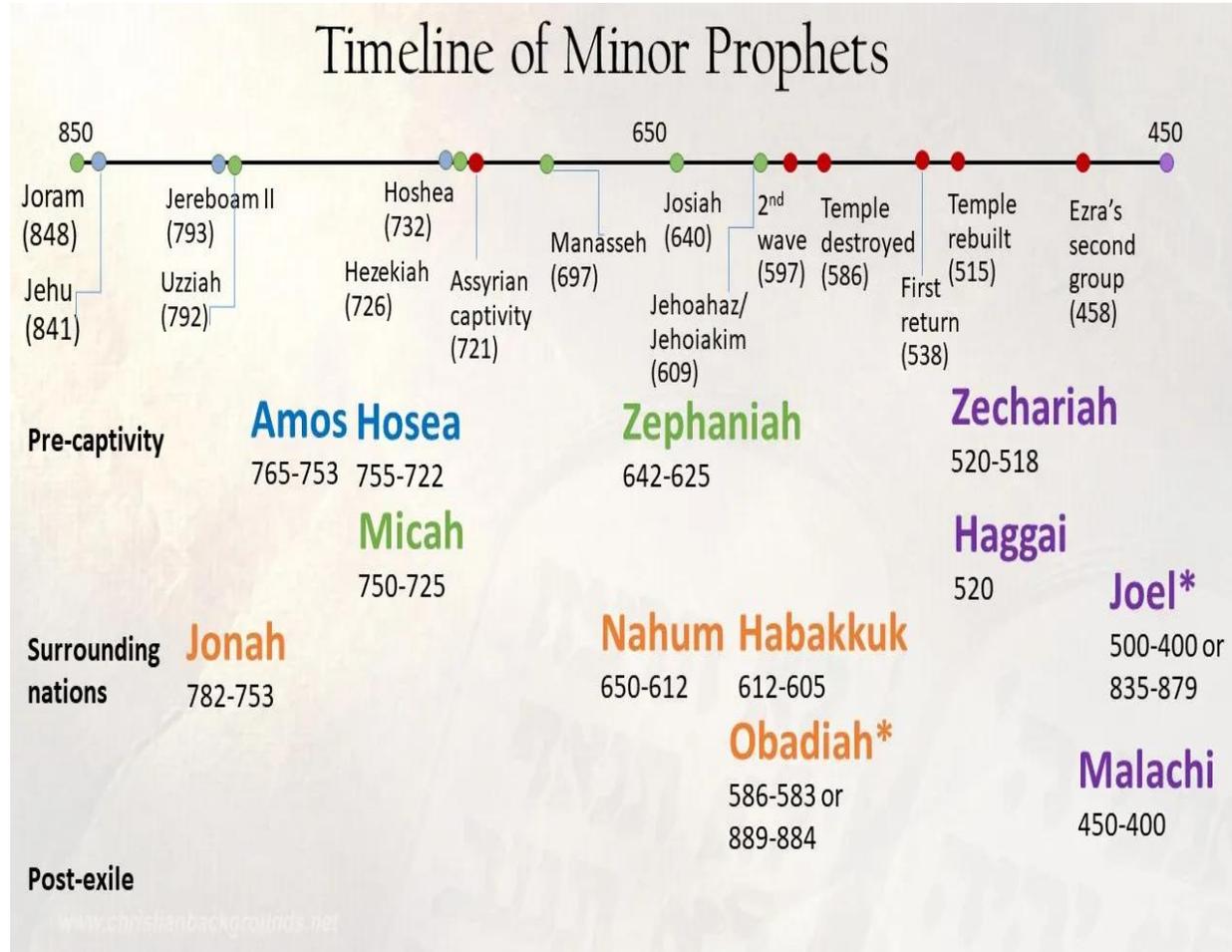


# Hosea

Survey of the Minor Prophets

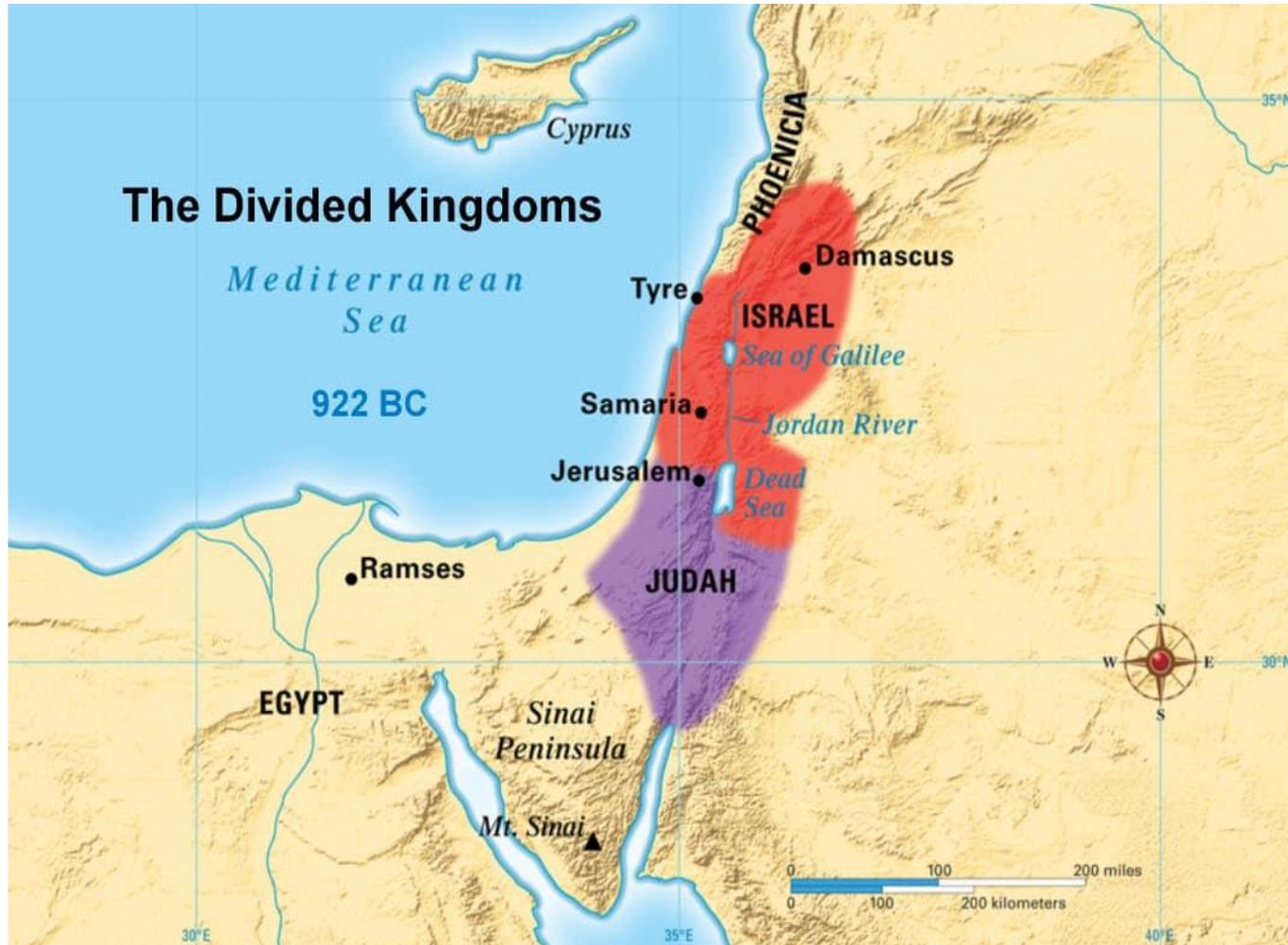
# When and Where?



Hosea is the first prophet of the Old Testament Minor Prophets (in canonical order). He was the son of an unknown prophet named Beerli and lived in the 8th century BC, prophesying in the northern kingdom of Israel some 30 years.

His name means "God saves" and symbolizes His relationship with Israel.

# When and Where?



Hosea was a contemporary of Isaiah, Amos and Micah. He lived during the final days of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, just before they were carried off into captivity by Assyria and never returned. At that time, Judah was also exiled into Babylon, but unlike the people of Israel, the people of Judah did return to their homeland (and eventually rebuild the Temple, post exile.)

