

Hosea 1

Verses 1

The word of the Lord which came to Hosea the son of Beeri, during the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and during the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel.

See charts 105 & 110

Reigns of the Southern Kings

	King	Good kings	Began	Ended	Years	Co-reign
6	Ahaziah (aka Jehoahaz)		841	841	1	
	Athaliah		841-835	835	6	
7	Joash (aka Jehoash)		835-796	796	40	
8	Amaziah		796-767	767	29	
9	Uzziah (aka Azariah)		791/767	740	52	24 years
10	Jotham	Like Uzziah but better	750/740	731	16	10 years
11	Ahaz		743/731	715	16	12 years
12	Hezekiah	Like David	728/715	686	29	13 years
13	Manasseh		696/686	642	55	10 years
14	Amon		642	640	2	
15	Josiah	Like David	640	609	31	

Reigns of the Northern Kings

	King	Began	Ended	Years	Co-reign
9	Jehoram (aka Joram)	852	841	12	
10	Jehu	841	814	28	
11	Jehoahaz	814	798	17	
12	Jehoash (aka Joash)	798	782	16	
13	Jeroboam II	793/782	753	41	11 years
14	Zechariah	753	752	6 months	
15	Shallum	752	752	1 month	
16	Menahem	752	742	10	
17	Pekahiah	742	740	2	

The minimum date for his ministry would be the last year of Uzziah and the first year of Hezekiah which would be from 767 to 728 AD. So his ministry was at least 40 years in length and likely longer than that.

See chart 115

Prophets of the Northern Kingdom				
Prophet	Kings and Events	Dates	Years	Bible History
Jonah	Jehoash, Jeroboam II (Amaziah)	810-790	20	2 Kings 13-14
Joel	Uzziah	790-760	30	2 Kings 11-15
Amos	Jeroboam II (Uzziah)	780-760	20	2 Kings 14-15
Hosea	Jeroboam II to Hoshea (Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz)	785-725	60	2 Kings 15-18
Isaiah	Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah	750-695	55	2 Kings 15-20
Micah	Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah	745-725	20	2 Kings 15

It's interesting that many of the northern prophets dated their ministries primarily by the reigns of the southern kings.

Verse 2

²When the Lord first spoke through Hosea, the Lord said to Hosea, “Go, take for yourself a wife inclined to infidelity, and children of infidelity; for the land commits flagrant infidelity, abandoning the Lord.”

The translation here says “a wife inclined to infidelity”. One has to wonder if this is what the Hebrew text implies or is this translation an attempt to soften the fact that God is telling His prophet Hosea to marry a “wife of fornication”?

The following is from the Septuagint.

2 The beginning of the word of the Lord by Osee. And the Lord said to Osee, Go, take to yourself a wife of fornication, and children of fornication: for the land will surely go a-whoring in departing from the Lord.

This does not imply that she was a harlot (one who has sex for money) but she will be unfaithful. Concerning the children we know Hosea fathered the first child but the text is not clear concerning the last two

Some people have questioned if it was wrong for God to tell a prophet to marry a woman who was or would become unfaithful. According to the law only a priest of God was prohibited against marrying a prostitute or a woman divorced from her husband.

See Leviticus 21:7

⁶ They shall be holy to their God and not profane the name of their God, because they present the offerings by fire to the Lord, the food of their God; so they shall be holy. ⁷ They shall not take a woman who is a prostitute and profaned, nor shall they take a woman divorced from her husband; for he is holy to his God.

Rahab (the harlot) married Salmon (or Sala) from the tribe of Judah, becoming the mother of Boaz and an ancestor of King David and Jesus.

See Matthew 1:5

⁵ Salmon fathered Boaz by Rahab, Boaz fathered Obed by Ruth, and Obed fathered Jesse. ⁶ Jesse fathered David the king; David fathered Solomon by her who had been the wife of Uriah.

The lineage to Jesus included a harlot (Rahab), a foreigner (Ruth) and an adulterer (David). This is not a vindication of bad behavior but it does show us that God uses anyone who turns to Him for His help.

Verse 3

³ So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bore him a son.

