

MY NAME IS GOMER
Part Two

I tried, she thought to herself. I tried really hard to be a good wife. After all I gave Hosea three children. OK, our third child did look a little different; that was the first time. I couldn't help myself, since he knew me from before Hosea took me for his wife. He was young and strong and handsome...and married. Then he asked my name.

"My name is Gomer," she told him. He wanted to worship in the high places, which were sacred to Baal, since the high places were closer to the heavens. This wouldn't be the first time he wanted to meet in the high places, and it wasn't even spring. And then there were others.

I am sure Hosea knew the truth when our third child was born that I had been unfaithful. Because he loved me so much, he hoped against hope that I would change. But there were only others. I don't know why I allowed myself to follow them to the high places. At one point I led the way, almost too eager to worship. Maybe the 'act' gave me power over them, or maybe it reminded of the life I left to be a farmer's wife. She said the last phrase, farmer's wife, with distain. Maybe I was searching for a love that I had lost so long ago, the love that Hosea had for me. And I told him so.

"How could you do this to me, Gomer?" Hosea said. "And even now I still love you. Am I crazy?"

"You are not crazy," Gomer said, feeling guilty, "I'm just not cut out to be a farmer's wife."

"What have I done to you for you to treat me this way?" he asked her.

"You haven't done anything," she replied. "It is me, I just can't love you the way you love me."

"But you told me yourself how your dream had finally come true when I asked you to marry you," Hosea said in frustration.

"It did come true," she said in growing pain and frustration. "The dream did come true, but over time I realized that the love was never there, that the love had died in me years ago."

"Then why are you still going to the high places," Hosea said confronting her.

"Why are you eagerly running to the high places with these young men?"

"They asked me to worship with them so that their fields and women would be fruitful!" she said in defense.

“Some of them are Israelites!” Hosea challenged. “Trust me, they haven’t gone to worship, and besides, their wives are angry...at you!”

“They have never accepted me, Hosea, as one of them!” she threw back at him.

“Yes,” Hosea said, “That is true. They were shocked when I first returned with you, but their attitudes towards you were changing...and now this!”

“I have tried, Hosea, but my love for you is not as overwhelming as yours,” she confessed.

“Your love will not deepen chasing the men of Baal in the high places,” Hosea countered. “You will only find your love for me and for God within yourself.”

Then Hosea gently held her arm and looked into her eyes, “I will always love you, I know that now, maybe too much. At least for our children’s sake, Gomer, you must try!”

She couldn’t help herself...she visited the high places.

*At the very beginning of Hosea’s mission, he was prompted to ‘go, marry a **whore**, and get children with a whore, for the country itself has become nothing but a whore by abandoning Yahweh’.*

*It is not clear, however, that Gomer was a whore in the usual sense of that word, for the term in Hebrew, literally translated, is not ‘whore’ but ‘woman of whoredoms,’ and this is similar to the phrase, ‘spirit of whoredoms’, which Hosea uses elsewhere to characterize what is happening generally in the society of his time. Many Israelite women of that day, it seems, were prostituting themselves, not as professional prostitutes, but in sexual activities that were a gesture of the **worship** at the Canaanite shrines of that era.*

*That Hosea married a sacred prostitute of Baal must have been **shocking** to the families of the conservative Levitical community to which we think he belonged. Because of the encroaching breakdown in sexual morality, Israel had now, for all intents and purposes become ‘nothing but a whore by abandoning Yahweh’.*

It would appear that at this moment, at the birth of his first child, Hosea became conscious of that awful truth that a catastrophic invasion of Israel was imminent, because of Israel’s deplorable moral condition.

*The births of two additional children, and the revelations that accompanied them, only served to intensify this awareness. One of these was to be called 'Lo Ruhamah,' **not pitied**, and the other 'Lo Ammi,' **not my people**. The covenantal relation with this people established at Sinai was now terminated. "You are not my people and I do not exist for you". This was the core of what Yahweh said when he first began speaking 'through Hosea'.*

*The first child was to be called '**Jezreel**', he was told—not a personal name, but the name of a city that had become famous because of a bloody massacre that had occurred there a century earlier—hence, similar in sound to the words **Rwandan Massacre**.*

It seems likely, therefore, that sometime after the birth of his three children Gomer left Hosea and became involved with other men.