

Unrepentant Israel

Hosea 6

Last time we learned how God was going to punish Israel for their sins. He intends to let them suffer at the hands of their enemies and completely withdraw from them. Today we start with Hosea making a desperate plea to Israel to return to their God.

“Come, let us return to the LORD. He has torn us to pieces but he will heal us; he has injured us but he will bind up our wounds. ² After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will restore us, that we may live in his presence.

Hosea starts out here by pleading with the Israelites to return to God. He is telling them that it is time to repent and to seek the Lord and to humble themselves before him, in hopes of finding mercy with him.

It says here “Come, let us return to the Lord”. Hosea is saying let’s not go to the Assyrians, nor the king; we have had enough of that, and they were of no help to us. But let us *return to the Lord*, return to the worship of him and turn away from the idols, and find our hope and restoration in Him.

God has torn us apart and has injured us. Remember last time that God said they will know that it was I that did these things to them. It is because of our lack of acknowledgement of Him that these things have come to pass. It is going to get worse if we do not return to Him. Isaiah 9:12-13 says, “¹² *Arameans from the east and Philistines from the west have devoured Israel with open mouth. Yet for all this, his anger is not turned away, his hand is still upraised. ¹³ But the people have not returned to him who struck them, nor have they sought the LORD Almighty.*”

So, they are deep in their affliction just as God had said. But there is hope, He will restore us, heal us, revive us, and restore us. This is an acknowledgement of the power of God. Remember that God had said that in their affliction that they would seek His face. This is exactly what Hosea is saying here. If we seek His face, He will restore us.

Now notice something very interesting here. It is going to take 3 days for this restoration to take place. What other restoration in the Bible took 3 days to complete? The resurrection of Jesus of course. Do you see the significance of this?

The Israelites are completely dead in their sins and it is going to take 3 days for them to come to life and be restored. They are buried and out of the sight of God but in 3 days He will raise them up so they can live in His presence. Hosea told them that if they say this little prayer with full confidence in Gods love and power that they would be restored.

³Let us acknowledge the LORD; let us press on to acknowledge him. As surely as the sun rises, he will appear; he will come to us like the winter rains, like the spring rains that water the earth."

Israel's biggest problem was described back in Hosea 4:6 where it said, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge". Hosea tells them that they need to get back to the knowledge and acknowledgement of Christ.

As surely as the sun rises is talking about going from the dark to the light, from sin to salvation. Hosea is saying that God will return to us at the appointed time. It says that He will come as the winter and spring rains, or the former and later rains.

Let's put that into a little perspective. The farmers of the time didn't have the types of irrigation system that they do today. Therefore, the farmers knew exactly what to plant and when to plant it because they knew when the rain would come. Thus, their crops would grow.

Psalm 72:6 puts it this way' *"May he be like rain falling on a mown field, like showers watering the earth."*

Joel 2:23 says, *Be glad, people of Zion, rejoice in the LORD your God, for he has given you the autumn rains because he is faithful. He sends you abundant showers, both autumn and spring rains, as before.*

Hosea is telling them that if we get back to what is right then He will pour out showers of blessings upon the us. Like rain from the sky His mercy and grace will rain upon us.

⁴ “What can I do with you, Ephraim? What can I do with you, Judah? Your love is like the morning mist, like the early dew that disappears.

This is kind of a strange expression to find in the Bible. It can give off the impression that God is at a loss and doesn't know what to do. Is that the case here? By no means, God was speaking in a manner they could understand, to show them just how absurd and unreasonable they had become. God had tried various methods to keep Israel on the right track. God gave them chance after chance. However, every time they turned back to Him it was like the morning dew. It dissipated quickly and they turned back to their old ways.

God didn't want to remove Himself from Israel, He had no other choice. Their superficial worship of God is what is leading to their demise. Gods anger is building, and we don't get to the real punishment phase for 2 more chapters. But, He begins to tell them what He is about to do to them through not just Hosea but other prophets as well.

⁵ Therefore I cut you in pieces with my prophets, I killed you with the words of my mouth— then my judgments go forth like the sun.^[a]

God sent many prophets to chastise Israel and give them a severe tongue lashing. They told Israel exactly what God was about to do to them for what they had done. I am sure it was something like, “because of this sin God is going to this”, because of that sin God is going to do that”. Then when God is done sending the prophets to them the judgement will start. It is going to happen as sure as the sun is going to rise.

⁶ For I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings.

In other words, this is all happening because you refused to acknowledge God for who He is. God had done so much for them, and they wouldn't even give Him credit. Instead, they worshiped other gods and made sacrifices to them. Therefore, their burnt offerings meant nothing.

God said in *Jeremiah 7:22-23*, ²² *For when I brought your ancestors out of Egypt and spoke to them, I did not just give them commands about burnt offerings and sacrifices,* ²³ *but I gave them this command: Obey me, and I will be your God and*

you will be my people. Walk in obedience to all I command you, that it may go well with you.

I have to say at this point that in case you don't know it that everything flows from the knowledge of God and is revealed in His Word. We must have a firm belief that He is who He is. God is a rewarder of all those who diligently and honestly seek Him but He is also a punisher of those who don't.

⁷As at Adam,^[b] they have broken the covenant; they were unfaithful to me there.

⁸Gilead is a city of evildoers, stained with footprints of blood. ⁹As marauders lie in ambush for a victim, so do bands of priests; they murder on the road to Shechem, carrying out their wicked schemes. ¹⁰I have seen a horrible thing in Israel: There Ephraim is given to prostitution, Israel is defiled. ¹¹“Also for you, Judah, a harvest is appointed. “Whenever I would restore the fortunes of my people,

How little they honored the covenant they made with God when He led them out of Egypt. Just as Adam did when He ate the fruit. In general, they broke it off with God, and proved themselves unfaithful. There were good things entrusted to them to keep, the jewels of mercy and piety, and the knowledge of God, in the cabinet of sacrifice and burnt offering, but they betrayed that trust, kept the cabinet, but pawned the jewels for the gratification of a base lust. They had broken every condition or law that God had given them.

However, in this case Adam refers to a place, not the person. Adam, was a town in Gilead on the way to Shechem, and had become a place of violent robbers. It is mentioned in Joshua 3:16. This is the place where the priests led a coup against the king and many were killed by their hands.

As you can see here Israel and Judah have broken every commandment there is.

Many of us have kids and we have corrected them at one time or another. Do we do that because we hate them or because we love them? Guys, we are God's children and sometimes we need His loving hand in correcting us.

It is only when we are humble before Him and receive His correction with love that we truly say we are His children, and He is our father.