Gomer was a name given to both men and woman in the bible.

See Genesis 10:2

² The sons of Japheth were Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras.

We can see from this verse that the first of the three children was Hosea's. The next two children might be but it is not specifically stated so in the text.

See verses 6a & 8

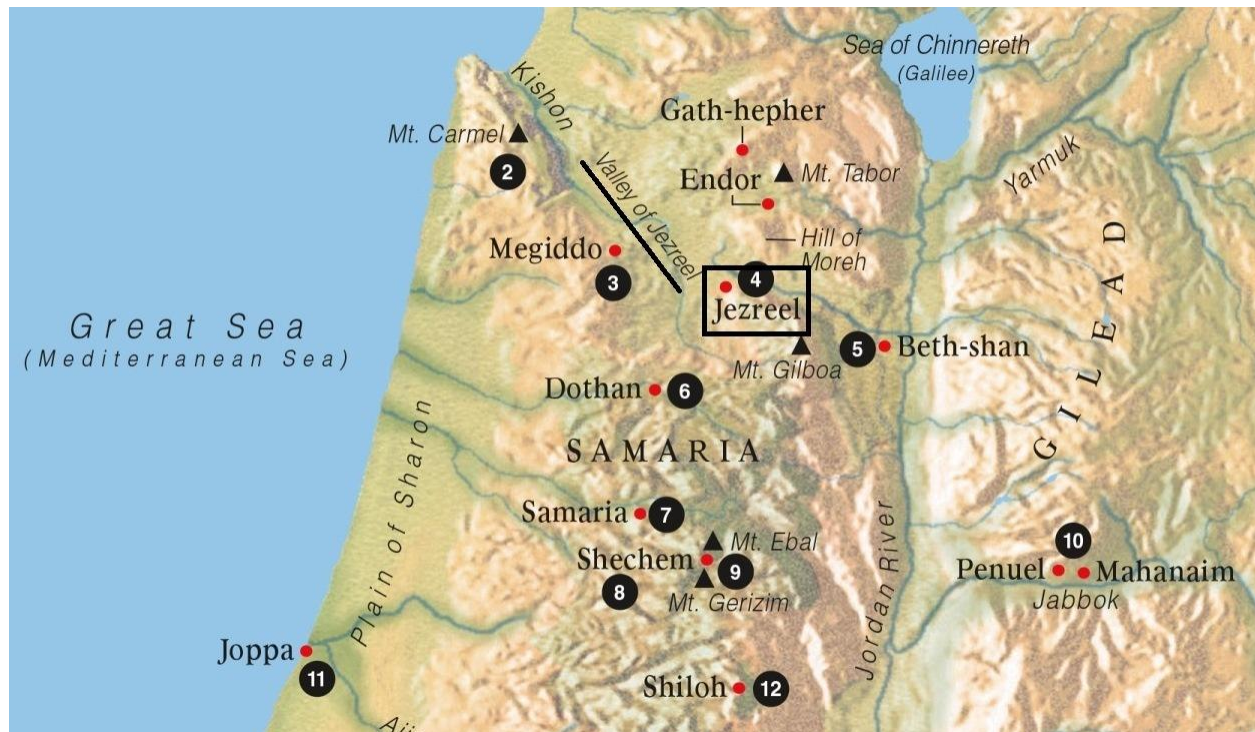
^{6a} Then she conceived again and gave birth to a daughter.

⁸ When she had weaned Lo-ruhamah, she conceived and gave birth to a son.

Verse 4

⁴ And the Lord said to him, “Name him Jezreel; for in just a little while I will punish the house of Jehu for the bloodshed of Jezreel, and I will put an end to the kingdom of the house of Israel.”

See map 120



The city of Jezreel was located on a hill overlooking a valley which became known as the Jezreel valley. The town of Jezreel was where King Ahab and his wife Jezebel established their summer residence.

However, this was also the place where Jehu massacred Ahab's seventy sons and many others that were associated with him.

See 2 Kings 10:11

¹¹ So Jehu killed all who remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel, and all his great men, his acquaintances, and his priests, until he left him without a survivor.

