

The Book of Hosea

Session 1: Hosea and His Times

Session 2: Hosea the Prophet and the Man

Session 3: Hosea's Themes and Relevance



Introduction

- Resources: IVP-OT commentary, IVP-New Bible Commentary, Interpretation-Hosea, James Limburg, John Knox Press, BST-The Message of Hosea, Derek Kidner
- Grace in OT & the heart of God: "Amos dwells on what God has done ... Hosea dwells on what God has felt for Israel." Limburg, Interpretation, Minor Prophets, 6
- Passion *and* commitment: '..... there is hurt, humiliation, waiting, personal approach and appeal, and, at last, mutual commitment. Cost, too; but mostly the cost of risking rebuff, reopening wounds, working at a difficult relationship and being determined that it shall last and grow.'



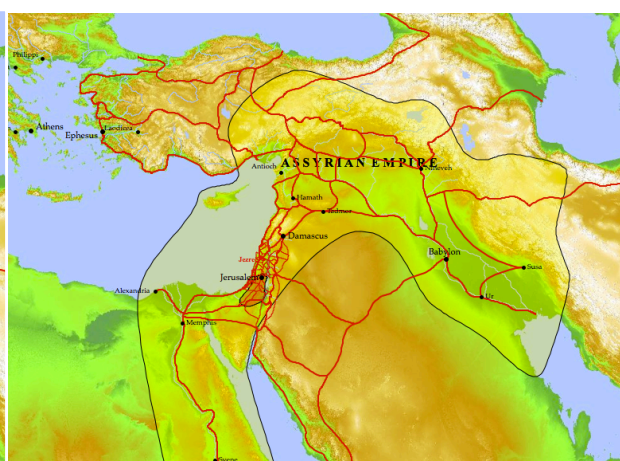
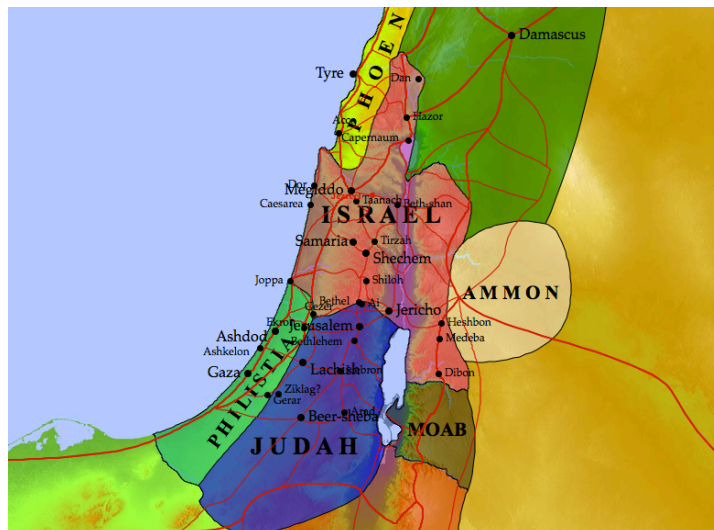
"She's a lying cheating whore but she makes a great metaphor."

- Radical call to be a man of God: Hosea's whole life was a walking, talking visual aid. The straying wife, the children were all visible constant reminders of the message.
- Perhaps no other prophet had such an intertwining of message and life. Hosea's is '...a problem family, and God compares His situation not to that of an autocrat whose orders nobody dares question, nor of a father who rejoices in an adoring wife and children, but to that of a husband whose wife has left him, and a father whose children are like strangers in his own house and are fast destroying themselves.' Kidner, 11.

