

HOSEA: LOOKING BEYOND JUDGMENT TO RESTORATION

VIII: Anticipating Israel's Repentance And Restoration

(Hosea 5:15-6:3)

I. Introduction

- A. God's punishment is very painful, but afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness, Hebrews 12:11.
- B. This was the theme of Hosea, the "death-bed prophet of Israel" and the last prophet to the Northern Kingdom of Israel before it fell to Assyria in divine judgment. (ESV Introduction to Hosea)
- C. Hosea 5:15-6:3 presents the longing of God and Hosea for Israel's true repentance following great national distress that will bring the nation back to the Lord. We view this passage for our insight and application:

II. Anticipating Israel's Repentance And Restoration, Hosea 5:15-6:3.

- A. God directed Himself to wait for Israel's true repentance to occur following her future great trials, Hosea 5:15:
 1. By use of the cohortative form of the verb "return" (*shuv*), the volitional mood described in the first person **singular** imperfect (*'ashuvah*), God urged Himself, "Let *Me* return to My place" to wait until Israel had acknowledged her guilt and sought His face of favor in true repentance, Hosea 5:15a.
 2. Such repentance would occur only after the people had gone through great distress when they would earnestly seek Him, Hosea 5:15b. (Kittel, *Bib. Heb.*, p. 900; Allan P. Ross, *A Heb. Handbook*, 1975, p. 54)
 3. This statement anticipates Israel's true repentance that will occur as a result of the nation's great trials in the future Great Tribulation, cf. Zechariah 12:10-13:1; *Ryrie Study Bible, KJV*, 1978, fn. to Hosea 6:3.
- B. The prophet Hosea responded to God's words by calling on the nation Israel truly to repent, Hosea 6:1-3:
 1. Hosea responded to God's use of the cohortative of *shuv* in the first person **singular** in Hosea 5:15a to use the cohortative in the first person **plural** imperfect in Hosea 5:15 to address his countrymen in Hosea 6:1a with the verb *nashuvah*, saying, "Come, let *us* return unto Yahweh . . .," Hosea 6:1a.
 2. The prophet's cohortative is backed by his claim that since **God** (the pronoun "He" is emphatic, *Ibid.*, Kittel) was the One Who will have torn Israel's people in the trials of the Great Tribulation, that He would also heal them; He would have injured them, so He would then bind up their wounds, Hosea 6:1b NIV.
 3. Hosea's claim that after two days God would revive them, that on the third day He would restore them to live in His presence figuratively presents God's punishment as being short in comparison to the prolonged days of great blessing that will follow Israel's repentance, Hosea 6:2; *Bible Know. Com., O. T.*, p. 1393.
 4. By additional uses of the cohortative form of the verb in the first person plural, Hosea urged Israel, "Let *us* acknowledge (*waned'ah*), let *us* pursue (*nirdepah*) to know Yahweh" (Hosea 6:3a; *Ibid.*, Kittel), calls to acknowledge God's authority (versus Hosea 4:1, 6; 5:4) and to have intense devotion to the Lord, *Ibid.*
 5. Hosea encouraged his countrymen that as sure as the sun rises, God would appear to bless His repentant people, Hosea 6:3b. This assurance of God's faithfulness to His Abrahamic Covenant in Israel's behalf is reflected in Jeremiah 33:25-26 where God promised to cast away the seed of Jacob only if His Genesis 8:22 post-Flood covenant with Noah of the perpetuity of both day and night were to fail!
 6. Hosea promised that God would come to bless His repentant people like the early winter and latter spring rains that water the earth to yield Israel's much-needed agricultural produce, Hosea 6:3c. Within this latter assurance is an intended critique of relying on the local Baal gods to produce the rain needed for Israel's livelihood. God and not the local Baals was the true Source of Israel's much-needed early and latter rains, cf. Hosea 2:13; *Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, volume One, p. 431-433.

Lesson: Realizing that the Northern Kingdom of Israel would truly repent only under great future trials in the Great Tribulation, God resolved to wait for those great trials to occur in longing for that repentance. Moved by realizing the great trial ahead for an unrepentant nation, Hosea urged his people to repent, to acknowledge the Lord's authority and to be very devoted to Him, for He would have been the One Who had punished them, and He would heal her of His wounds, His blessing would be far longer than her punishment and His goodness in providing blessings would belong to Israel as He was the only true source of blessing as opposed to false gods.

Application: (1) If we have sinned, may we repent BEFORE God disciplines to save ourselves from much needless pain! (2) May we acknowledge God's authority and be highly devoted to Him for blessing, knowing that His blessing is far greater and longer than His punishment, and that He alone is the Source of all true blessing. (3) If we like Hosea see others headed for sure divine punishment, may WE like Hosea cleave to the Lord opposite what others are doing and urge others to repent and heed the Lord!