

DIGGING DEEPER

Amos & Hosea

I. AMOS & HOSEA'S CHRONOLOGY

BIBLICAL EVENT	KLASSEN DATE	REFERENCE
David's reign	1025-985 B.C.	
Solomon's reign	985-945 B.C.	
Ahab's reign	889-870 B.C.	
Elijah's ministry	889-868 B.C.	
Elisha's ministry	868-808 B.C.	
Jeroboam II begins to reign in Israel	798 B.C.	2 Kgs. 14:23
Hosea begins his prophecy	784 B.C.	Hosea
Amos begins to prophesy	774 B.C.	Amos
End of ministry of Amos	763 B.C.	
Death of Jeroboam II	762 B.C.	2 Kgs. 14:29
Isaiah's ministry begins in Judah	732 B.C.	Isa. 6
End of ministry of Hosea	724 B.C.	
Samaria besieged by Assyria	723-721 B.C.	2 Kgs. 17:5
Fall of Samaria & Israel to Assyria	721 B.C.	2 Kgs. 17:6

II. THE WORLD AND FAMILY OF AMOS & HOSEA

A. Their world

Amos and Hosea lived in the same world as the prophet Jonah. Assyria was a growing power, but not a present threat to Israel during the days of Jeroboam II. In fact, Assyria's defeat of Syria had given Jeroboam the opportunity to expand northward.

Times were good for many in the northern kingdom. Luxury abounded. Amos properly described the practices of the rich and powerful: they "lie on beds of ivory," "eat lambs from the flock," "sing idle songs to the sound of the harp," and "drink wine in bowls and anoint themselves with the finest oils." (Amos 6:4-6) He called the fat, wealthy women of the capital city of Samaria, "you cows of Bashan!"

This period of peace and expansion gave Israel a false security. They were confident that all of the good things of life they experienced were because they were in favor with God, and He was blessing them. They were a very religious society with a lot of liturgy accompanied by many sacrifices.

But they were also a very careless and self centered society. Their worship was not exclusively of Yhwh, the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David. Like Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and Ahab and Jezebel, they bowed down to the pagan gods and idols of the Canaanites. While many lived in luxurious comfort, they often did so by oppressing the poor and depriving them of justice. Right became a product of power; it was hard to find righteousness in the land.

B. Their families

1. Before answering God's call as a prophet to the northern kingdom of Israel, Amos was a rancher of sheep, goats, and probably cows and owner of groves of sycamore trees, a tree that produced cattle fodder. He lived in the little village of Tekoa, about six miles south of Bethlehem, in the southern kingdom of Judah. He appears to be well educated and well read. The style of his writing reveals a man of wisdom, learning, and literary skill. One area in which he had no formal training however was in that of a prophet. One day, to his total surprise, God called him to leave his business behind, leave Judah, go to Israel, and proclaim the message God put upon his heart.
2. Hosea was a native of Israel. He saw the injustice and spiritual unfaithfulness of his nation first hand. About all we know of his origin was that his father's name was Beeri. His name in Hebrew is equivalent to "Joshua" or "Jesus!" While we know little of the family from which Hosea came, his own immediate family, his wife and three children, form the most significant background for his entire ministry. Out of Hosea's experience with them, God speaks about His relationship with Israel.

III. AMOS & HOSEA'S SIGNIFICANCE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

A. Amos

1. Amos is the first of the writing prophets, prophets who recorded the message God gave them as well as speaking it.
2. His book is not a biography or a story; it is a series of messages from God through the prophet to Israel and ultimately to the world.
3. An outline of the prophecy of Amos

a. God's Judgment of the nations (1-2)

Eight times Amos says "For three transgressions of the people of _____, and for four, I will not turn away its punishment."

The first six times he fills in the blank with the names of the surrounding nations, the enemies of Israel. Undoubtedly the people would respond, "Amen, they deserve it!"

The seventh time he says the same for Judah, their southern kinsman rival. "Amen" again!

