

2 – HOSEA: INTRODUCTION

I. Historical Background



SCRIPTURE Hosea 1:1

The word of the Lord that came to Hosea the son of Beeri, 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.

- Hosea prophesied during the eighth century B.C., which is pre-exilic.
- Hosea's ministry spanned several decades.
- His ministry began near the end of Uzziah's reign in Judah (790-739 B.C).
- His ministry also began near the end of Jeroboam II's reign in Samaria (793-753 B.C.).
- His ministry lasted until the early years of Hezekiah's reign in Judah, starting in 715 B.C.
- The writer does not list the six kings of Samaria after the reign of Jeroboam II.
- Hosea prophesied apparently after the ministry of the prophet Amos.

II. The Prophet

The Voices of God to Israel: The Minor Prophets

A. His Name

- The name “Hosea” indicates salvation, deliverance or help.

B. His Home and Early Life

- It is generally believed that he was a native of the north, possibly from the city of Samaria.
- Nothing is known of his earlier life.

C. His Occupation

- Nothing is known of his occupation.
- It is presumed that he was a priest since he had knowledge of priestly duties and responsibilities.

D. His Marriage

- He was directed to marry a woman of “whoredom” or idolatry.
- The book provides a parallel between Hosea and Gomer with Yahweh and Israel

III. The Occasion. Purpose & Themes of the Book

- The purpose of Hosea must be understood against the background of the message of Deuteronomy.
- Deuteronomy records the covenantal agreement between the Lord and Israel.
- Hosea exposes the breach of the covenant by Israel.
- He also announces God’s intention to implement the covenant curses.
- Hosea affirms the promise of Israel’s ultimate restoration.
- The major themes can be summarized in three words: sin, judgment and salvation.
- While Hosea contains several calls to repentance, he did not expect a positive response.
- Hosea’s reconciliation with Gomer illustrates Israel’s ultimate restoration.