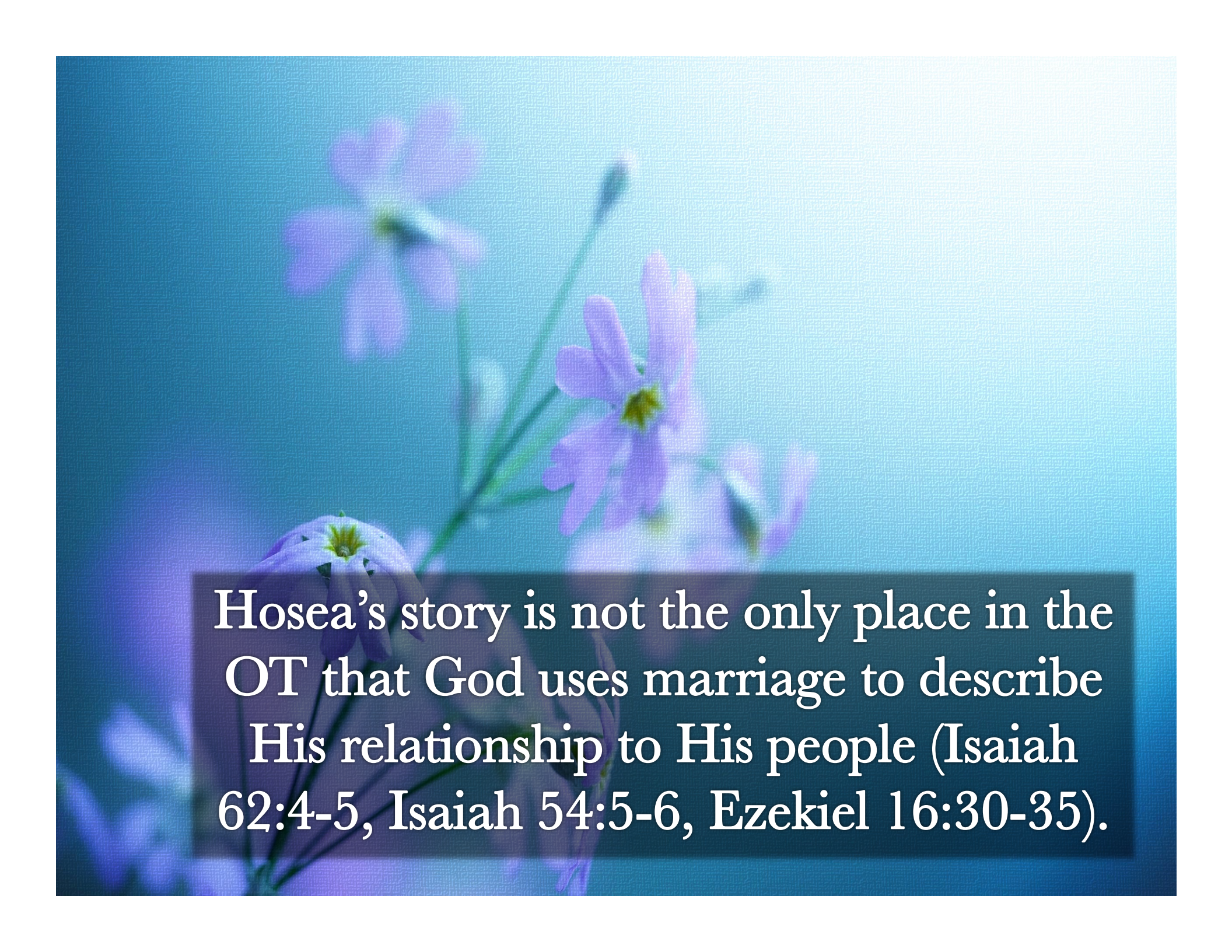




**Your
First
LOVE**

Hosea And Gomer

- The prophet is asked to find a “wife of harlotry”, only to discover that she has a hard time leaving that life behind (Hosea 1:2, 2:6).
- Gomer is Israel – Hosea’s personal heartache is akin to God’s for His unfaithful people. The pain of this story teaches us that God’s emotional investment was quite real.
- But the prophet is told to find Gomer, and “love her again” (Hosea 3:1,5), just as God never gives up in His search for tender souls who are willing to return to Him.



Hosea's story is not the only place in the OT that God uses marriage to describe His relationship to His people (Isaiah 62:4-5, Isaiah 54:5-6, Ezekiel 16:30-35).

God And Marriage

- God is the original designer of marriage, so He knows best how to prescribe it. There are plenty of boundaries to keep in mind (Proverbs 6:23ff, Malachi 2:14-16, Matthew 5:27-32, Matthew 19:1-12).
- But is it enough to simply “keep the rules”? Does this work in a marriage to another person? So why should it work with God?
- Marriage must go deeper than the rules, since it is a relationship. It is not about what I can get out of it, but what I can give!

○ *Revelation 2:1-3*

○ Ephesus kept sound doctrine with perseverance.

○ It is a good example to follow until we lose something along the way!

○ *Revelation 2:4-5*

○ In spite of everything the Ephesians did right, their lack of love showed a hollowness to their work.

○ It only took a few years to reach the point of empty rule-keeping.

**“You Have Left
Your First Love”**



Love That Is *Lost*

- When do we stop feeling like we must passionately pursue our spouse? How do we go from whole-hearted intimacy to dead routine?
- Interestingly, many marriages do not die in a dramatic fashion, but in quietness. Love is not *taken*, but *lost*.

The background of the slide features a soft-focus image of several purple flowers, likely pansies, with green stems and leaves. The overall color palette is a mix of light and dark purples and blues, creating a serene and spiritual atmosphere.

Ephesians 5:22-33

As we develop one type of marriage we learn to appreciate the other more fully.

Marriage is not earth-isolated, but is, in fact, something we will share with God for eternity (Revelation 21:2,9).

As Christ Loved