evidence about “ the prophet’slife, where he was born, what his occupation was before he was called to be aprophet, or his age when he became a prophet”. 1The book is well ‘ known not for the intense poetic imagery within its oracles, but for the prophet’s marriage to the adulterous woman Gomer’. 2 BackgroundTo understand the message behind the book of Hosea, one has to understand the time he lived and prophesied. There is no supportingevidence when the book was written but there is are ‘ various scholarly views’. 3Hosea’s ministry was to Israel during “ the reign of Uzziah in Judah 792-740 BC, andking Jeroboam II in Israel 793-753 BC, extending at least thirty years into the reign of Hezekiah 716-686 BC”. 4His  prophecies was to ‘ the northern kingdom, this can be seen by his geographical knowledge of Israel’s, this suggests thathe was likely a citizen of the North’. 5After the death of king Jeroboam II, the nation of Israel had six different kingsin a period of twenty years.

four of the kings were assassinated and two ofthem were forcibly removed from the throne. The rising empire of Assyriainvaded Israel, and by 722 BC had completely conquered the nation and carriedoff much of its population into exile. The nation of Israel made a mistake ofindenturing the Lord with Baal (master), a Canaanite nature God. “ Canaanitesworshipped a pantheon of gods, but the most important in practice, though notin theory the chief god was Baal”.

By the time Hosea started prophesying, thepeople of Israel were involved in idol worship, they were visiting shrine prostitutes, adopting the magical practices of fertility cults.  Hosea 3: 1Chapter 3 is seen as one of the mostvital in the prophecy, but it is also one of the debatable. It presents someinsoluble problems and some phrases have dubious authenticity. Previously inchapter 1 the lord has instructed Hosea ‘ to go and marry a promiscuous woman, and have children with her’ (1: 1). The woman was called Gomer. Gomer means “ perfection”, in Hebrew “ gmr” meaning to “ accomplish or compete”. 6 But inchapter 3: 1 begins with Hosea been instructed, ‘ again to go and show love your wifeagain’ (3: 1), The word “ go again” has different views among scholars, Anderson Mays sees it as a “ divine command, but Jacob Jeremias suggests that this interpretation best suits the word orderand puts the spotlight on the fact of Yahweh’s speaking, rather than on thecommand itself”.

7The relationship between Gomer and the woman in Chapter 3 is questioned amongscholars that woman still Gomer. Fuhr suggest that ‘ although not mentioned byname, there is little doubt that the adulterous woman in 3: 1 is Gomer’. 8 He alsostate that because ‘ the event in chapter three appears in chapter one, seemsclear to demonstrate the love that God has for adulterous Israel, he concludeby saying in this the drama unfolds to reveal that Gomer was in need ofredemption’. 9The word “ again” it suggestedthat ‘ it point to the secondmarriage, not the remarriage of a divorced wife but the taking of a second wife’. 10 Thisview of Hosea having to marry a second wife has its another interpreting amongother scholars. They believe that ‘ Hosea took two different women as wives torepresent the two kingdoms of Israel’.

11 Thisview is argued that there is no internal evidence that each supposed wiferepresents the only half of Israel’. 12 Iacknowledge all the view of the scholars but I believe that the woman Hosea wascommanded to marry is still the same woman.  ‘ The Hebrew word for “ love” (bb) compose ofmany meaning: to have sexual relations, to fall in love, to express a deepemotional care and commitment, to make an alliance, here it must describeHosea’s acts and words that will back his wife’s affections’. 13  so  Hosea was supposed to show this kind of loveto her woman, a love that has depth and emotional care for her as was commanded. It is suggested that the command Hosea received, ‘ would be difficult to obeywith a woman who had broken her lifetime commitment to her husband’.

14 Thelove that Hosea was going to show his wife was symbolic to God’s love to hispeople (Israel), as Wiersbe hold that ‘ God loved his people and wanted toreturn that love to him, but they committed evil by worshipping idols, justlike a woman who is unfaithful to her husband’. 15    “ Lovecakes of raisins” means “ to compress” or a noun denotes a cake prepared of “ compressedgrapes”. 16They are ‘ delicacies distributed at times of celebration 2 Sam 6: 19, they arealso used to worship of other gods like the queen of heaven according to Jer7: 18; 44: 15-19’. 17 This to state that the Israelites ‘ haveplaced their affections on other gods, the have fallen in love with the cultsof their day which promise happiness and success’.

18 Havingfallen to other gods the Israelite has violet the commandments, you shall nothave no other gods before me according to Exo 20: 3′. 19  Vv: 2 Hosea is seen as an obedient servantbecause he obeyed God’s commanded take his wife from another man. Redeeming hiswife was not easy, he was forced to pay redemption price to his wife’s lover torelease her. The redemption price was paid in both silver and grain were paidin exchange. Thirty shekels was the price of a slave (Exod 21: 32; Lev. 27: 4).

Barley was considered as bread ofthe poor; it was also fed to animals’. The price paid can raise some questionswas Hosea poor? or he didn’t value his wife? Or the lover of his wife was apoor man? Given that the full amount paid was not expensive, or did that manvalue her? This redemption price is questioned, ‘ why would Hosea need to make apayment for someone who is already his wife’. 20 It issuggested that ‘ possibly her practices of prostitution had forced her intoslavery’. 21Teresa Hornsby also suggest that the price paid by Hosea is unstable at bestand cannot be used to identify the transaction as a purchase of a servant orslave, but rather consider Hosea’s payment as one rendered to a prostitute forher service’. 22 But view is was rejected by Rudolph basedon its theory, that Hosea is buying Gomer as a slave or servant on the basicthat the comparison between the value paid in Hosea to that of Leviticus andExodus is dubious, he claim that Hosea is buying a mistress’. 23  Vv: 3 After having redeemed Gomer back to his house Hosea laydown some instructions, that she should remain fully in sexual self-disciplineform her husband until she is fully restored and recommits herself to him. Otherssuggest that ‘ the restrictions are acts of love designed to reform Gomer’.

