

Introduction according to the canonical arrangement. the book

[Family](#), [Marriage](#)



Introduction The purpose of this essay is to deal with a critical exegesis of the book of Hosea chapter 3: 1-5. A brief authorship and background of the book this book will be given. Hosea is one of books among the twelve minor prophets according to the canonical arrangement.

The book is accredited to Hosea 'son of Beerai' as the author (1: 1). There is no evidence about "the prophet's life, where he was born, what his occupation was before he was called to be a prophet, or his age when he became a prophet". 1 The 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 Background To understand the message behind the book of Hosea, one has to understand the time he lived and prophesied. There is no supporting evidence when the book was written but there are 'various scholarly views'. 3 Hosea's ministry was to Israel during "the reign of Uzziah in Judah 792-740 BC, and king Jeroboam II in Israel 793-753 BC, extending at least thirty years into the reign of Hezekiah 716-686 BC". 4 His prophecies was to 'the northern kingdom, this can be seen by his geographical knowledge of Israel's, this suggests that he was likely a citizen of the North'. 5 After the death of king Jeroboam II, the nation of Israel had six different kings in a period of twenty years.

four of the kings were assassinated and two of them were forcibly removed from the throne. The rising empire of Assyria invaded Israel, and by 722 BC had completely conquered the nation and carried off much of its population into exile. The nation of Israel made a mistake of indenturing the Lord with Baal (master), a Canaanite nature God. "Canaanites worshipped a pantheon

of gods, but the most important in practice, though not in theory the chief god was Baal”.

By the time Hosea started prophesying, the people of Israel were involved in idol worship, they were visiting shrine prostitutes, adopting the magical practices of fertility cults. Hosea 3: 1 Chapter 3 is seen as one of the most vital in the prophecy, but it is also one of the debatable. It presents some insoluble problems and some phrases have dubious authenticity. Previously in chapter 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 in chapter 3: 1 begins with Hosea been instructed, ‘ again to go and show love your wife again’ (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 order and puts the spotlight on the fact of Yahweh’s speaking, rather than on the command itself”.

⁷The relationship between Gomer and the woman in Chapter 3 is questioned among scholars that woman still Gomer. Fuhr suggest that ‘ although not mentioned by name, there is little doubt that the adulterous woman in 3: 1 is Gomer’.⁸ He also state that because ‘ the event in chapter three appears in chapter one, seems clear to demonstrate the love that God has for adulterous Israel, he conclude by saying in this the drama unfolds to reveal that Gomer was in need of redemption’.⁹The word “ again” it suggested that ‘ it point to the second marriage, not the remarriage of a divorced wife but the taking of

a second wife'. 10 This view of Hosea having to marry a second wife has its another interpreting among other scholars. They believe that 'Hosea took two different women as wives to represent the two kingdoms of Israel'.

11 This view is argued that there is no internal evidence that each supposed wife represents the only half of Israel'. 12 I acknowledge all the view of the scholars but I believe that the woman Hosea was commanded to marry is still the same woman. 'The Hebrew word for "love" (bb) compose of many meaning: to have sexual relations, to fall in love, to express a deep emotional care and commitment, to make an alliance, here it must describe Hosea's acts and words that will back his wife's affections'. 13 so Hosea was supposed to show this kind of love to 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 obey with a woman who had broken her lifetime commitment to her husband'.

14 The love that Hosea was going to show his wife was symbolic to God's love to his people (Israel), as Wiersbe hold that 'God loved his people and wanted to return that love to him, but they committed evil by worshipping idols, just like a woman who is unfaithful to her husband'. 15 "Lovecakes of raisins" means "to compress" or a noun denotes a cake prepared of "compressed grapes". 16 They are 'delicacies distributed at times of celebration 2 Sam 6: 19, they are also used to worship of other gods like the queen of heaven according to Jer 7: 18; 44: 15-19'. 17 This to state that the Israelites 'have placed their affections on other gods, they have fallen in love with the cults of their day which promise happiness and success'.

18 Having fallen to other gods the Israelite has violated the commandments, you shall not have no other gods before me according to Exo 20: 3'. 19 Vv: 2 Hosea is seen as an obedient servant because he obeyed God's command to take his wife from another man. Redeeming his wife was not easy, he was forced to pay redemption price to his wife's lover to release her. The redemption price was paid in both silver and grain were paid in exchange. Thirty shekels was the price of a slave (Exod 21: 32; Lev. 27: 4).