The final time he gets to the heart of the message: "For three transgressions of the people of Israel, and for four, I will not turn away its punishment." (2:6)

1. **Because of bribery**
2. **Mistreatment of poor**
3. **Perversion**
4. **Spiritual adultery**
5. **Forgetting God**
6. **Ignoring spiritual leaders**

b. The sermon on the Source of Amos' message of judgment (3)

c. The message to the "cows of Bashan," rich women who encouraged the wickedness of their husbands (4)

d. A Lament for Israel (5) The theme of Amos' message from the Lord can be found in Amos 5:21-24.

Amos 5:21-24 ²¹ "I hate, I despise your feast days, And I do not savor your sacred assemblies. ²² Though you offer Me burnt offerings and your grain offerings, I will not accept *them*, Nor will I regard your fattened peace offerings. ²³ Take away from Me the noise of your songs, For I will not hear the melody of

your stringed instruments. ²⁴ But let justice run down like water, And righteousness like a mighty stream.

e. A Sermon to respected leaders (6)

f. The encounter with the king (7)

Jereboam tells Amos to quit preaching this message that disturbs the people. Amos declares that he must preach the Word of the Lord.

g. The visions of judgment (7-9)

1. Locusts – “It shall not be.” (7:1-3)
2. Fire – “It shall not be.” (7:4-6)
3. Plumb line set in midst of Israel (7:7-9)
4. Summer Fruit – the end has come (8:1-14)
5. Altar – None will escape (9:1-10)
6. A final word of hope (9:11-15)
7. Tabernacle – Israel will be restored.

Amos 9:11–15 ¹¹ “On that day I will raise up The tabernacle of David, which has fallen down, And repair its damages; I will raise up its ruins, And rebuild it as in the days of old; ¹² That they may possess the remnant of Edom, And all the Gentiles who are called by My name,” Says the LORD who does this thing. ¹³ “Behold, the days are coming,” says the LORD, “When the plowman shall overtake the reaper, And the treader of grapes him who sows seed; The mountains shall drip with sweet wine, And all the hills shall flow *with it*. ¹⁴ I will bring back the captives of My people Israel; They shall build the waste cities and inhabit *them*; They shall plant vineyards and drink wine from them; They shall also make gardens and eat fruit from them. ¹⁵ I will plant them in their land, And no longer shall they be pulled up From the land I have given them,” Says the LORD your God.

B. Hosea

1. God told Hosea to take a wife. Eventually she would prove unfaithful to Hosea and would mirror the unfaithfulness of Israel to God.
2. Hosea obeyed. His wife’s name was Gomer. She was not immediately unfaithful. Of her first child the Scripture says, “bore him a son,” indicating that the child was Hosea’s. He named him, at God’s instruction, Jezreel which means “Yhwh sows.” Gomer’s next child was a daughter. She was not Hosea’s. God said to name her “No Mercy.” Another child of adultery was born. God commanded his name to be “Not My People.” Gomer had become a harlot, and the children’s names were a constant reminder of that fact.

- 3. Out of the tragedy of Hosea's home life, God sent a message to the prophet who was to carry it to Israel.**
 - a. Israel was a spiritual harlot. She had broken her vows to the Lord and gone after other gods like Baal.
 - b. She had produced sons and daughters of harlotry upon whom God said "I will have no mercy" and of whom God said, "they are not my people."
 - c. God would bring judgment upon those who rejected him. The nation would be carried into captivity.
 - d. Ultimately, God would redeem harlotrous Israel and bring her back to Himself. Then He would say to those without mercy, "You have mercy," and to those who were not His people, "You are My people."
4. Got told Hosea to go and buy back his harlot of a wife and restore her to her place in the home. This Hosea did as a picture of the redeeming love of God that buys the sinner back from her/his iniquity against the Lord. This is another of the Old Testament's marvelous advance pictures of our Lord redeeming us at the price of His own blood.

IV.COMMENTARY ON AMOS & HOSEA IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Paul applies the above to God's redemption of the Gentiles in **Rom. 9:25-26**, "As He says also in Hosea: "I will call them My people, who were not My people, And her beloved, who was not beloved. And it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them, 'You are not My people,' There they shall be called sons of the living God."