

# **“A Tragedy in the Parsonage!”**

*Hosea 1:1-9; 6:6*

**Intro.** – It was Mark Twain who once debated the question of polygamy with a Mormon friend. The discussion became quite heated. Finally, the friend challenged Twain by saying, “Can you tell me a single passage in the Bible wherein polygamy is forbidden?” “Certainly,” Twain responded, “No man can serve two masters.”

A shoe repair sign advertised a leading brand of rubber heel. On this sign was an attractive young woman lovingly embracing one of these heels. The caption read: “I’m in love with America’s number one heel!” Under this, in a feminine hand, someone had written the following: “Sorry sister, I married him!”

The jokes concerning marriage are almost endless. Why? Various answers can be given, but, I like this one: “Many-a-truth are spoken in jest.” Some marriages are nothing more than a joke, or better put they are nothing more than a tragedy. We’re all too aware of just how true this is. Even marriages where both the husband and wife are suppose to be Christians, tragedy has struck.

Before going any further, let me clarify that if both husband and wife are Christians (truest Biblical sense) – there will be no divorce. There are no divorces in truly Christian marriages...

Our text relays a tragic marriage – the marriage of a prophet of God; thus, the title “A Tragedy in the Parsonage!” There is much to learn from this tragedy in the parsonage. 3 things in particular: 1) True Nature of Sin; 2) God is a Suffering God; 3) God’s Grace Truly is Amazing. All of this focuses around God’s faithfulness and our faithfulness in response:

*Purpose: to learn three vital lessons from the prophet Hosea*

## **I THE TRUE NATURE OF SIN**

### **A. Background to Hosea**

1. The scene of this real-life drama is laid in the city of Samaria between 750-735 B.C.
2. The time was one of great prosperity and poverty – prosperity economically speaking... poverty in speaking of values and morals.
  - as is the case today = for every one person who can stand prosperity there are hundreds who can stand adversity.
3. In spite of these tempestuous days, Hosea met, fell in love and married a young woman named “Gomer” which literally means “perfection or completion.”
  - a. truism = person generally finds their heaven or hell on earth in the person they marry. Simply put, Hosea did NOT find his heaven.
  - b. Gomer didn’t share the same purposes/goals of her godly/patriotic husband... Doubtless she felt neglected and perhaps often threw in his face “you love them more than me!”
  - c. Hosea knew Israel was destined for disaster if they failed to repent; thus, a new wife who wanted “the good life” and the burden of Israel’s faithlessness weighed heavily on Hosea
  - d. son was born – Hosea hopeful bring Gomer and he closer; instead, she became more wayward
  - e. 2 more children born – a girl whose name “unloved” and boy whose name “no-kin-of-mine”
    - 1) names say it all – Gomer’s unfaithfulness was blatant
    - 2) yet, Hosea doesn’t divorce Gomer which was amazement to his enemies and irritating grief to his friends.
  - f. Gomer finally left Hosea/kids – and through the pain and disappointment, Hosea’s tears served as a telescope through which he saw into the heart of God like no other man could!

### **B. Sin is Unfaithfulness**

1. As Hosea grieved over his own tragedy, he realized as Gomer deserted him, Israel deserted God!
2. Hosea came to realize what fundamentally wrong in Gomer’s conduct what wrong with Israel:
  - a. wickedness of Gomer not simply in the fact she left Hosea for another, she ceased to love and care for Him no longer confident Hosea could make/give what she wanted.
  - b. Hosea learned essence sin not just outward act, but, also rottenness inner life resulting in act!

- c. Mark 7:14-23 “...Do you not see that whatever goes into the man from outside cannot defile him; because it does not go into his heart, but into his stomach...That which proceeds out of the man, that is what defiles the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceeds the evil thoughts and fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness. All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man.”

### C. Faithfulness is the Exact Opposite of Sin

1. Just as the essence of sin is of the heart (rotteness one’s inner life = unfaithfulness); so, is the case for true commitment or faithfulness – in its essence is the exact opposite of sin!