This was not the kind of place that anyone would want to name their child after, but this was God's way of reminding the Northern Kingdom that the atrocities of Jehu were not forgotten and that His divine judgment was about to fall upon Jehu and all of northern Israel.

God punished Jehu by allowing Syria to capture nearly half of the Northern Kingdom.

See 2 Kings 10:31 - 33

³¹ But Jehu was not careful to walk in the Law of the Lord, the God of Israel, with all his heart; he did not desist from the sins of Jeroboam, into which he misled Israel. ³² In those days the Lord began to cut off pieces from Israel; and Hazael defeated them throughout the territory of Israel: ³³ from the Jordan eastward, all the land of Gilead, the Gadites, the Reubenites, and the Manassites; from Aroer, which is by the Valley of the Arnon, that is, Gilead and Bashan.

See chart 125



God also promised to end the kingdom of Israel. This occurred when Shalmaneser V, king of Assyria (727–722 BC), made King Hoshea a vassal, and later besieged Samaria for three years, leading to the Assyrian captivity in 722 BC.

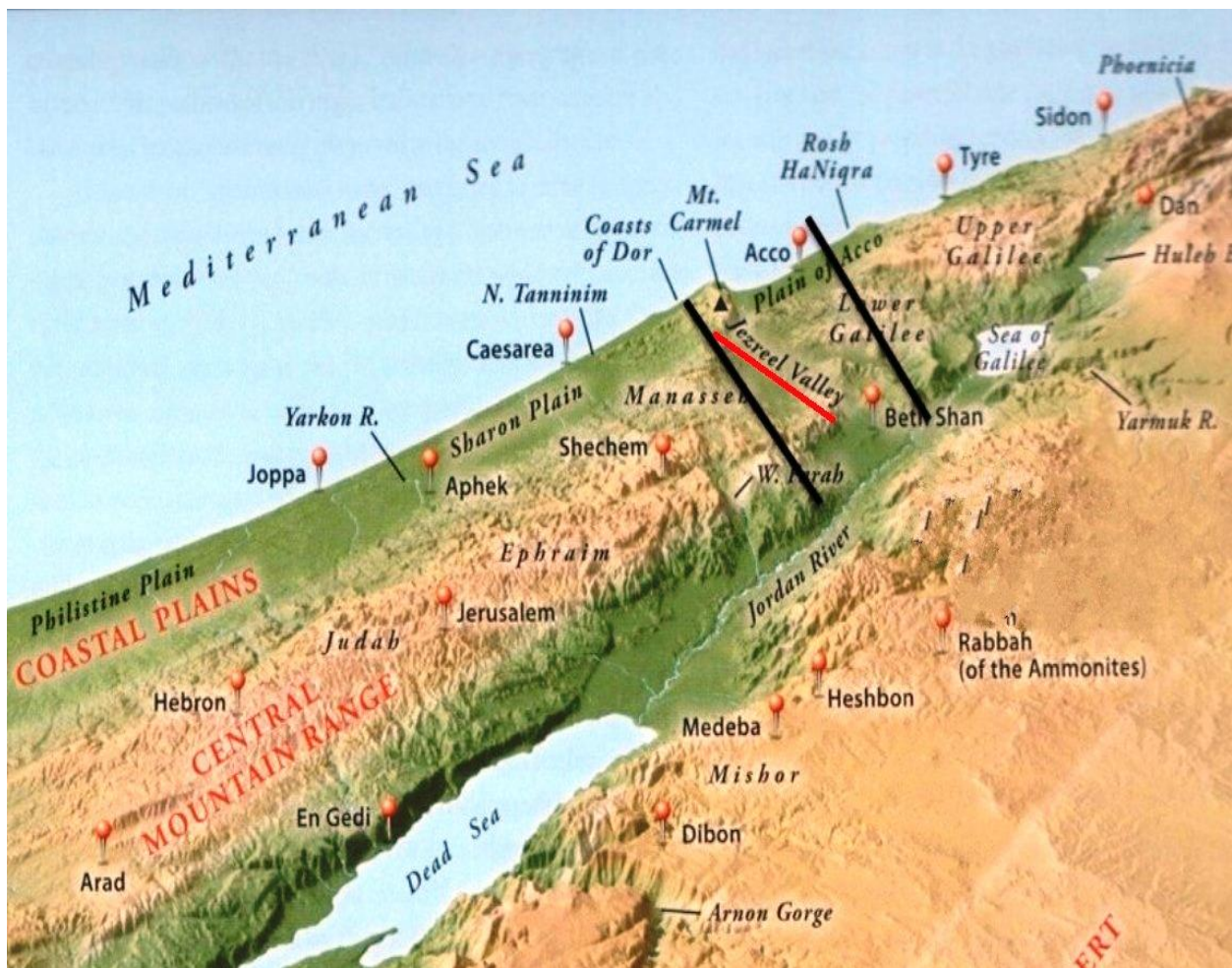
Verse 5

⁵ On that day I will break the bow of Israel in the Valley of Jezreel."

"Break the bow" is a figure of speech which means that the army of northern Israel will be destroyed.

The Jezreel Valley played a major role in the Assyrian wars against Israel. This site fell to Tiglath-Pileser III around 733 BC and this set the stage for the Assyrian conquest of Samaria in 722 BC. Tel Megiddo was a strategic stronghold in these battles.

See map 130



Verse 6

⁶ Then she conceived again and gave birth to a daughter. And the Lord said to him, “Name her Lo-ruhamah, for I will no longer take pity on the house of Israel, that I would ever forgive them.

In verse 3 it says that Gomer bore him a son but in this verse the language is not as specific and leaves some room for doubt that the daughter is his. It is possible that the writer simply used a different phrasing and nothing should be made of this but verse 2 did refer to them as children of infidelity.

Because God is using the children of Hosea and his wife to send a message to the Northern Kingdom concerning their evil conduct He provides the names for their children. Lo-ruhamah means "no pity," which signifies that Israel has broken the Covenant between God and Israel and God will no longer forgive their sin.

