

Hosea Introduction

Hosea 1:1 – “The word of the Lord that came to **Hosea**, the son of Beerī, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel.”

Kings of Judah:
 Uzziah (792-740)
 Jotham (750-735)
 Ahaz (735-715)
 Hezekiah (715-686)

King of Israel:
 Jeroboam II (793-753)
 (Israel falls in 722)

- Jeroboam II was the 4th generation of the Jehu dynasty:
 - 1-Jehu – 28 years
 - 2-Jehoahaz – 17 years
 - 3-Jehoash – 16 years
 - 4-Jeroboam II – 41 years
 - *end* - Zechariah – ½ year or six months!
- Hosea 1:4 is a prophecy of the end of Jehu’s dynasty (fulfilled in 752) and the end of northern Israel (fulfilled in 722 BC)
- Hosea prophesying in the final days of Jeroboam II beginning about (?) 760 BC while Uzziah was on the throne in southern Judah.
- Hosea continued to prophesying through the fall of northern Israel and Samaria in 722 BC
- Hosea was still prophesying in the early days of Hezekiah’s reign in Judah about (?) 710 BC
- A good estimate of the time of Hosea’s time as an active prophet would be **760-710 BC**, or about 50 years.
- According to chapter 1, verse 1 the minimal length of Hosea’s active ministry would be 753-715 BC, or about 38 years.

Egypt												
Babylon												
Syria												
Assyria	Adad-nirari III (811-783) - Defeated Aram - Subjugated Damascus	Shalmaneser IV (783-773) - 1st weak king leading to Assyria's decline	Ashur-Dan III (773-755) - 2nd weak king of decline - 763 BC, solar eclipse	Ashur-nirari V (755-745) - 3rd weak king of decline	Tiglath-Pileser III (745-727)	Shalmaneser V (727-722) - Defeated Israel 722 BC	Sargon II (722-705) - Defeated Israel 722	Sennacherib (705-681) - Invaded Judah - Defeated Lachish 701 BC - Threatened Hezekiah	Esarhaddon (681-669)	Ashurbanipal (669-631, or 627)	Ashur-etil-ilani (631-627?)	Sin-shar-ishkun (627-612) - Nineveh falls
Israel	Jehu (841-814)	Jehoahaz (788-782)	Jehoahaz (814-798)	Menahem (762-742)	Zechariah (753)	Pekah (740-732)	Pekahiah (742-740)	Hoshea (731-721)				
Judah	Joash (835-796)	Amaziah (796-767)	Uzziah (792-740)	Jotham (750-735)	Ahaz (735-715)	Hezekiah (715-686)	Manasseh (697-642)	Amon (642-640)	Josiah (640-609)			
PROPHET			AMOS 760-754	HOSEA 760 - 710					NAHUM 663-654	JEREMIAH 627-580		
			JONAH 759	MICAH 750-686	ISAIAH 740-681			ZEPHANIAH 630	HABAKKUK 609-598			

Basic Outline of Hosea

1. Personal – Chapters 1-3
 - a. Chapter 1 – Hosea marries Gomer and has three children
 - i. Jezreel, a son, God will punish the house of Jehu for the blood of Jezreel and end the kingdom of Israel
 - ii. Lo-ruhama, a daughter, meaning “she has not received mercy” for God will have no more mercy for Israel and will not forgive them.
 - iii. Lo-ammi, a son, meaning “not my people” for Israel is not God’s people and Yahweh is not Israel’s God.
 - iv. Yet, there will be a restoration
 - b. Chapter 2 – Israel is unfaithful (Gomer also appears to have become unfaithful.)
 - c. Chapter 3 - Hosea is told to love Gomer again or to welcome her back into his house.
2. Prophecies – Chapters 4-14
 - a. Chapter 4-5 – Israel is unfaithful
 - b. Chapter 6 – Israel will come back to Yahweh in the last days, but will be punished beginning in Hosea’s day
 - c. Chapter 7-12 –
 - i. Chapter 7 – Israel turns to Egypt and Assyria
 - ii. Chapter 8 – Israel turns to idols and altars of sin
 - iii. Chapter 9-10 – Israel prospered and turned to their own strength but will be driven out of the Lord’s land
 - d. Chapter 13-14
 - i. Chapter 13 – Israel will be judged here in history
 - ii. Chapter 14 – Israel will return and be saved in the future

Hosea’s Marriage to Gomer

There are four typical interpretations for Hosea’s marriage:

1. Hypothetical Marriage –
 - a. In this view there was never a marriage. It was either a vision or a symbolic story or an allegory.
 - b. Believed by Jews in the Middle Ages into the 1800’s
 - c. Supported because God would never allow, cause or use such an immoral marriage
 - d. Logical because:
 - i. Hosea’s ministry would have been destroyed by immorality
 - ii. The time between the birth of the children would have been too disconnected to have any meaning
 - e. Rejected because:
 - i. It is not written like an allegory
 - ii. Gomer seems to be a real person
 - iii. Too many details that have no symbolic meaning are provided
 - iv. Why write an allegory in two chapters (1 and 3) and separate them with the longest chapter in the book (chapter 2)
2. Literal Marriage where Gomer is already a prostitute when Hosea marries her-
 - a. There was a marriage where Hosea married a prostitute, likely a temple prostitute
 - b. This is what it means when God tells Hosea to, “take to yourself a wife of whoredom and have children of whoredom.”

- c. The wife was a prostitute so the children were children of a prostitute
 - d. The priest could not marry a prostitute according to the Law, but Hosea wasn't a priest.
 - e. Rejected:
 - i. Not the most natural way of understanding the text
 - ii. It is not logical that God would tell a man to marry a unfaithful woman who was a prostitute.
3. Spiritual Unfaithfulness –
- a. The unfaithfulness was not moral, but spiritual/religious
 - b. This means Gomer was an idol worshipper and didn't follow Yahweh
 - c. Rejected:
 - i. How is an idolater more acceptable than a prostitute?
4. Literal Marriage where Gomer becomes unfaithful and ends up in prostitution –
- a. There was a marriage between Hosea and Gomer
 - b. Gomer was not originally a prostitute and was originally faithful to Hosea
 - c. Rejected:
 - i. This marriage and family life would have taken too long to be a spiritual example and signs of prophecy.
 - d. Acceptable:
 - i. Six or seven years of married life is NOT TOO LONG to be an example
 - ii. Hosea wasn't just playing a part in a prophecy. Hosea LOVED Gomer.
 - iii. People would have seen, heard and known about Hosea's family life and had sympathy on him. They would have had compassion on Hosea and understood his emotions and actions. This would have made the people consider God's feelings and actions towards Israel. It may have caused them to reconsider their treatment of God since they were Gomer.
 - iv. Hosea's experience with Gomer is an exact parallel to Yahweh's experience with Israel.