

What's Your Name?

Scripture Reading — Hosea 1

“Like an adulterous wife this land is guilty of unfaithfulness to the Lord.”

Hosea 1:2 —

If you have children, how did you choose their names? Maybe you just liked the way they sounded. Maybe you chose names that honored family members. Or perhaps you chose a name for its meaning.

On the surface, Israel appeared to be thriving in Hosea’s day. The land was peaceful. The harvest was plentiful. The economy was strong. But beneath this prosperity was spiritual decay. Israel was worshiping false gods, practicing sexual immorality, and engaging in other sins displeasing to God.

So God sent Hosea to warn Israel in a surprising way. God told Hosea to “marry a promiscuous woman and have children with her” and to give them names reflecting God’s displeasure with his people. Each name is more severe than the one before it: “Jezreel” refers to Israel’s coming military defeat. “Lo- Ruhamah” means God’s love for his people has grown cold. And “Lo-Ammi” signifies that Israel is no longer God’s people.

Yet God’s grace prevails! In time, Jesus carried the curse of those names. On the cross, Jesus became “Lo-Ammi” as the forsaken child of God. And through belief in Jesus we receive a new name that is more important than our birth name: “You are a chosen people, a holy nation ... God’s special possession” (1 Peter 2:9). How does your daily life reflect your new spiritual identity?

Prayer

Father, we don’t deserve to be called your people. But through Jesus you name us as your children. Help us to live in honor of your name. Amen.

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