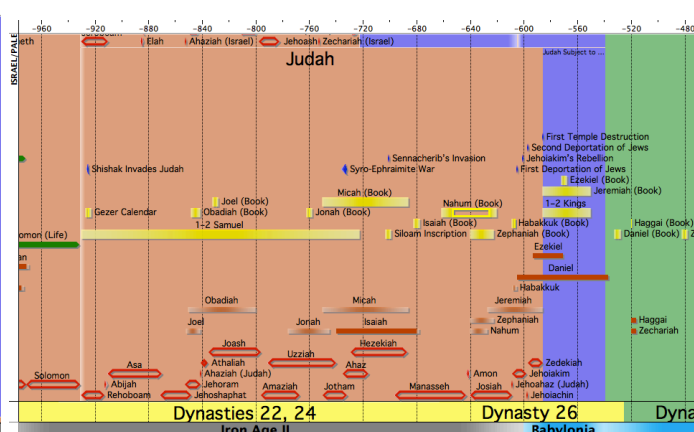
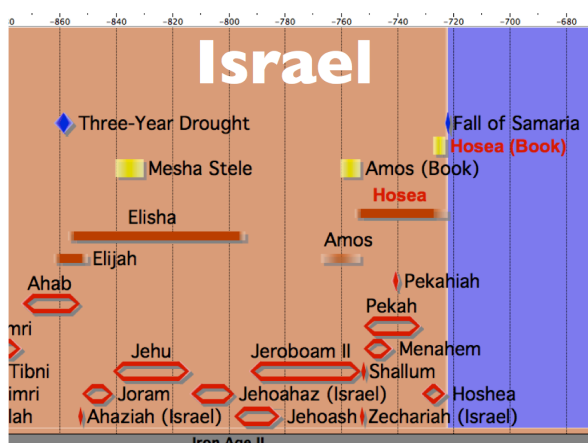
Session 1: Hosea and His Times

1. Political Situation, Hosea 1:1

- World powers - Assyria, Egypt



- Local powers - Israel: political stability soon to end, Jeroboam II, Zechariah, Shallum, Menahem (2 Kings 15:16), Pekahiah, Pekah, Hoshea.

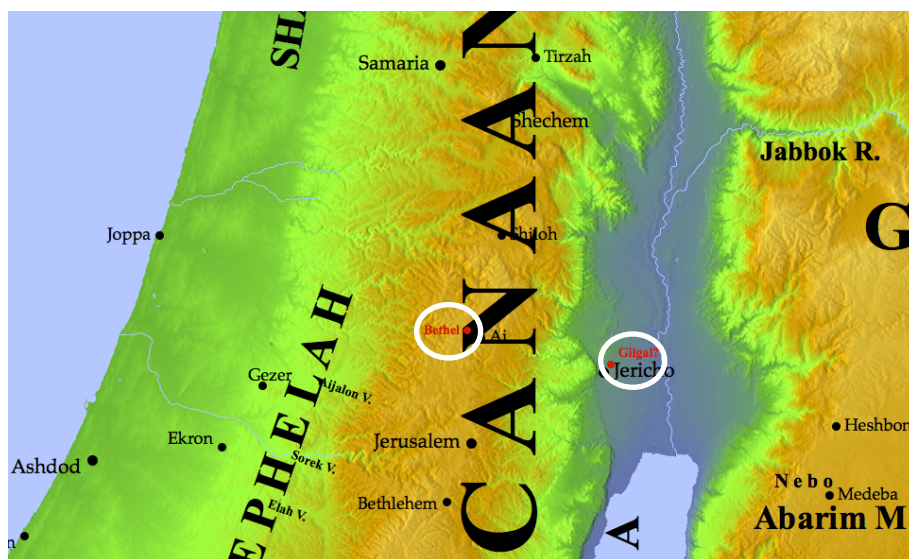


- The economic times - prosperity soon to end: "Each turn of the helm brought the ship of state closer to the rocks ... His words were addressed to people on a ship that was already beginning to sink." Limburg, 8.
- Judah - doing better than Israel, but still in danger, Hezekiah etc.
 - Would fall 120-140 years later
 - Depending if count from first deportation of Jews, 605BC - Daniel 1:1, or from the date of the Temple's destruction, 586BC-2 Kings 25:1-12, Jer 39:1-10, Jer 52:4-16

2. Spiritual Situation

a. Worship, Hosea 4:15

- Idols: Bethel (Beth-Aven) & Gilgal, Hosea 10:5, 8:5-6.



- Rejection of God:
 - In religion, with other gods, Hosea 11:2
 - In politics, with shabby intrigues and dubious patrons; Hosea 7:1-7, 8:4
 - In morals, with unbridled sex and violence.¹ Hosea 4:2, 13-14
- The people had plenty of religious activity, but that was not what God wanted - '...He wanted people: converted people, deeply repentant, wholly and for ever His.' Kidner, 14. Hosea 12:6, 14:1-2, 6:6.
- b. Spiritual leadership
 - Hosea's contemporaries: Isaiah, Amos, Micah, Jonah
 - State of the priesthood: Hosea 4:7-9, 6:9
- c. The Far Future: Hosea 3:5, 11:1

