

Understanding Israel's Fate and Future Through Hosea

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Their deeds will not allow them

To return to their God.

For a spirit of harlotry is within them,

And they do not know the LORD. Hosea 5:4, NASB

1. A little about the prophet Hosea.
 - a. Prophet to the northern kingdom of Israel, though some of his prophecies also addressed Judah.
 - b. Lived in the mid-8th Century B.C.
 - i. Began his ministry during the reigns of King Uzziah, of Judah, and Jereboam II, of Israel.
 - ii. Contemporary of prophets Isaiah, Micah, and Amos.
 - iii. Assyria was the world “superpower”
 - iv. Israel was a divided kingdom, with the 10 northern tribes being called “Israel” while the 2 southern tribes were called “Judah”.
 - v. The northern tribes of Israel completely abandoned the Lord and went headlong into sin and idolatry. Judah was not far behind them.
 - c. His name means “salvation”. - there could be some symbolic significance for the name and the message.
 - i. Joshua, son of Nun, was called Hosea before he was called Joshua. (“Joshua” means “Yahweh saves”) - led Israel into the Promised Land
 - ii. The High Priest during Israel’s Persian repatriation was named Joshua - symbolic significance (see **Zechariah 3:8**) - helped lead Israel back into the Promised Land
 - iii. The name “Jesus” is derived from Joshua, and is related to Hosea - will be the ultimate Redeemer of Israel and will lead the remnant of Israel back into the Promised Land in the final days.
2. Read **Hosea 5** to get some textual context of **verse 4**.
 - a. To whom does God address the prophecy of **Hosea 5**? (*Hint*: see **verse 1**).
 - i. In **verse 2**, the NASB translation says, “*The revolters had gone deep into depravity . . .*”. The NIV calls them “*rebels*”. The Hebrew word means “*those who swerve, or fall away*”.
 - ii. In **verse 2**, the NASB uses “*depravity*”, whereas the NIV uses “*slaughter*”. The Hebrew word seems to carry both connotations. How could those words be related? Explain.
 - b. Is Israel alone as the subject of God’s judgment and condemnation? (*Hint*: see **verse 5**).
 - c. What disciplines did the Lord visit upon Israel as a result of their sin and unfaithfulness? (*Hint*: see **verse 8-10, 14**)
 - d. What do you think is the “*Day of Rebuke*”? (In Hebrew, the word translated “rebuke”, could also be translated “*correction*”.) See **verse 9**.
 - e. How did Israel respond to their discipline? (*Hint*: see **verse 13**).

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- f. What will cause God to be reconciled with Israel? (Hint: see **verse 15**).
- g. What does God say about His ultimate relationship with Israel?
- 3. Read **Hosea 5:4** again.
 - a. What prevented Israel from returning to their God? How does this happen?
 - b. Hosea says Israel did not know the Lord? How could someone return to someone they do not know? Explain.
 - c. Speaking of Israel, the NASB translation said there was a "*spirit of harlotry within them.*" The NIV translated this by saying there was a "*spirit of prostitution in their heart*". The Hebrew literally means "*a spirit of prostitution was near them*".
 - i. What do you think this means?
 - ii. Do you think this is related to Israel's deeds? Explain.
 - iii. How do you think this spirit got close to Israel?

Spiritual Lessons from Hosea

- 1. God's _____ for us is unconditional and permanent, but His _____ are conditional the revokable. God can only _____ us as much as we can bare it.
- 2. We can only know God _____ . What we learned about God from our past experience alone is not enough to sustain our relationship with Him.
- 3. Our desires can lead to _____ that distract us from God but can lead us to evil spirits that can dominate our lives.
- 4. Evil _____ and _____ separate us from God for several reasons.
- 5. Repentance comes when we learn that what we _____ falls far short of God's _____ . It restores us to fellowship with God.

Prophetic Conclusions: From this lesson, do you believe God will eventually fulfill His promises to Israel to make her first among the nations? Do you believe He will make Israel a kingdom of royal priests? What must Israel do to receive these blessings? Explain.