

Uzziah [Judah] Becomes Famous and Powerful (c. 757 BC)

2 Chronicles 26:6–15

Uzziah's Military Campaigns

6 Now he went out and warred against the Philistines, and broke down the wall of Gath and the wall of Jabneh and the wall of Ashdod; and he built cities in *the area of* Ashdod and among the Philistines.
7 God helped him against the Philistines, and against the Arabians who lived in Gur-baal, and the Meunites.
8 The Ammonites also gave tribute to Uzziah, and his fame extended to the border of Egypt, for he became very strong.

Uzziah's Infrastructure and Agricultural Improvements

9 Moreover, Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem at the Corner Gate and at the Valley Gate and at the corner buttress and fortified them.
10 He built towers in the wilderness and hewed many cisterns, for he had much livestock, both in the lowland and in the plain. *He also had* plowmen and vinedressers in the hill country and the fertile fields, for he loved the soil.

Uzziah's Army

11 Moreover, Uzziah had an army ready for battle, which entered combat by divisions according to the number of their muster, prepared by Jeiel the scribe and Maaseiah the official, under the direction of Hananiah, one of the king's officers.
12 The total number of the heads of the households, of valiant warriors, was 2,600.
13 Under their direction was an elite army of 307,500, who could wage war with great power, to help the king against the enemy.
14 Moreover, Uzziah prepared for all the army shields, spears, helmets, body armor, bows and sling stones.
15 In Jerusalem he made engines *of war* invented by skillful men to be on the towers and on the corners for the purpose of shooting arrows and great stones. Hence his fame spread afar, for he was marvelously helped until he *was* strong.

Hosea's Prophecy to Israel—A Picture of Israel's Unfaithfulness (c. 755 BC)

Hosea 1–3

1:1 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.

The Command to Marry Gomer

2 When the LORD first spoke through Hosea, the LORD said to Hosea, "Go, take to yourself a wife of harlotry and *have* children of harlotry; for the land commits flagrant harlotry, forsaking the LORD."
3a So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim,

The Naming of Hosea's Children

3b and she conceived and bore him a son.
4 And the LORD said to him, "Name him Jezreel; for yet a little while, and 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.
5 "On that day I will break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel."
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 have compassion on the house of Israel, that I would ever forgive them.
7 "But I will have compassion on the house of Judah and deliver them by the LORD their God, and will not deliver them by bow, sword, battle, horses or horsemen."
8 When she had weaned Lo-ruhamah, she conceived and gave birth to a son.
9 And the LORD said, "Name him Lo-ammi, for you are not My people and I am not your God."

Future Restoration and Reversal

- 10 Yet the number of the sons of Israel
Will be like the sand of the sea,
Which cannot be measured or numbered;
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.” [\[Rom 9:26\]](#)
- 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 great will be the day of Jezreel.

Transition

2:1 Say to your brothers, “Ammi,” and to your sisters, “Ruhamah.”

Idolatrous Israel Will Be Punished Like a Prostitute

- 2 “Contend with your mother, contend,
For she is not my wife, and I am not her husband;
And let her put away her harlotry from her face
And her adultery from between her breasts,
- 3 Or I will strip her naked
And expose her as on the day when she was born.
I will also make her like a wilderness,
Make her like desert land
And slay her with thirst.
- 4 “Also, I will have no compassion on her children,
Because they are children of harlotry.
- 5 “For their mother has played the harlot;
She who conceived them has acted shamefully.
For she said, ‘I will go after my lovers,
Who give *me* my bread and my water,
My wool and my flax, my oil and my drink.’

The Lord’s Discipline Will Bring Israel to Repentance

- 6 “Therefore, behold, I will hedge up her way with thorns,
And I will build a wall against her so that she cannot find her paths.
- 7 “She will pursue her lovers, but she will not overtake them;
And she will seek them, but will not find *them*.
Then she will say, ‘I will go back to my first husband,
For it was better for me then than now!’

Agricultural Fertility Withdrawn from Israel

- 8 “For she does not know that it was I who gave her the grain, the new wine and the oil,
And lavished on her silver and gold,
Which they used for Baal.
- 9 “Therefore, I will take back My grain at harvest time
And My new wine in its season.

I will also take away My wool and My flax
Given to cover her nakedness.

