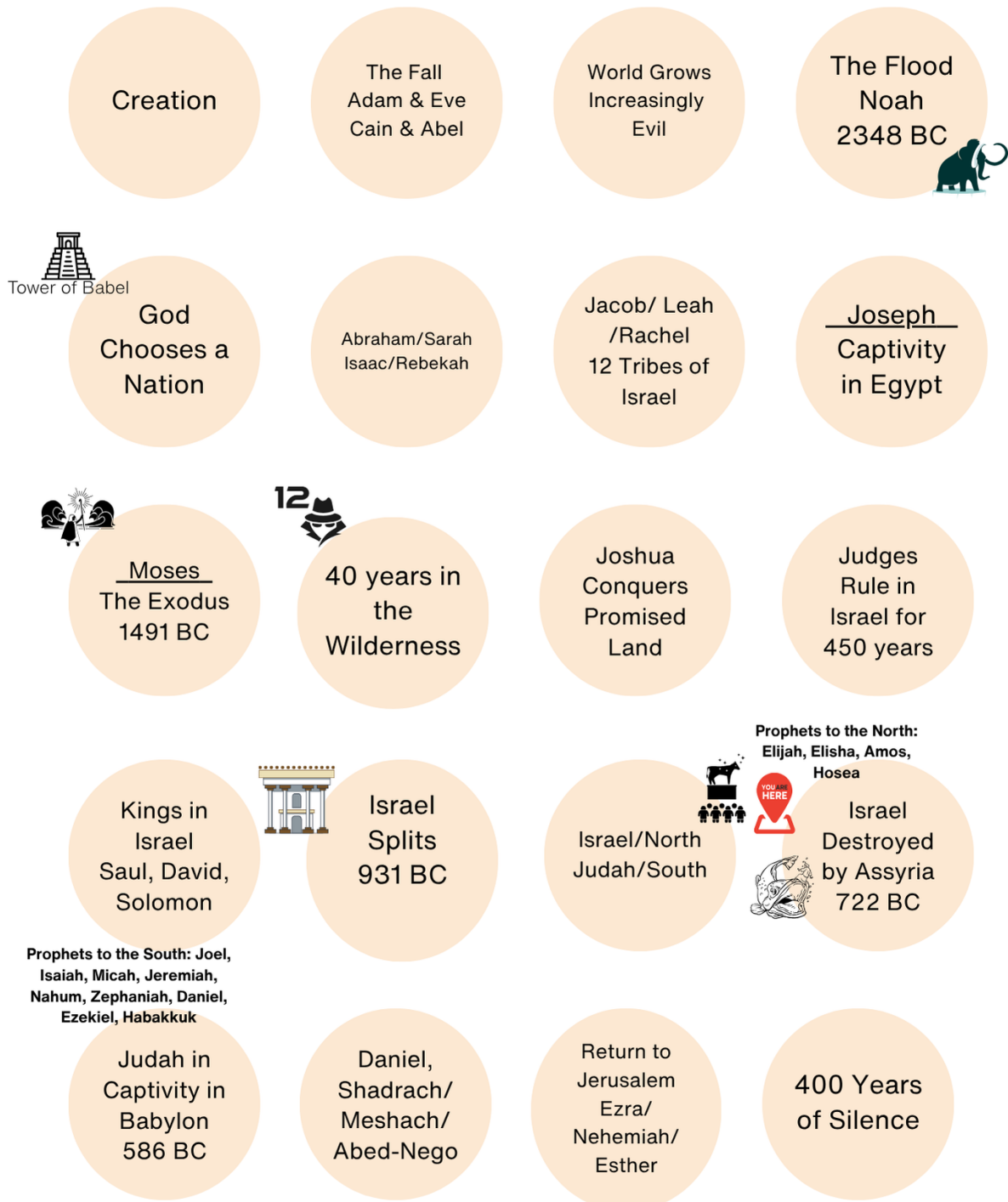


Old Testament Timeline



Forget Me Not

Hosea 1 – Hosea 2:13

Hosea served as a prophet of God from 760 to 720 B.C. His ministry was in the northern kingdom of Israel and spanned the reigns of seven kings. During the reign of King Jeroboam II, the northern kingdom of Israel enjoyed several notable military victories. As a result, they experienced both political rest and financial prosperity. Over the next thirty years, the six final kings of Israel reigned, and prosperity gave way to more moral decay. Worship of pagan gods ran rampant, and the blessings of Yahweh were attributed to the false god, Baal. No longer looking to the One True God, Israel sought alliances with foreign countries.

