

Hosea 14 - Restoration in Spite of Unfaithfulness

II. Wayward nation and faithful God (Hosea 4:1—14:9)

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(C) Israel's repentance and restoration (14:1-9)

(a) Repentance as a prerequisite for restoration (14:1-3)

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(d) Concluding exhortation to honor God's covenant (14:9)

Hosea 14

(C) Israel's repentance and restoration (14:1-9)

(a) Repentance as a prerequisite for restoration (14:1-3)

1 **Return**, Israel, to the LORD your God, For you have stumbled because of your wrongdoing.

1 Return, O Israel, to the LORD your God, For you have stumbled because of your iniquity.

1 "Return, Israel, to the LORD your God, for you have fallen due to your own iniquity.

1 O Israel, return unto the LORD thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity.

— "Return" - Hosea's prophecy ends on a positive note with an exhortation to repentance

— Hosea appeals to Israel to return to Yahweh because her wrongdoing had caused her to stumble in her history as a nation

— We know from history and the Biblical text that Israel did not repent, but nevertheless, God's invitation was open and genuine

— Israel cast off her God, but God did not cast off His people, whom He foreknew (Cf. Rom 11:2)

2 Take words with you and return to the LORD. Say to Him, "Take away all guilt And receive us graciously, So that we may present the **fruit of our lips**.

2 Take words with you and return to the LORD. Say to Him, "Take away all iniquity And receive us graciously, That we may present the fruit of our lips.

2 Bring a prepared speech with you as you return to the LORD. Say to him: 'Take away all our iniquity, and accept what is good. Then we will present the fruit of our lips.

2 Take with you words, and turn to the LORD: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips.

- Hosea counseled the people to return to the Lord with words that expressed their repentance
 - The people should acknowledge their sins and ask the Lord to remove their iniquity (Cf. 1 John 1:9)
 - They should also ask Him to receive them graciously, so that they may praise Him with their lips (Cf. Heb 13:14)

3 "Assyria will not save us, We will not ride on horses; Nor will we say again, 'Our god' To the work of our hands; For in You the orphan finds mercy."

3 "Assyria will not save us, We will not ride on horses; Nor will we say again, 'Our god,' To the work of our hands; For in You the orphan finds mercy."

3 Assyria won't save us; we won't be riding on horses, Nor will we be saying anymore to the work of our hands, "You are our God." Indeed, in you the orphan finds mercy.'

3 Asshur shall not save us; we will not ride upon horses: neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, Ye are our gods: for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy.

- Israel should renounce her confidence in Assyria (political alliances) and military might ("horses") for their security and victory

— They should also promise not to call their handmade idols their gods, and that only from God could vulnerable, dependent orphans such as themselves find mercy

(b) Benefits of restoration (14:4-7)

4 I will heal their apostasy, I will love them freely, Because My anger has turned away from them.

4 I will heal their apostasy, I will love them freely, For My anger has turned away from them.

4 "I will correct their apostasy, loving them freely, since my anger will have turned away from them.

4 I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him.

- In the day of Israel's repentance, the Lord will turn from His anger and demonstrate His love by healing her (Cf. 6:1)

— At that time the Lord's blessing will return to Israel

5 I will be like the dew to Israel; He will blossom like the lily, And he will take root like *the cedars of Lebanon*.

5 I will be like the dew to Israel; He will blossom like the lily, And he will take root like *the cedars of Lebanon*.

5 I will be like the dew to Israel; Israel will blossom like a lily, growing roots like the cedars of Lebanon.

5 I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon.

- Like dew, it will cause the nation to blossom like a lily which was renowned for its beauty (Cf. Song 2:2)

— This is a complete reversal of the imagery used in 13:15: instead of being dry and withered, Israel would blossom

6 His shoots will sprout, His majesty will be like the olive tree, And his fragrance like *the cedars of Lebanon*.

6 His shoots will sprout, And his beauty will be like the olive tree And his fragrance like *the cedars of Lebanon*.

6 Israel's branches will spread out, and its beauty will be like an olive tree, with its scent like that of Lebanon.

6 His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon.

- The Israelites would become as beautiful as a majestic "olive tree," which is not only attractive, but the source of beneficial products (Cf. Ps 52:8; Jer 11:16)

— Israel would become productive and attractive to the eye and nose, namely, totally appealing.