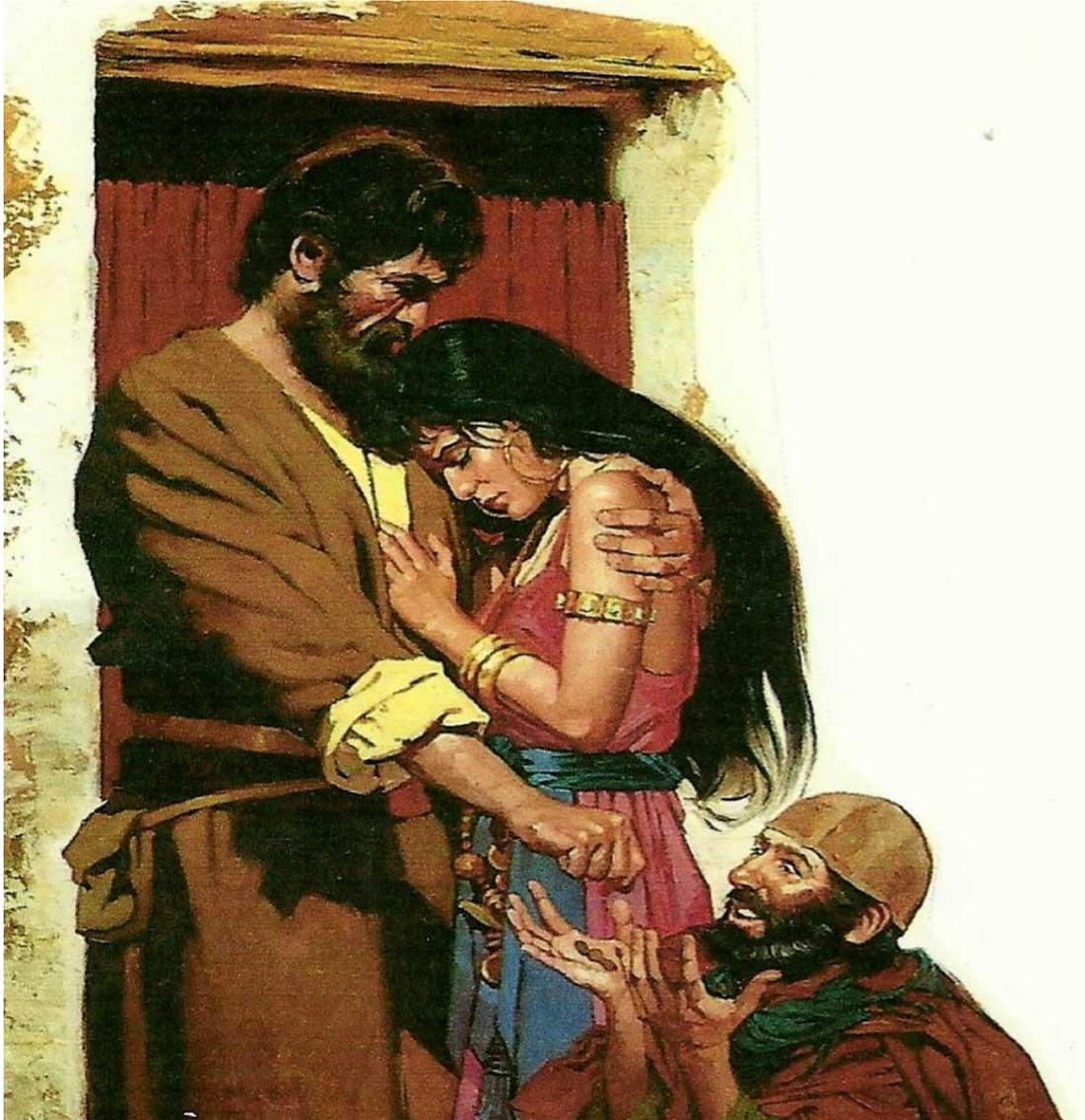
# Context:



At this time, Israel was filled with idolatry, had abandoned God and His commands, and was spiritually and morally bankrupt. They worshiped at pagan shrines and adopted pagan deities, practicing ritually prostitution and human sacrifice. This led Hosea and other prophets to use prostitution as a “word picture” of the people’s unfaithfulness to the Lord.

Hosea vigorously preached against the idolatry of Israel and bravely rebuked the people, as well as its kings and priests, in an attempt to remind them all of the Lord’s faithfulness and thus recall them back to God in repentance. They did not heed his call.

# Hosea and Gomer:



Hosea was called by God to live, marry and have children with names and activities that symbolized his prophetic message from God. The wife he chose (God chose for him) was Gomer, a prostitute, and his children were given names that showed God's faithfulness to unfaithful people.

# Content:

With 14 chapters, the book of Hosea is one of the longer of the Minor Prophets. Much of the book takes place during the reign of Jeroboam II of Israel in the north at the same time as Isaiah and Amos were prophesying to Judah in the south.

Despite Jeroboam's success as a king, he persisted in the old idolatry of his ancestor kings of Israel. With their economic prosperity, Hebrew kings led the people in unrighteous living that was an abomination to God.

The book is a severe warning against idolatry and a dramatic call to repentance. Christians draw upon the analogy of Hosea's taking his adulterous wife back into his home as signifying Christ's redemption of all people on the cross. Despite the severity of judgment in Hosea, God's love for His people comes through again and again, as Hosea 1:7 states, *"I will have mercy on the house of Judah and will save them by the Lord their God."*



# Study:

- Read Chapter 1:1-9. Note this 'pastors' family. Describe them and discuss the significance of their names.
- Read Chapter 3. What does Hosea do?
- Read Chapter 4:6-7. What is God doing here?
- Read Chapter 6: 1-7. How are Israel and Judah responding here? Are they taking repentance seriously?
- Read Chapter 9. What is God's response to the people? What is difficult for you to read in this chapter?
- Read Chapter 11: 1. How does God show He still loves His people? Where have you heard this passage in the New Testament?
- Read Chapter 13:1-4. What is God revealing about Himself?
- Read Chapter 14. What is the last word of God to the people of Israel?

# Conclusion:

"For I desired mercy,  
and not sacrifice;  
and the knowledge  
of God more than  
burnt offerings"  
(Hosea6:9)

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