Israel had broken their covenant with God.

1. Read Deuteronomy 11:13-32 and describe the covenant and the responsibilities of each side in this covenant.

Israel - _____

God - _____

2. In addition to Jeroboam II, Kings Zechariah, Shallum, Menahem, Pekahiah, Pekah, and Hoshea reigned in Israel during Hosea's ministry. Read the passages below and record what you learn about each of the kings and their reigns.

King Jeroboam II (2 Kings 14:23-29) - _____

King Zechariah (2 Kings 15:8-12) - _____

King Shallum (2 Kings 15:13-16) - _____

King Menahem (2 Kings 15:17-22) - _____

King Pekahiah (2 Kings 15:23-26) - _____

King Pekah (2 Kings 15:27-31) - _____

King Hoshea (2 Kings 17:1-6) - _____

God used prophets to remind His people of the covenant they had made with Him and to call them to repentance during times of idolatry. On several occasions, God asked rather strange things of these prophets. These requests served as living metaphors for His people. Hosea was one of those prophets.

3. **THINK:** Consider the times of Hosea's ministry. Political assassinations, idolatry, and immorality had become the usual way of life. What do you think it would have been like to be a prophet of God in times like these?

Remarkably, God was about to make things even more difficult for Hosea.

Read Hosea 1:1-9.

4. What was the first instruction given by the Lord to Hosea? (v. 2b)

| |
|---|
| Harlotry (v. 2b) - adultery, fornication, prostitution |
|---|

5. What reason is given for this strange request? (v. 2c)

Harlotry/Departing (v. 2c) - to be a harlot, act as a harlot, play the harlot, to be unfaithful to God

6. **THINK:** If God saw Israel's departure from Him as an act of harlotry (acts that pained Him deeply), why do you think He asked His servant to take a wife of harlotry?

There is debate among many about God's request to Hosea. Some wonder how God could ask a godly man to marry such a woman. So then, did Hosea marry a woman who was already a prostitute, or did he marry a woman who then became one?

In the book of Hosea, God depicts His relationship with Israel as Husband and wife, and their acts of idolatry as acts of adultery against Him. He used Hosea's marriage to an unfaithful wife as a real-life parable for the spiritual adultery between God and His people: Hosea, the faithful husband, and Gomer, the adulterous wife.

7. Read Joshua 24:2,14. Describe the state of Abraham's ancestors when God called him, what God required of Abraham, and the nation that was brought forth from him.

We need not wonder if Gomer was a prostitute before marrying Hosea. This becomes easy to accept when we consider the circumstances under which God chose to enter into a relationship with us.

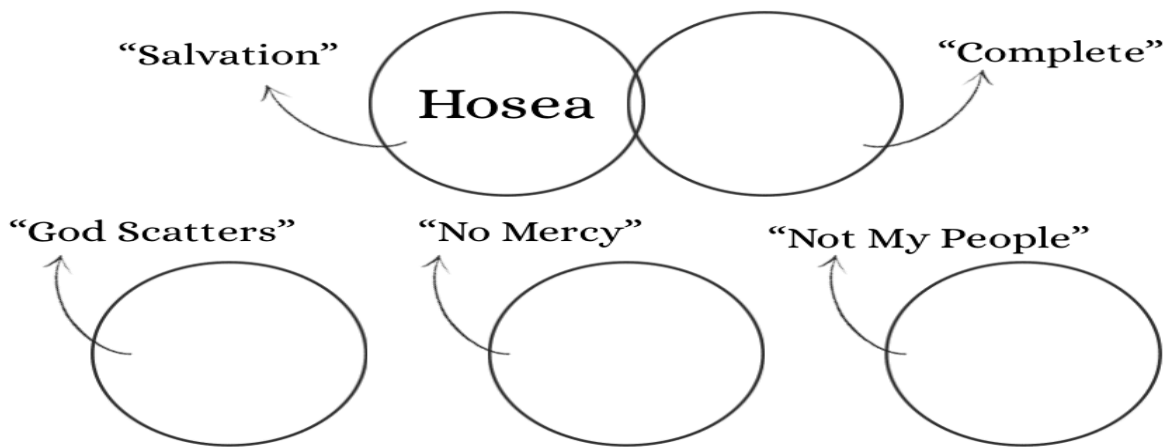
"But God demonstrated His own love towards us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