- "...shoots" - imply stability, "majesty" suggests visibility, and "fragrance" connotes desirability

7 Those who live in his shadow **Will again raise grain**, And they will blossom like the vine.

His fame *will be like the wine of Lebanon*.

7 Those who live in his shadow Will again raise grain, And they will blossom like the vine. His renown *will be like the wine of Lebanon*.

7 Those who live under its protection will surely return. Their grain will flourish; they will blossom like a vine, and Israel's scent will be like wine from Lebanon.

7 They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon.

- Other nations will flourish as they benefit from Israel's good influence

— Israel is itself the tree beneath whose shade the members of the nation flourish with freshness and vigor. This seems more consistent with the imagery in Hosea 14:5-6, which compares Israel to trees.

- "...Will again raise grain" - the Israelites will again grow grain, a sign of covenant blessing (Cf. 2:21-23; Deut 28:4,8,11; 30:9; Amos 9:13-15)

- The picture of Israelites again growing grain points to the return of covenantal blessing (Cf. Deut 28:4,8,11; 30:9; Hosea 2:21-23; Amos 9:13-15)

- "...like the wine of Lebanon" - once again Israel will be "like a" fruitful "vine" which produces the best wine, no longer a scraggly vine in the wilderness (Cf. 10:1)

(c) God is the source of restoration (14:8)

8 Ephraim, what more have I to do with idols? It is I who answer and **look after you**. I am like a luxuriant juniper; From Me comes your fruit.

8 O Ephraim, what more have I to do with idols? It is I who answer and look after you. I am like a luxuriant cypress; From Me comes your fruit.

8 "Ephraim, what have I in common with idols? I have listened and will pay attention to him. I am like a flourishing cypress; in me will your fruit be found."

8 Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard him, and observed him: I am like a green fir tree. From me is thy fruit found.

- Ephraim would repudiate her dealings with idols

— The contrast with Ephraim's earlier attitude is stark (Cf. 2:8; 4:17; 8:4-6; 13:2)

— "...look after you" - the Lord would respond to Ephraim's repudiation of idols with a commitment to care for her

— The same God who stealthily watched Israel like a leopard ready to pounce on its prey will now become the One who carefully watches over His people to protect them

— "...like a luxuriant juniper" - comparing Himself to a green pine tree, the Lord also asserted that He is the nation's source of prosperity

(d) Concluding exhortation to honor God's covenant (14:9)

9 Whoever is wise, let him understand these things; Whoever is discerning, let him know them. For the ways of the LORD are right, And the righteous will walk in them, But wrongdoers will stumble in them.

9 Whoever is wise, let him understand these things; Whoever is discerning, let him know them. For the ways of the LORD are right, And the righteous will walk in them, But transgressors will stumble in them.

9 Whoever is wise, let him understand these things. Whoever is discerning, let him know them. For the ways of the LORD are right: the righteous follow his example, but the rebellious stumble in them.

9 Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the LORD are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein.

- The book ends with a word on wisdom. One who is wise and discerning will learn a threefold lesson from Hosea's message:

(1) The ways of the LORD (His covenantal demands) are right

- (2) The righteous walk in (obey) them and experience the blessings of loyalty (Cf. Deut 8:6; 10:12; 11:22; 28:9; Judges 2:17)
- (3) The rebellious falls, stumble over (not in) them, in the sense that destruction (stumbling) is the direct result of disobedience (Cf. 7:13; 8:1; 13:16)