

Session 2: The Message of Hosea

E. The Influence of Hosea

What happened to Hosea after the eventual siege and destruction of Samaria is not known. However, we do know that his words were brought south to Judah, where they were remembered and eventually collected to form the book of Hosea as we have it today. One man who was profoundly influenced by Hosea was the prophet Jeremiah. He received his call to be a prophet in 620 B.C., some 100 years after Hosea's death (see the time-line: make this a link to timeline). At that time the kingdom of Judah and Jerusalem its capital was facing another external threat, this time the empire of Babylon (See the Timechart for more detail).

Activity 2.5

Read Jeremiah 36

E1. The Scroll of Jeremiah

The fourth year of Jehoiakim was 605 B.C. It was the year of the battle of Carchemish at which Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon decisively defeated Necho of Egypt (see map 3 – make this a link to map 3). Following the battle, Judah was now in the Babylonian sphere of influence. The threat of conquest by Babylon, of which Jeremiah had been warning for the past 15 years, was now a reality.

Is it possible to locate the contents of the scroll that Jeremiah dictated to Baruch, Baruch read in the Temple and the officials read to the king? Does it still survive as part of the book of Jeremiah?

- It was short enough to be read right through three times in the same day
- It contained a summary of Jeremiah's early preaching.
- It would probably consist of short oracles, each one giving the core of Jeremiah's message on each occasion.
- The nobles and officials were very alarmed when they heard it.
- Jehoiakim clearly understood it to be a threat of defeat by Babylon (verse 29)
- After the scroll was destroyed it was written again word for word and more oracles were added to it.

Chapters 2 to 6 have the following characteristics:

- They are short enough to be read several times in a day.
- They are made up largely of short terse prophetic oracles
- They contain a broad sweep of related themes

- They threaten judgement and gradually become more specific about where the judgement is to come from
- They end with the portrayal of an enemy from the north..
- They have other words now added to them
- So it is possible that chapters 2 to 5 contain in essence the scroll read to Jehoiakim in 605 B.C., a summary of Jeremiah's messages in the first 15 years of his activity as a prophet.

E2. Jeremiah and Hosea

Activity 2.6

Read Jeremiah chapters 2 to 6 and make notes on the similarities and differences between Jeremiah's message and that of Hosea.

For example: in Jeremiah 2:2-3 Israel is addressed as a bride and the wilderness remembered as a honeymoon period.

You may find it helpful to concentrate on the following passages:

2:1-13

3:6-14

3:19-4:4

5:20-31

6:16-30

Further Reading

For more information on the covenant see:

Bernhard Anderson: *The Living World of the Old Testament*, chapter 3

or:

John Drane: *Introducing the Old Testament*, chapter 2

For more on Jeremiah, see:

Bernhard Anderson: *The Living World of the Old Testament*, chapter 12

or:

John Drane: *Introducing the Old Testament*, chapter 6

Preparation

The key Bible passages for session 3 are:

1 Samuel 9 and 10

1 Kings 17 and 18, and 22

2 Kings 2 and 9

Amos 7:10-17

Jeremiah 26 to 29