- Romans 5:8

8. Describe the hurt someone might experience if their spouse were to be unfaithful to them, not just once but over and over again.

9. **THINK:** Verse 3 tells us that Hosea obeyed the Lord and took Gomer for his wife. What can you learn from Hosea's obedience and what he must have believed about the God he served?

10. Using verses 3-9, complete Hosea's family tree.



11. Record the reason God gave for each of the names He chose.

First Born (vs. 4-5): _____

Second Born (v. 6): _____

Third Born (v. 9): _____

As with Hosea's marriage to Gomer, God would also use the names of his children to represent spiritual lessons and future warnings for the people of Israel.

Jezreel – God sows, God scatters, God avenges; Jezreel was also a city in the northern kingdom of Israel, best known for the violent judgment King Jehu carried out against King Ahab's (wife = Jezebel) evil descendants

12. Read 2 Kings 9:4-7. What instructions were given to Jehu when he was anointed king of Israel, and what would the Lord do through his obedience?

While Jehu carried out God's judgment on Ahab's evil descendants, he lost sight of what he was doing and why he was doing it. In his zeal, he went too far and ended up killing more people than God had intended, including the King of Judah (the Southern Kingdom), Ahaziah, and his forty-two brothers. (2 Kings 9-10)

In addition, 2 Kings 10:29 tells us that Jehu did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam (idolatry) and made Israel sin. Because of his obedience in carrying out judgment against Ahab's family, God promised that Jehu's sons would sit on the throne of Israel for four generations (Jehoahaz, Jehoash, Jeroboam II, Zechariah). But then God would avenge the innocent bloodshed that took place in Jezreel at the hands of Jehu and his descendants by putting an end to Jehu's dynasty (732 BC) and scattering or putting an end to the nation of Israel (724BC).

Lo-ruhamah – no mercy, unpitied or unloved

Hosea's second child's name warned the nation of Israel that they would no longer experience the mercy of God because they did not know or recognize Him as their Father, even though He had proven His love towards them over and over again. There is no heart too far gone that the grace of God cannot reach it, but a heart can reject the grace of God so long that there is no heart left for God to lay hold of.

13. Read Deuteronomy 7:6-11 and record everything you learn about God and His character.

14. Compare and contrast God's mercy on Israel and Judah. (Hosea 1:6-7)

| Israel | Judah |
|--------|-------|
| | |

God would use the Assyrian Army to carry out His judgment on the northern kingdom of Israel.

15. Read the following passages and describe what took place in Israel and Judah when faced with the Assyrian Army.

2 Kings 17:5-18: _____

Summarize why God allowed this to happen. _____

2 Kings 19:35-36: _____

Read 2 Kings 19:15-20, 34, and summarize why God showed mercy to Judah.

16. Record the message God sent to Israel with the naming of Hosea's third child. (v. 8)

Lo-ammi – not my people

What? Was God going back on His promise? Was He done with Israel? Had He turned His back on the Jews?