- 10 “And then I will uncover her lewdness
In the sight of her lovers,
And no one will rescue her out of My hand.
- 11 “I will also put an end to all her gaiety,
Her feasts, her new moons, her sabbaths
And all her festal assemblies.
- 12 “I will destroy her vines and fig trees,
Of which she said, ‘These are my wages
Which my lovers have given me.’
And I will make them a forest,
And the beasts of the field will devour them.
- 13 “I will punish her for the days of the Baals
When she used to offer sacrifices to them
And adorn herself with her earrings and jewelry,
And follow her lovers, so that she forgot Me,” declares the LORD.

Future Repentance and Restoration of Israel

- 14 “Therefore, behold, I will allure her,
Bring her into the wilderness
And speak kindly to her.
- 15 “Then I will give her her vineyards from there,
And the valley of Achor as a door of hope.
And she will sing there as in the days of her youth,
As in the day when she came up from the land of Egypt.
- 16 “It will come about in that day,” declares the LORD,
“That you will call Me Ishi
And will no longer call Me Baali.
- 17 “For I will remove the names of the Baals from her mouth,
So that they will be mentioned by their names no more.
- 18 “In that day I will also make a covenant for them
With the beasts of the field,
The birds of the sky
And the creeping things of the ground.
And I will abolish the bow, the sword and war from the land,
And will make them lie down in safety.
- 19 “I will betroth you to Me forever;
Yes, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and in justice,
In lovingkindness and in compassion,
- 20 And I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness.
Then you will know the LORD.

Agricultural Fertility Restored to the Repentant Nation

- 21 “It will come about in that day that I will respond,” declares the LORD.
“I will respond to the heavens, and they will respond to the earth,
- 22 And the earth will respond to the grain, to the new wine and to the oil,
And they will respond to Jezreel.
- 23 “I will sow her for Myself in the land.

I will also have compassion on her who had not obtained compassion,
 And I will say to those who were not My people,
 ‘You are My people!’
 And they will say, ‘You are my God!’” [[Rom 9:25; 1 Pet 2:10](#)]

An Illustration of God’s Love for Idolatrous Israel

3:1 Then the LORD said to me, “Go again, love a woman *who* is loved by *her* husband, yet an adulteress, even as the LORD loves the sons of Israel, though they turn to other gods and love raisin cakes.”
 2 So I bought her for myself for fifteen *shekels* of silver and a homer and a half of barley.
 3 Then I said to her, “You shall stay with me for many days. You shall not play the harlot, nor shall you have a man; so I will also be toward you.”
 4 For the sons of Israel will remain for many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or *sacred* pillar and without ephod or household idols.
 5 Afterward the sons of Israel will return and seek the LORD their God and David their king; and they will come trembling to the LORD and to His goodness in the last days.

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Chronological Notes

1) Hosea.

- A) The title of the book of Hosea states that Hosea’s ministry took place “when Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah ruled Judah, and during the time when Jeroboam son of Joash ruled Israel” (Hos 1:1). These kings’ reigns are as follows:

(1) Judah.

- (a) Uzziah (791t–740t; sole reign 767t).
- (b) Jotham (751t–736t; sole reign 740t).
- (c) Ahaz (732t–716t).
- (d) Hezekiah (716t–687t).

(2) Israel.

- (a) Jeroboam II (793n–753n; sole reign 781n).

- B) When we examine the book itself for more precise indications of date, we find that Hosea warns that “in a little while I [God] will punish the dynasty of Jehu on account of the bloodshed in the valley of Jezreel, and I will put an end to the kingdom of Israel” (Hos 1:4). Jeroboam II was the great-grandson of Jehu, and his son Zechariah, who succeeded him, reigned only six months (753n) and was the last of the line of Jehu. Thus we can date the beginning of Hosea’s recorded prophecies to a short time before the death of Jeroboam II: Elul [September] of 753 BC. For this reason, I have placed Hosea 1–3 at c. 755 BC in today’s reading.
- C) We can place a lower bound on the date of Hosea’s recorded prophecies of 723n BC—the year of the fall of Samaria. This disaster is threatened in Hosea (cf. 10:14; 11:6; 13:16) but has not yet taken place. We may further refine this date by noting the verses that describe Israel seeking the aid of Assyria (cf.

5:13; 7:11; 8:9; 14:3). This took place during the reign of Menahem (752n–742n; 2 Kgs 15:19–20) and the struggle for power in Israel during these years provides a good background for the bulk of Hosea's prophecies. For this reason, I have placed Hosea 4–14 at c. 743 BC in the readings.¹

¹ "The complacency of the early days (2:5, 8, 13) gives way to a desperation in foreign (7:8–12; 12:1) and domestic (7:3–7; 13:10–11) affairs, evidenced in the latter chapters" (Douglas Stuart, "Hosea Jonah," *WBC*, 10.)