

Hosea 1

Review of the organization of the Bible:

Pentateuch (5)	-Gen. – Deut.
History (12)	-Joshua – Esther
Poetry (5)	-Job – Song of Solomon
Major Prophets (5)	-Isaiah – Daniel
Minor Prophets (12)	-Hosea – Malachi
Gospels (4)	-Matthew – John
History of the Church (1)	-Acts
Letters of Paul (13)	-Romans – Philemon
General Letters (8)	-Hebrews – Jude
Revelation (1)	-Revelation of Jesus Christ (to John)

Who were the 12 Minor Prophets? 12 men who preached the word of God during the time of the kings and after the Babylonian captivity

Why are they called "minor"? Only because of the length of their books (not because they are not important)

Four major prophets? Isaiah, Jeremiah (plus the book of Lamentations), Ezekiel, Daniel
-Some of the greatest passages in the Old Testament are from the 12 "Minor" Prophets

Hosea

- He was known as the prophet of God's love and grace (an "Old Testament apostle John")
- He lived in Ephraim (Northern Kingdom of Israel) – It was also known as Israel or Manasseh

In whose reign did Hosea begin his prophecy? Uzziah

-In whose reign did Hosea end his prophecy? Hezekiah

-Hezekiah became king after the fall of the Northern Kingdom in 721 BC

-How, therefore, did Hosea prophesy after 721 BC? It is believed that he moved to the Southern Kingdom after 721 BC (See *Zondervan Bible Encyclopedia*, III, 210b)

So the date for this book is about 750-700 BC

Conditions in the Northern Kingdom:

- Political disintegration – four of the last kings in the Northern Kingdom were assassinated
- The government was breaking up
- Family life was disintegrating – marriage vows meant nothing; there were sexual orgies, drunkenness, and prostitution
- There was class hatred (the rich oppressed the poor)
- There was a failure of religion and faith; idolatry was widespread

Theme of the book: God's love for his people (hoping that they would repent and return to him)

Hosea 1.1-9

V1 – Why date the book first by the kings of the Southern Kingdom? The Southern Kingdom was God's royal line (for the genealogy of Jesus Christ)
-The Southern Kingdom was more faithful than the North
-Only the tribes of Judah and Benjamin (the Southern Kingdom) returned from captivity

V2 – Some take this as a parable (not an actual story), but there is no indication of this
-Maybe Gomer was a good woman at the time of the marriage (or maybe she had been a prostitute in the past but had repented, then later went back to her old profession and became unfaithful)
-What were the instructions of God? Literally: marry a prostitute and have children by her
-Reason? Because the land was consumed with harlotry

V3 – Whom did Hosea marry? Gomer
Result? A son

V4 – Name for the boy? Jezreel
-Jezreel means "God's scatters" and can also mean "God sows"
-The word is both hopeful and destructive at the same time (the theme of this book)
-Jehu – because he carried out God's will in destroying the descendants of Ahab, God let him establish a dynasty
-It lasted 100 years = Jehu, Jehoahaz, Joram, Jeroboam II – their bloodshed is being discussed in v 4b
-This was the beginning of the end of the Northern Kingdom

V5 – Symbol of the defeat of the Northern Kingdom? A broken bow
-What good is a soldier with a broken bow?
-The defeat of the Northern Kingdom would come in the valley of Jezreel (also known as Esdraelon)

V6 - Next event? A daughter was born
-Meaning of her name? No compassion, no favor
-Message? God's forgiveness of the Northern Kingdom had come to an end

V7 – Who would be saved? The Southern Kingdom (from captivity)
-How would they be saved? By fighting
-The Babylonian Empire fell to the Medes and Persians
-In other words, the battle is not won by weapons and armies, but by trusting God

V8 – Next event? A third child was born

V9 – The meaning of his name? Not my people
-So God was going to destroy the Northern Kingdom
-So why should Hosea preach to the Northern Kingdom? Some individuals might be saved

Hosea 1.10-11 (hope in the midst of despair)

V 10 – **Words of hope?** The sons of Israel would be great in number

-And when the Northern Kingdom would be destroyed? There would be the "sons of God" in existence

V 11 – **What would the sons of Israel and Judah do?** Follow one leader

-Who was the leader? Jesus Christ

Read Romans 9.24-26 – The Gentiles took the place of the Northern Kingdom in the family of God

Notice the hope of Hosea in the midst of despair, like the legend of the phoenix rising out of the ashes

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