

Hosea 6:1-3

There are few more impassioned appeals to return to the Lord than the one given here by the prophet, Hosea (**Hos 6:1**).

Summary

In Hosea 6:1-3, the prophet sounds a call to Israel to repent of her sin and return to the the Lord, and if she did so, she could expect to be received home by a God of abundant grace.

1. Turning Back vs. 1a

The call to repent of sin is one of the main biblical themes (**Mark 1:4; 15**).

Biblical repentance contains three important elements:

First, a sorrowful mourning over sin. (**Jonah 3:5**). Secondly, a turning from sin (**Jonah 3:8b**). Thirdly, a turning back to God (**Hos. 6:1**).

The call of Hosea to wayward Israel indicates that repentance is possible.

The Lord had spoken through Hosea of the certainty of judgment in the form of exile but would it be possible to come back to the Lord even when Israel no longer existed as a nation (**1 Kings 8:46-50**).

The same Jesus who began his ministry by calling for repentance ended it with a call to saving grace (**John 12:32**).

Since the rest of the chapter indicates a poor assessment by the Lord regarding Israel's spiritual condition, it seems that the people did not respond positively to Hosea's plea. Nonetheless, the prophet pointed to the way of return to the Lord. Christians today need to call a wayward culture back to Christ.

2. Restorative Judgment vv. 1b

Hosea followed his initial call by pointing out Israel's need to repent (**6:1b**).

The calamities the people faced were ultimately caused by the wrath of God.

God is a holy God who must and will punish all sin. Consequently, sinners must repent at once, turning from your sin to the God of grace, who freely offers salvation through the blood of the Savior, Jesus Christ.

Our need to repent makes it vital that we also understand our opportunity to return to the Lord and be delivered (**Hos. 6:1b; Heb 12:10; 1 John 1:9**).

God has healing mercy for afflicted sinners who repent.

3. Revived People vs. 2

The Lord will restore his broken people to life (**Heb 6:2**).

If you will repent and come in faith, Jesus will supply abundant life (**John 1:10**).

A sinner's conversion to Jesus is a spiritual resurrection (**Eph. 2:1-10**).

Hosea foretells Israel's revival (**Hos. 6:2**). First, the Lord will not be slow in restoring life to those who return to him in faith: two or three days was not a long time for them to wait. Secondly, by the third day a dead body was clearly beyond the possibility of normal restoration. Yet even this condition was no barrier to the sovereign power of God to restore life. The testimony of the New Testament suggests that Hosea's ultimate meaning in saying "on the third day he will raise us up" was anticipating the resurrection of Jesus on the third day (**1 Cor. 15:4; Luke 24:46-47**).

The northern kingdom of Israel was never restored from captivity and exile, unlike the southern kingdom that returned to Jerusalem. The apostle Paul applies Israel's promise of restoration to the coming of the gospel of Jesus to the Gentile lands (**Hos. 2:23; Rom. 9:25-26; Hos. 6:2**). God extends this promise to everyone who repents and believes on Christ for salvation.

4. Knowing the Lord vs. 3

It is always the grace and mercy of God that animate our repentance and open the door for us to return to him. Hence Hosea urges the people to press on to know the blessings of God's salvation (**Hos 6:3**).

What does Hosea mean: "Let us know; let us press on to know the LORD?"

It means we must know God as He has revealed Himself in the Bible.

In the immediate context of the book, it means we must know God in covenant faithfulness, drawing near to him in worship with hearts filled with love and praise.

It means a life of fellowship with God as his Spirit indwells us, as our walk is guided by his Word, and as we walk with him in a spirit of prayer.

What will happen if we make it our priority to know the Lord, pressing on in covenant zeal? "His going out is sure as the dawn (**Hos 6:3**). The prophet speaks of the certainty of God's receiving us through penitent faith in Christ. Hosea adds a second picture, describing an equally reliable blessing from the Lord: "he will come to us as the showers, as the spring rains that water the earth" (**Hos. 6:3**). God's Word, studied in faith and blessed by God's Holy Spirit, is certain to bring life to every parched soul, producing a harvest of spiritual life and good works (**Isa 55:6-7**).

So; come and return to the Lord (**Matt 11:28; John 7:37-38; Rev 22:17**).

If you come to Jesus, then you will say "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus" If your heart calls to him, Jesus answers, "Surely I am coming soon" (**Rev. 22:20**).

When he comes, it will be like the light of dawn piercing the night of darkness, "as the showers, as the spring rains that water the earth" (**Hos. 6:3**).