Verse 7

⁷ But I will take pity on the house of Judah and save them by the Lord their God, and will not save them by bow, sword, battle, horses, or horsemen.”

God was willing to show Judah pity for another 136 years (until 586 BC) after the destruction of the Northern Kingdom in 722 BC. Most likely this came about because a number of the southern kings were good and implemented spiritual reforms that made Judah worth saving. However, in the end Judah became worse than the Northern Kingdom and suffered defeat and deportation to Babylon.

In the second part of this verse God promised that Judah would be saved by His hand rather than by their ability to fight using the weapons of that time. This prophecy was fulfilled when the army of Sennacherib came up against Jerusalem and King Hezekiah prayed for deliverance.

See 2 Kings 18 & 19

³⁵ Then it happened that night that the angel of the Lord went out and struck 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians; and when *the rest* got up early in the morning, behold, all of the 185,000 were dead. ³⁶ So Sennacherib the king of Assyria departed and returned *home*, and lived at Nineveh. ³⁷ Then it came about, as he was worshiping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer killed him with the sword; and they escaped to the land of Ararat. And his son Esarhaddon became king in his place.

One reason God may have granted Hezekiah this special victory was based on the fact that he was a very good king. The good kings are highlighted in green.

See chart 135

Reigns of the Southern Kings			
	King	Good kings	Years
1	Rehoboam		17
2	Abijam (aka Abijah)		3
3	Asa	Did good & right	41
4	Jehoshaphat	Like David	25
5	Jehoram		8
6	Ahaziah (aka Jehoahaz)		1
	Athaliah	Queen	6
7	Joash (aka Jehoash)		40
8	Amaziah		29
9	Uzziah (aka Azariah)		52
10	Jotham	Like Uzziah but better	16
11	Ahaz		16
12	Hezekiah	Like David	29
13	Manasseh		55
14	Amon		2
15	Josiah	Like David	31
16	Jehoahaz		3 months
17	Jehoiakim		11
18	Jehoiachin		3 months
19	Zedekiah		11

It should be noted that these good kings had longer reigns than most of the bad kings, so the tribe of Judah was worthy of a longer period of time in the Promised Land.

