

INTERACTIVE TRAVEL GUIDE

DESTINATION: *Hosea 1-14*

Hosea means “salvation.” He was the son of Beeri. Hosea was called to prophesy to the Northern Kingdom of Israel during the reign of King Jeroboam (and during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, over the Kingdom of Judah). Sources vary as to the date of the writing (between 750 and 715 B.C.), but his message was clear: they had rejected God and thus they would be sent into exile and become wanderers in other nations.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

760-720 BC
Lifespan of the Prophet Hosea

KINGS OF ISRAEL DURING HOSEA'S LIFE:

793-752 B.C.
Jeroboam II

753-752 B.C.
Zechariah

752 B.C. (one month)
Shallum

752-742 B.C.
Menahem

724-740 B.C.
Pekahiah

752-732 B.C.
Pekah

732-722 B.C.
Hoshea

TRIP PLANNER:

The first three chapters of Hosea give a picture of Hosea's private family life and the agony of living with an unfaithful wife. This picture lays a graphic foundation for God's message through Hosea to the nation of Israel and her unfaithfulness to God in the remaining chapters 4-14. Hosea addresses the primary sins of Israel as adultery, drunkenness, idolatry, and licentiousness.

PLACES OF INTEREST:

Valley of Jezreel – A plain situated to the north of Jezreel between the ridges of Gilboa and Moreh. It was here that Gideon was chosen by the Lord to defeat the Midianites and the Amalekites (Judges 6:3). Two centuries later, the Israelites were defeated here by the Philistines, and Saul and Jonathan were killed (1 Samuel 31:1-6). The ancient city of Megiddo is located in the south and west of the valley.

Valley of Achor – Means "trouble" in Hebrew. It is the name of a literal valley in the vicinity of Jericho, but is used by both Isaiah & Hosea in a proverbial sense to refer to the valley of trouble, a place for herds to lie down in (Isaiah 65:10), the valley of trouble for a door of hope (Hosea 2:15).

PEOPLE OF INTEREST:

Hosea the son of Beeri - The name Hosea means "salvation." It comes from the same Hebrew root (hoshea) as the names Joshua and Jesus. Throughout the book, Hosea will show us that salvation is found in turning to the LORD and away from our sin. We also know that he had a wife named Gomer (Hosea 1:3) and two sons and a daughter (Hosea 1:4, 1:6, 1:9). His contemporaries were Amos, Isaiah, Jonah and Micah.

Gomer – Means "complete." The root word is gamar (Strong's # 01584), and it is a verb. In addition to complete, gamar means to perfect or to finish. The harlot wife of the prophet Hosea whom God commanded him to marry. She bore him three children, then left the family to live a life of harlotry and eventually was "redeemed" by Hosea and was reconciled to him.

Jezreel – means "God will scatter/sow." First-born son of Hosea and his wife Gomer. Jezreel refers to the Valley of Jezreel, where Jehu - the founder of the dynasty that put Jeroboam II on the throne - massacred all the descendants of Ahab, thus establishing his throne (2 Kings 10:11). God directed Hosea to name his son Jezreel to confirm His promise to avenge the bloodshed of Jezreel by judging the house of Jehu. In the end will be the uniting factor between Israel & Judah (v. 11).

Lo-Ruhamah – Means “no mercy; not loved.” Second child, a daughter, born to Hosea and a constant reminder to him and everyone else of coming judgment and exile. Her mercy and love would be given to another (the nation of Judah).

Lo-Ammi – Means “not my people.” Third child born to Hosea and Gomer. This child was a constant reminder that the people of Israel had pushed away the Lord God, and should no longer be considered His people.

Kings of Judah . . . king of Israel – Hosea’s ministry spanned the years 760 to 720 B.C., during the days of the divided monarchy. This was after the days of David and Solomon, when the people of God divided in a civil war, creating two nations: Israel in the north, and Judah in the south. This is some 250 years after the time of King David, and some 650 years after Israel came into the Promised Land.

Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah – Used by Hosea as a reference point for the days of his ministry according to the kings of Judah.

Jeroboam . . . king of Israel – Jeroboam I was the first king of a divided Israel, leading a popular revolt against the high taxation of Rehoboam, son of Solomon (1 Kings 12).

Jeroboam II – followed in the wicked footsteps of Jeroboam I. Hosea began his ministry in the days of Jeroboam II who, from a political and economic standpoint, was a successful and good king (2 Kings 14:23-29). Israel prospered politically and materially under his reign, but it was a time of significant spiritual and moral decay. The terrible result of this decay wouldn’t become evident until the days of Jeroboam II were finished.

10 Tribes of Israel – the recipients of Hosea’s judgment message from the Lord. They include:

1. Reuben
2. Simeon
3. Issachar
4. Zebulun
5. Dan
6. Naphtali
7. Gad
8. Asher
9. Ephraim (son of Joseph)
10. Manasseh (son of Joseph)

FUN FACTS:

Dramatic consequences of Jeroboam's sins - Of the six kings who followed Jeroboam II during the time of Hosea's ministry, four were violently overthrown and one died as a conquered exile in Assyria.

Break the bow of Israel - "The bow was a symbol of power in a day when it was the principal instrument of warfare. Thus, a broken bow symbolized the loss of power." (Hubbard)

Harlotry - Synonyms are "prostitution, whoredom, vice crime;" most often used as "offering sexual intercourse for pay."

Sow the wind and reap the whirlwind - Origin of this saying is Hosea 8:7.

Shekel - Refers to one of many ancient units of weight and currency. The shekel was originally derived from the weight of 180 grains (one grain weighs about 0.047 grams). A coin is money that is stamped with an official seal to certify its weight. Coins were invented by the early traders who stamped their own marks so that they would not have to weigh it again each time it was used. In Hosea's purchase of Gomer of 15 shekels, it equaled about 6 ounces of silver.

A homer and a lethek of barley - Homer or Cor was an ancient Hebrew unit of measurement equal to 10 ephah (or 12 bushel). One lethek is equal to 5 ephah.

Hosea 2:23 - Only other mention of Hosea in the Bible is in the Apostle Paul's reference to this prophecy fulfilled in Romans 9:24-26.

MAPS:

The Divided Kingdoms