¹ Kidner, 13

Session 2: Hosea the Prophet and the Man

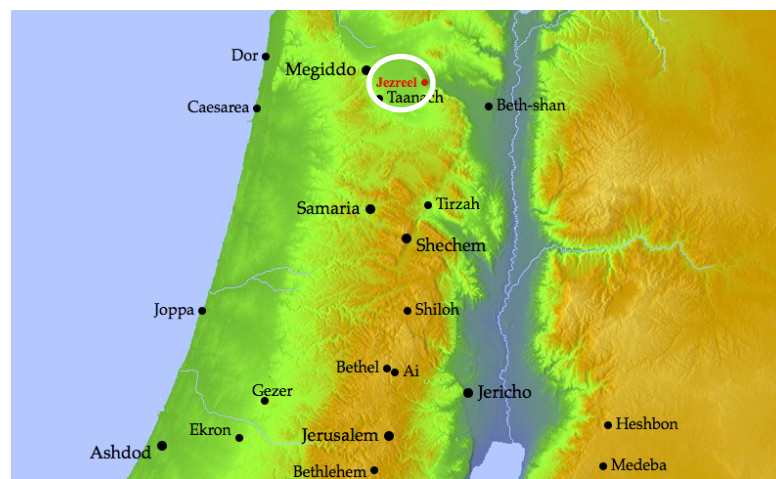
The radical prophet-man, Hosea 9:7

1. Marriage to Gomer: Hosea 1:2

- JB, *'Go, marry a whore, and get children with a whore, for the country itself has become nothing but a whore by abandoning Yahweh.'*
- Hosea's whole life was a walking, talking visual aid.
- Redeeming Gomer: Hosea 3:1-5 (Exodus 21:32, Gen 37:28, see also Lev 27:1-8).

2. Naming of children, Hosea 1:4-9

- a. Jezreel: location of the King's summer palace and where dynasty of Jehu began.



- 'Jezreel' = 'scattered'. 'Israel' = 'God perseveres'. Hosea 1:11-2:1, 2:23.
 - New Testament writers use the passage to illustrate the eternal plan of God for all peoples including Gentiles to be added to His family, Rom 9:23-26, 1 Peter 2:9-10.
 - Four main events of extreme violence:
 1. Jehu killed the kings of Israel & Judah. He decided God's agenda.
 2. Jezebel died a cruel death
 3. Jehu displayed the heads of the seven sons of Ahab
 4. Engineered the mass extermination of Baal worshipers (2 Kings 9-10)
 - Fulfillment of the prophecy:
 1. The house of Jehu destroyed, 752BC with murder of Zechariah, 2 King 15:8-12.
 2. Israel falls & taken captive 722 B.C., 30 years later.
- b. Lo-ruhamah = 'not loved/pitied' (Psalm 103:13, 100:5, 136 - loveX26)
- See also Hosea 1:2, 2:4-5
 - '...when we insist on our own way and persevere in our sin, the time comes when the daily mercies of the Lord are withdrawn from us and we are abandoned to our folly so that we might learn to turn back to Him.' Boice, 17.
 - Root word is 'womb', or 'guts' - same as 'heart' to us, the seat of the emotions. God had them in His heart (womb, belly), but they could no longer be there because they had rejected him so often for so long.

c. Lo-Ammi, "not my people"

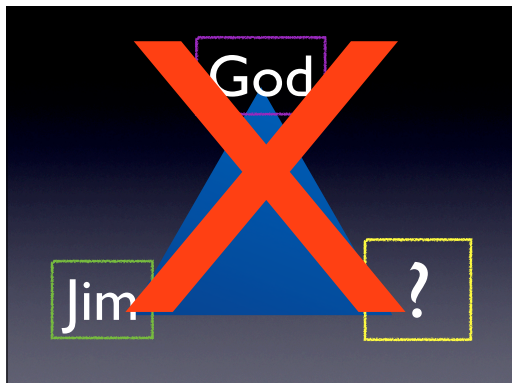
3. Rich metaphors

Session 3: Hosea's Themes and Relevance

1. Security in God's Love

- a. Loves the loveless: Hosea 1:7, 10, 2:14, 19-23, 3:1, 11:8-11, 14:4-8
- b. Values the worthless & ransoms the enslaved, Hosea 3:2
- c. No complacency, Revelation 3:17
- d. Growing in Gratitude
- e. Reawaken the "Wow!"

2. No Triangles



- a. True / false repentance
- b. Contrast Hosea 6:1-4 with Hosea 10:12.

3. What God Wants,

- a. Hosea 6:6
- b. Mercy
- c. Acknowledgment of God

Conclusion

- Hosea 14:9
- Decide to decide