- Illus. – like the poem of the optimist and pessimist,  
 Twixt the optimist and pessimist,  
 The difference is droll.  
 The optimist sees the doughnut,  
 The pessimist sees the hole.

2. What Hosea was asking of Gomer is what God is asking of Israel AND of you and me! What? Not offerings or sacrifices... He ask of loyalty/faithfulness and LOVE.

3. If God gets our pure love (heart, minds, and wills) He gets everything. If God doesn’t get this = 0!  
 Hosea understood this perfectly through this tragedy in the parsonage!

## II GOD IS A SUFFERING GOD

### A. The Capacity for Suffering

1. Israel had their false gods – never thought of these gods in terms of suffering  
 - suffering was and is today considered very *ungodlike!*
2. Thanks to Calvary the Gospel of Christ you and I can understand suffering as necessary/essential for Christ to be our Lord AND Savior!
  - a. Hebrew 4:14-16 = great High Priest understands because He was tempted as we; yet no sin!
  - b. Son suffered the eternal wrath of Father for sins put upon the Son...
  - c. Father suffered to see His Son having to endure such suffering...
3. To be able to suffer when objects of love are making havoc of their lives is the very essence of God = for GOD IS LOVE!

### B. Love is Dangerous

1. Because Hosea *loved* Gomer, he couldn’t watch her trash her life and not suffer = love dangerous!
2. Hosea summarized it: “If I suffer because of Gomer’s waywardness, God, Who is infinitely more loving than I, suffers accordingly in the waywardness of His people...

O, that you and I would begin to recognize the significance to the fact that God is a *suffering* God!

## III GOD’S GRACE IS TRULY AMAZING

### A. All Have Been Unfaithful

1. Like Gomer, like Israel, all have sinned (been unfaithful) to God; yet, He still desires us (none would perish) and never ceases to love and wants to forgive IF we let Him!
2. Hosea, understanding grace, was desirous of forgiving Gomer, even to point of buying her back...
3. How did Gomer turn out?... Not told... Would like to think she responded to love and grace, but am fully aware love and grace are more times than not resisted...!

### B. We Ought to Stand Amazed

1. How can anyone love so deeply as did Hosea; yet, the love of God far surpasses this love!
2. Jesus came to share our lot and deliver us from our own unfaithfulness:
  - a. He bought us back not with silver or gold, but with His own blood...
  - b. Isaiah 53:5 “*He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed.*”
3. “I Stand Amazed”

I stand amazed in the presence,  
Of Jesus the Nazarene,  
And wonder how He could love me,  
A sinner condemned unclean.

How marvelous, how wonderful,  
And my song shall ever be.  
How marvelous, how wonderful,  
Is my Savior's love for me.

**Conclusion:** Somewhere I read this story. A wealthy man from Chicago was spending time in the South where he met and learned to love a charming girl who eventually became his loving wife. After their wedding, they moved back to Chicago to a palatial area of the city where they enjoyed three wonderful years together. Then one day something happened that caused this beautiful, young wife to lose her mind. At her best, she was a bit demented. At her worst she was a raving maniac. The neighbors began to complain; so, the couple was forced to move. After several more moves, advice to “put her away” and countless doctors, one physician recommended to the young husband to take his wife back to her home in the South – that perhaps this would help.

He did just that, but nothing seemingly helped. With a broken heart and dashed hopes, he brought his wife back to their house in Chicago. He lifted her out of the car as she had fallen asleep. When he laid her down on her own bed, he noticed she was fast asleep. Fearing he might wake her, he watched in silence throughout the night. When morning came, she opened her eyes and looked at her husband. Instantly, he saw that again she was her sweet self. Something had happened.

“My dear,” she said, “I have been on a long, so long journey. Where have you been?”

The brave, faithful heart speaking out of the memory of long desperate hours, weeks, and months of watching, agonizing and hoping, simply answered back, “I have just been waiting for you.”

That is God's response from age to age. Even now He is waiting for you and me to respond to His love with a whole-hearted devotion. May we make that response at this very time!