Barley was considered as bread of the poor; it was also fed to animals'. The price paid can raise some questions: was Hosea poor? or he didn't value his wife? Or the lover of his wife was a poor man? Given that the full amount paid was not expensive, or did that man value her? This redemption price is questioned, ' why would Hosea need to make a payment for someone who is already his wife'. 20 It is suggested that ' possibly her practices of prostitution had forced her into slavery'. 21 Teresa Hornsby also suggests that the price paid by Hosea is unstable at best and cannot be used to identify the transaction as a purchase of a servant or slave, but rather consider Hosea's payment as one rendered to a prostitute for her service'. 22 But this view is rejected by Rudolph based on his theory, that Hosea is buying Gomer as a slave or servant on the basis that the comparison between the value paid in Hosea to that of Leviticus and Exodus is dubious, he claims that Hosea is buying a mistress'. 23 Vv: 3 After having redeemed Gomer back to his house Hosea laid down some instructions, that she should remain fully in sexual self-discipline for her husband until she is fully restored and

recommits herself to him. Others suggest that 'the restrictions are acts of love designed to reform Gomer'.

24 However both Hosea and Gomer, will remain both faithful to each other. Gomer. The word remains "dwell" stated here has same verb describes the period of waiting for purification after childbirth. After Gomer turns to him in loving commitment, she will again receive all the blessings of full family privileges. The disciplinary period in their marriage is described as 'prophetic action designed to symbolize a time of chastening and deprivation through which Israel is to pass'. 25 "But why should Hosea avoid his wife when he has just been told to love her?" 26 The answer is found in chapter 'whereby Israel will dwell many days without king, prince, without sacrifice or pillar without ephod of household gods' (v4). This restoration of Hosea and Gomer's relationship is parallel to the story of God and Israelite's relationship been restored.

Vv4 The disciplinary period Hosea gave to his wife is seen as a 'prophetic action designed to symbolize a time of chastening and deprivation through which Israel is to pass'. 27 Verse 4 interpret 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 wife are a part so also Israel will live in isolation for a time without kings and prince. These are 'political leaders "kings and princes" they performed some military role 7: 16, also can be seen as 'an administrative official, not necessarily royal' they will be removed because they caused people to stumble'. 28 The "scared stones", 'were stones erected at shrines to symbolize the male deity, and they were often

set beside lush trees or wooden posts, which represented the female deity'.
 29 ' They were stand features at Canaanite Baal shrines, symbolizing the sexual fertility of 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 pagan cults'. 31 They also caused the Israelites to break their relationship with their God, so they will be also removed.

Gray smith state that ' Yahweh will remove the factors that have caused Israel to destroy her relationship with him', 32 as stated in chapter 2 " for I will remove the names of the Baals from your mouth, and they shall be remembered by name no more" (2: 17). " Idols" are statues of figurines representing household deities 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 full implements of her national and religious systems'.

34 Vv: 5 This verse begins with " Afterwards", which to state that at the end of the period that nation of " Israel will seek their God" (v: 5a). The word " seek" ascribe to the Israelites, ' has a sense of seeking to gain or regain a person or thing', in other words it is ' to attain something that is that object of one's desire'. 35 McComiskey state that ' when one seek God, it is to make him the object of one's allegiance and desire'. 36 The one who will seek after the Lord will have to turn to him and do his will, but ' there is no indication of the means which the God of Israelites will use to bring about this return'.
 37 " David their king" it is suggested this might apply to the Davidic

headship. But it is questioned that word David their king, might have been latter addition.

Fuhr argue that ' Hosea is a true prophet, he is affirming Davidic theology as some of the prophets as Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, a theology based in the covenant God made in David (2 Sam 7: 12-16)'.³⁸ He also suggests that the prophets were prophets and, as such, could predict the future. Even if the primary function of the prophets was to proclaim the word of God to their primary contemporaries this does not diminish their role to proclaim the future as foretellers. Hosea does exactly that'.³⁹ The same promise for Israel's return is similar to the promise stated in (1: 11). Vv: 5c " fear God", After return to the Lord their God the nation will fear their God again. The word " fear God" means ' either trembling in awe or obeying'.

Then in " the latter days" that's to say a new covenant in Christ, as Douglas Stuart state that ' the end time described have their ultimate fulfillment in the new covenant in Christ. Christ is David's son who rules his people as their head'.⁴⁰ McComiskey also suggest that this ' does not always have an eschatological perspective. It always denotes a period of time that, from the writer's standpoint is in indefinite future'.⁴¹ Conclusion In conclusion, one will say that Hosea is faithful servant who is willing to obey orders and break the law (of Torah) to fulfil the plans of his God, as a prophet, he was not supposed to marry a prostitute but because of his love and obedience to his God. The story teaches one to understand the love of God he has for his people, even they turn back on him but he still loves them. It is amazing that God is still reaching out to his people even they are going after other gods.

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