24 Howeverboth Hosea and Gomer, will remain both faithful to each other. Gomer. The wordremains “ dwell” stated here has sameverb describes the period of waiting for purification after childbirth. AfterGomer turns to him in loving commitment, she will again receive all theblessings of full family privileges. The disciplinary period in theirmarriage is described as ‘ prophetic action designed to symbolize a time ofchastening and deprivation through which Israel is to pass’. 25 “ Butwhy should Hosea avoid his wife when he has just been told to love her?” 26 The answeris found in chapter …… ‘ whereby Israelwill dwell many days without king, prince, without sacrifice or pillar withoutephod of household gods’ (v4). This restoration of Hosea and Gomer’relationship is parallel to the story of God and Israelite’s relationship beenrestored.

Vv4 The disciplinary period Hosea gave to his wife is seen asa ‘ prophetic action designed to symbolize a time of chastening and deprivationthrough which Israel is to pass’. 27 Verse 4interpret the purpose of verse 3. The couple will refrain from sex for a time, this behavior too models the greater message of which a prophet and his wifeare a part so also Israel will live in isolation for a time without kings andprince. These are ‘ political leaders “ kingsand princes” they performed some military role 7: 16, also can be seen as ‘ anadministrative official, not necessarily royal’ they will be removed becausethey caused people to stumble’. 28 The “ scared stones”, ‘ were stones erected at shrines to symbolizethe male deity, and they were often set beside lush trees or wooden posts, which represented the female deity’. 29 ‘ Theywere stand features at Canaanite Baal shrines, symbolizing the sexual fertilityof the deities, and they are vigorously condemned throughout the OT (Exo 23: 24; Deut 7: 5; Lev 26: 1; Hos 10: 2; Amo 2: 7-8; Mic 5: 13)’. 30″Ephod”(priestly garment Ex 28; 39), ‘ used in both legitimate Yahweh worship and pagancults’. 31 Theyalso caused the Israelites to break their relationship with their God, so theywill be also removed.

Gray smith state that ‘ Yahweh will remove the factorsthat have caused Israel to destroy her relationship with him’, 32 asstated in chapter 2 “ for I will removethe names of the Baals from your mouth, and they shall be remembered by name nomore” (2: 17). “ Idols” are statues of figurines representinghousehold deitites and could also be used for divination purposes (Zec 10; 2; Heb 2: 19)33.’Since her exile, to varying degrees, Israel has lived without the fullimplements of her national and religious systems’.

34 Vv: 5   This verse beginswith “ Afterwards”, which to state that at the end of disciple period that nationof “ Israel will seek their God” (v: 5a). The word “ seek” ascribe to the Israelites, ‘ has a sense of seeking to gainor regain a person or thing’, in other words it is ‘ to attain something that isthat object of one’s desire’. 35 McComiskeystate that ‘ when one seek God, it is to make him the object of one’s allegianceand desire’. 36 The one who will seek after the Lordwill has to turn to him and do his will, but ‘ there is no indication of themeans which the God of Israelites will use to bring about this return’. 37″David their king” it is suggested this might applies to theDavidic headship. But it is questioned that word david their king, might havebeen latter addition.

Fuhr argue that ‘ Hosea is a true prophet, he is affirmingDavidic theology as some of the prophets as Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, atheology based in the covenant God made in David (2 Sam 7: 12-16)’. 38 He alsosuggests that the prophets were prophets and, as such, could predict thefuture. Even if the primary function of the prophets was to proclaim the wordof God to their primary contemporaries this does not diminish their role toproclaim the future as foretellers. Hosea does exactly that’. 39 Thesame promise for Israel’s return is similar to the promise stated in (1: 11). Vv: 5c “ fear God”, After return tothe Lord their God the nation will fear their God again. The word “ fear God” means ‘ either trembling in aweor obeying’.

Then in “ the latter days” that’s to say a new convent in Christ, as Douglas Stuart state that ‘ the end time described have their ultimatefulfillment in the new convent in Christ. Christ is David’s son who rules hispeople as their head’. 40 McComiskeyalso suggest that this ‘ does not always have an eschatological perspective. Italways denotes a period of time that, from the writer’s standpoint is inindefinite future’. 41  Conclusion In conclusion, one will say that Hosea is faithfulservant who is willing to obey orders and break the law (of Torah) to fulfilthe plans of his God, as a prophet, he was not supposed to marry a prostitutebut because of his love and obedience to his God. The story teaches one tounderstand the love of God he has for his people, even they turn back on himbut he still loves them. It is amazing that God is still reaching out to hispeople even they are going after other gods.

The cross demonstrates the love ofGod, the redemption price paid by Hosea to his wife is seen in Jesus the pricehe paid on the cross.  1 Gary V. Smith, TheApplication commentary; From biblical text to contemporary life, (Michigan: Zondervan, 2001), p. 272 Richard Alan. Fuhr, Jr, and Gray E. Yates, The Message of the Twelve; Hearing the Voiceof the Minor Prophets (Tennessee: B Academic, 2016), p60 3 Robin Routledge, OldTestament Introduction: Text, Interpretation structure, Themes, (Apollos: London, 2016), p310 4 Fuhr and Yates, TheMessage of the Twelve, p. 605 Fuhr and Yates, TheMessage of the Twelve, p.

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