

**Hosea 6:1 ¶ Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up.**

**Hosea 6:2 After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight.**

Chapter 5 ends with a statement by Hosea that the day is coming when His people will recognize and confess their sin and seek God's face in light of their affliction. This chapter begins with the words of Hosea (or Hosea speaking on behalf of the believing remnant that is always present) urging his people to turn back to the Lord now. He knows that God will honor His covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He knows that in spite of God's judgment, He is still going to heal them.

The wording in verse two is interesting. One can read it as speaking of indefinite periods of time, but one can also read it in light of other scriptures. Scripture enlightens us regarding the passage of time when looking from man's perspective vs. God's perspective.

*Psalms 90:4 "For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night."*

*2 Peter 3:8 "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."*

In my study of prophecy, I found that the Jewish teachers look at a couple of verses in Genesis 2 as a statement as to man's time on planet earth preceding eternity.

*Genesis 2:2-3 "And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made."*

Using the formula 1000 years = one day, this represents 6,000 years to accomplish the work of redemption and 1000 years of rest with Jesus on the throne and Satan bound.

Only the future holds the answer, but that understanding makes a lot of sense to me from hindsight and my current perspective. Note that the wording of verse 2 states "after" two days. Personally, this indicates to me that the timeframe for Israel's broken relationship with the LORD will continue for at least 2000 years. I also believe the phrasing indicates that shortly after that time "in" the next 1000 year period the nation of Israel will arise to live again as a nation and experience healing to live in a fellowship with the God of Israel in fulfillment of God's covenant with Abraham. Israel has been resurrected as a nation, but not to spiritual life. I do not believe that will happen until the Lord Jesus returns to earth to establish His kingdom. It is at that time that He will bring all the Jewish people home to Israel to enjoy the blessings associated with the fulfillment of the covenant made with Abraham. Many of the prophets spoke of this time.

*Jeremiah 23:3–6 “And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase. And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the LORD. Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.”*

*Ezekiel 37:21–23 “And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all: Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions: but I will save them out of all their dwellingplaces, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them: so shall they be my people, and I will be their God.”*

*Zechariah 8:7–8 “Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Behold, I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country; And I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness.”*

**Hosea 6:3** Then shall we know, *if we follow on to know the LORD: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth.*

The prophet emphasizes that God will respond to Israel’s decision to turn to Him in faith and repentance with open arms. His willingness to take them back into relationship is as sure as the sun comes up in the morning. That response will bring blessings as refreshing and nourishing as the rains that nourish the ground and the harvest in winter and spring.

**Hosea 6:4** ¶ **O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee? for your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away.**

**Hosea 6:5** **Therefore have I hewed them by the prophets; I have slain them by the words of my mouth: and thy judgments are as the light that goeth forth.**

These verses express the heart of a parent who is frustrated because his children refuse to listen to him and realize that he only wants what is good for them. It is a statement of God’s heart toward Israel (Ephraim – Northern Kingdom) and Judah (Southern Kingdom). He has been faithful to send His prophets to sound out a warning and declare His coming judgment if they refuse to repent. That God will judge them according to His word is as sure as the sun giving light.

**Hosea 6:6 For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.**

**Hosea 6:7 But they like men have transgressed the covenant: there have they dealt treacherously against me.**

In these verses God reveals what He most desires from His people—mercy and intimacy. The people were good at going through the motions of offering sacrifices and burnt offerings—but with no true heart of worshipping God and keeping covenant with Him in the process.

When I looked at the Hebrew for mercy, I got the sense of showing kindness to others as a loving response to the kindness God has shown you. That kindness includes (according to Webster) showing self-control in light of having been wronged and showing compassion to the unfortunate and helpless.

To possess knowledge of God involves being familiar with His word with understanding and intent to developing relationship. Solomon expressed it well when instructing his son.

*Proverbs 2:1–8 “My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God. For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding. He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly. He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints.”*

Instead of growing in relationship to God through keeping covenant from a heart of love and reverence, God’s people had broken covenant and proven themselves unfaithful by turning to false gods.

**Hosea 6:8 Gilead is a city of them that work iniquity, and is polluted with blood.**

**Hosea 6:9 And as troops of robbers wait for a man, so the company of priests murder in the way by consent: for they commit lewdness.**

**Hosea 6:10 I have seen an horrible thing in the house of Israel: there is the whoredom of Ephraim, Israel is defiled.**

**Hosea 6:11 Also, O Judah, he hath set an harvest for thee, when I returned the captivity of my people.**

These verses just continue the indictment against Israel and Judah because of their spiritual adultery against God. The prophet again identifies the priests as accountable. Instead of providing spiritual leadership, they had led the people into idolatry and the wickedness that is part and parcel of the worship of the false gods those idols represented.

The NLT statement on verse 11 made the most sense to me: *“O Judah, a harvest of punishment is also waiting for you, though I wanted so much to restore the fortunes of my people!”*