Verses 8 - 9

⁸ **When she had weaned Lo-ruhamah, she conceived and gave birth to a son.**

⁹ **And the Lord said, "Name him Lo-ammi, because you are not My people, and I am not your God."**

Again, it is not stated that she bare a son to Hosea, which opens the door to the possibility that the child belonged to another man.

The name which God gave to their second son was "Not my People" and "I am not your God". We can see from this that Israel no longer had a relationship with God.

When the names of all three children are taken in succession the message to the Northern Kingdom was quite clear.

1. I will put an end to the kingdom of the house of Israel.
2. I will no longer take pity on the house of Israel.
3. You are not My people, and I am not your God.

Years later when the southern kingdom was deported to Babylon they knew they were being punished for their sin but God sent them prophets to let them know that He was still watching out for them. After 70 year their captivity would end and they would be able to return to the Promised Land. There was no such promise given to the people of the Northern Kingdom

However, 500 years later when the people of Judah rejected the Messiah they also lost their right to dwell in the Promised Land. God then chose those who believed in His Son to become the New Israel. This new Israel was made up of Jewish people and Gentiles that had accepted Christ as their savior.

See Galatians 3:26 - 29

²⁶ **For you are all sons and daughters of God through faith in Christ Jesus.** ²⁷ **For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.**

²⁸ **There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.** ²⁹ **And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to promise.**

Verse 10

¹⁰ **Yet the number of the sons of Israel**
Will be like the sand of the sea,
Which cannot be measured or counted;
And in the place
Where it is said to them,
"You are not My people,"
It will be said to them,
"You are the sons of the living God."

The first part of verse 10 is very similar to the language that God used in the book of Genesis when He blessed Abraham.

See Genesis 22:15 - 18

¹⁵ Then the angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven, ¹⁶ and said, “By Myself I have sworn, declares the Lord, because you have done this thing and have not withheld your son, your only son, ¹⁷ indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand, which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies. ¹⁸ And in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.”

Paul quoted the second half of verse 10 in his book to the Romans.

See Romans 9:23 - 25

²³ And He did so to make known the riches of His glory upon objects of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory, ²⁴ *namely* us, whom He also called, not only from among Jews, but also from among Gentiles, ²⁵ as He also says in Hosea:

“I will call those who were not My people, ‘My people,’
And her who was not beloved, ‘beloved.’”

²⁶ “And it shall be that in the place where it was said to them, ‘you are not My people,’
There they shall be called sons of the living God.”

We can see from these verses that Abraham's descendants included any Jew or Gentile that was a true believer. The law was given to the physical descendants of Abraham but the promise of the Messiah was given to all believers regardless of their genealogy.

Verse 11

¹¹ And the sons of Judah and the sons of Israel will be gathered together,
And they will appoint for themselves one leader,
And they will go up from the land,
For the day of Jezreel *will be great*.

This is an interesting prophecy because the 10 tribes of the Northern Kingdom will be deported to Assyria in about 30 years (722 BC) and for all intents and purposes they will not be heard from again until the 1st century AD.

See Acts 2:5 - 11

⁵ Now there were Jews residing in Jerusalem, devout men from every nation under heaven. ⁶ And when this sound occurred, the crowd came together and they were bewildered, because each one of them was hearing them speak in his own-language. ⁷ They were amazed and astonished, saying, “Why, are not all these who are speaking Galileans? ⁸ And how *is it that* we each hear *them* in our own language to which we were born? ⁹ Parthians, Medes, and Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea, and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰ Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya around Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, ¹¹ Cretans and Arabs—we hear them speaking in our *own* tongues of the mighty deeds of God.”

Jews from all around the world had come to Jerusalem for Pentecost in 28 AD and when they heard the Gospel message many of them accepted the Good News and became members of the church. At this point the 12 tribes were reunited under the headship of one leader (Christ).

See James 1:1

James, a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad: Greetings.

James informs the readers of his letter that he is writing to all 12 tribes who are dispersed abroad; meaning many from the Northern Kingdom had to be present on the day of Pentecost. In time these people returned to their homes and a number of years later James wrote them a letter to instruct them on what it means to live a Christian life.