Read Hosea 1:10-2:1

17. Yes, judgment was coming. Assyria would have victory over the Northern Kingdom of Israel, yet...

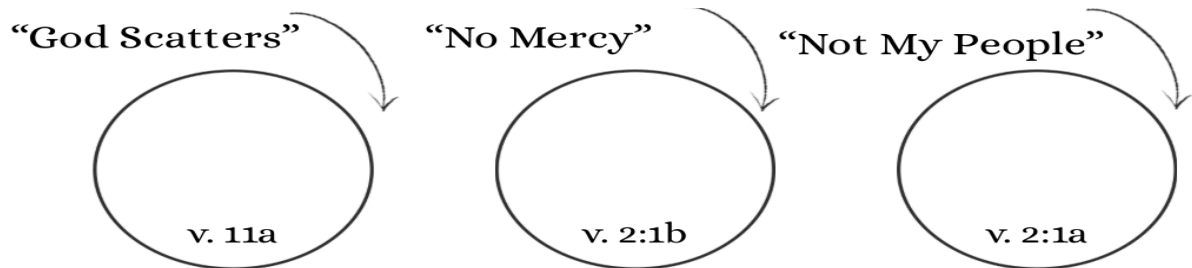
v. 10a, b _____

And what will be said to them in the very same place where they were told they were not His people? (v. 10f)

The children of Judah and the children of Israel shall be:

v. 11 _____

18. The names of Hosea's children served as a warning of the judgment that was to come, while teaching us a great lesson about God's grace. While everything that their names predicted came to pass, a day is still coming when the Jews will recognize Jesus as their Messiah (Zechariah 12:10-13:1), and God will rewrite the names. Record how each of these names will change. (Hosea 1:11-2:1)



19. Take a moment to reflect on the grace and mercy God has shown you. Ask Him to show you any areas in your life where you are being unfaithful to Him, then record the steps you will take to show Him your commitment to Him in those areas.

Read Hosea 2:2-13.

These verses outline the details of Israel's harlotry and the reasons why she is no longer God's wife.

20. How could this relationship be mended? (v. 2)

21. To whom had she (Israel) credited her supply of bread, water, wood, linen, oil, and drink? (v. 5)

22. What would God do in response and why? (vv. 6, 7d, e)

23. **THINK:** God has always been the One to care for Israel (v. 8), but they failed to recognize Him as their source and show gratitude to Him. How can failing to acknowledge God and being thankful to God for His provision lead to rebellion and idolatry?

God cares and provides for us every day, but so often, like the nation of Israel, we forget to credit God for all He is doing for us. We gripe and complain, saying we don't have enough or that things cost too much. We want what others have, and sometimes we'll do whatever it takes to get it. How loving is the thorny hedge that walls us in and keeps us from sinning all the more, and causes us to return to Him! (v. 7)

God is a holy God. We can be grateful that He does not give us what we deserve but instead chooses to discipline us.

24. **THINK:** Read the discipline that was shown to Israel in verses 9-13. How do you think this kind of discipline would look today?

25. What beautiful promise is found in the middle of this discipline? (v. 10)

God is so good to us, even in times of discipline. He never lets go of us.

26. Read the following verses and record how you can guard yourself from forgetting God.

1 John 2:15 _____

James 1:27c _____

James 4:4 _____

Romans 12:2 _____

A Closer Look at the Chastening of the Lord

Hosea 1-2

In our lesson this week, we read about God's discipline of His unfaithful people. The punishment was a direct consequence of their disobedience. They were charged with *committing great harlotry by turning away from the Lord and forgetting Him*.

Discipline should not be something to fear. God doesn't discipline His people because He despises them, but rather because of His great love for them, His children.

As believers, when we stray or forget, our loving Father will draw us back to Him through discipline.

27. Read Proverbs 3:1-12 and answer the following questions. What is the exhortation given in verse 1?

Law – instruction, direction

Commandments – a code of wisdom

28. What are the blessings for following God's commands found in verses 2-4?

29. What are the commands given in verses 5-6?

30. What is the promise given in verse 6?

31. What is commanded in verses 7-10?

32. What are the promises given in verses 8 and 10?

33. What do verses 11-12 teach you about the Lord's correction? What do they teach you about God? What do they teach you about yourself? Be specific.

Do not dismiss the Lord's correction. He loves you. You are His child, and He wants you to grow and mature!

34. Read the following verses. What do they teach you about His commandments and the promises for keeping them?

John 14:23

Romans 8:38-39

Hebrews 12:5-11

35. Read and write out John 14:15.

36. Reflect on all the commandments you've read in this section. How are you doing with following them? Are you experiencing God's promises, or are you facing correction?

37. As God's daughter, remember to find comfort in correction. Finish your time by writing a prayer to Him, thanking Him for loving you enough to correct you.
