

HOSEA: LOOKING BEYOND JUDGMENT TO RESTORATION

XX: God's Path Of Restoration For The Godly Remnant

(Hosea 14:1-9)

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 punishment. (ESV Introduction to Hosea)
- C. Hosea 14:1-9 describes Israel's future restoration following national judgment by the Assyrian invasion and captivity in turn followed by her national repentance, and how the godly remnant was to function before God would restore the nation. We view this passage for our insight and application (as follows):

II. God's Path Of Restoration For The Godly Remnant, Hosea 14:1-9.

- A. Though much of Hosea's prophecy deals with the issue of punishment for sin, Hosea 14:1-9 concludes the book on a positive note of repentance, forgiveness and national restoration, Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1406.
- B. God thus gave the path Hosea 14:1-3 for the godly remnant to find His forgiveness and national restoration:
 1. The Lord called for Israel to return to Him, for she had stumbled in her iniquity, Hosea 14:1 ESV.
 2. In returning to God, the people were to take words of repentance and say, "Forgive all our sins and receive us graciously that we may offer our lips [of praise] as sacrifice of bulls," Hosea 14:2 NIV ftn. Instead of trying to impress God with an artificial repentance in offering outward animal sacrifices, God called the nation to offer heartfelt words of confession of sin, a true sacrifice of the lips above that of mere animals!
 3. Israel's people were to confess that Assyria could not save them, that they would not rely on war horses for security (in obedience to Deuteronomy 17:16), nor would they say to the workmanship of their hands, to their idols, "Our God," for in the Lord all Israel like her vulnerable orphans found mercy, Hosea 14:3.
- C. When the godly remnant would take this path of repentance, God would restore their nation, Hosea 14:4-8:
 1. The Lord would heal their apostasy and fully express His love for His people, for His anger would be turned away from them, Hosea 14:4.
 2. Instead of being like an attacking wild animal in punishment (as He is pictured back in Hosea 13:7-9), God would be like the gentle, nourishing dew to Israel, and the nation would blossom like a lily and take deep root in stability like the majestic trees of Lebanon, Hosea 14:5 ESV.
 3. Like a tree, Israel would have her shoots spread out, her beauty would become like that of an olive tree and her fragrance like the richly aromatic cedar forests of Lebanon, Hosea 14:6 ESV.
 4. The people would return to their land and dwell under God's protective shadow, flourishing like the grain and blossoming like the vine, and their fame would be like the wine of Lebanon, Hosea 14:7 ESV; Ibid.
 5. A better translation of Hosea 14:8a is: "Ephraim shall say, 'What have I to do any more with idols?'" (Ibid.) This statement, contrasting with the attitude of apostate Israel in Hosea's day, will reflect Israel's repentant attitude, to which God will add [the personal pronouns being emphatic as they are placed first in their respective phrases], "***I Myself*** will answer and look after you, ***I Myself*** am like an evergreen cypress; ***from Me*** comes your fruit" and not from idols, Assyrians or war horses! (Ibid.; Hosea 14:8b with 14:3)
- D. Hosea's prophecy closes with a "word of wisdom" (Ibid.) to the wise who are to understand and discern this instruction in a threefold lesson, Hosea 14:9a, b, c, d:
 1. Lesson One - The ways of the Lord are right, Hosea 14:9b.
 2. Lesson Two - The upright walk in God's ways and experience consequent divine blessings, Hosea 14:9c.
 3. Lesson Three - The rebellious stumble over God's ways, resulting in their downfall, Hosea 15:9d.

Lesson: (1) God told the godly remnant that to have Him restore their nation after captivity, they were to bring Him not mere animal sacrifices, but words of true repentance, confessing they no longer relied on Assyria, war horses and handcrafted idols, for only God helps Israel as seen in His aid to her vulnerable orphans. (2) Israel would then experience God's restoration, protection and blessing. (3) In summary, Israel was to learn that God's ways are right, the upright walk in them and are blessed while the wayward stumble in them to their downfall.

Application: (1) May we realize that the ONLY path to blessing is to align with God's ways, to see Him as our SOLE Source of blessing, for all other gods are false, and following them will lead to our downfall. (2) If we need to repent from being wayward from the Lord's ways, may we give God more than mere outward material gifts, but bring Him heartfelt confession of sin, a change in viewpoint and attitude so required and valued by the Lord.