

Hosea 6, 11, 14: Predicting Israel's demise yet with restoration when repentance occurs. Hosea accurately predicts the end of the Northern Kingdom Israel, due to their sins and flagrant idolatries. But God still loves them just as Hosea cares for his wife of harlotry. In agonizing pain, God will terminate Israel but declares a future restoration for them when true repentance will be apparent. This is evident in Israel today, indicating its fulfilment.

Explaining the passages: Three times in Hosea a prediction of repentance or restoration is proclaimed, namely **6:1-3**; **11:8-11** and **14:4-7**.

A. Hos. 6:1-3: Chapter 4-5 is a severe rebuke for both the priesthood and monarchy in leading the people astray (**see 5:1**). Then, God says in **5:15** that He will withdraw from His people until they realize their guilt and predicts that one day in their affliction they will earnestly seek Him. In **6:1-3** is a definite call for Israel to return to the Lord but it also depicts the attributes of true repentance. First, there is no anger or bitterness against God in spite of the painful discipline inflicted (**1**). Instead, there is a firm belief that God will effectively heal them. Second, there is faith in **v2** that God will quickly restore them in just two to three days, meaning a very short time. It is the experience of believers that if repentance is genuine, His restoration indeed can be prompt. Finally, after restoration, one must press on to know God (**3**) and He will come to us as the spring rain. The latter in Israel is an assurance for a great harvest and is used figuratively to show the certainty and fullness of His blessings as they press on. Instantly, Hosea states in **v4** that genuine loyalty is lacking in Israel and thus true repentance is not present in his days. But today in Israel, such repentance is definitely evident among the Messianic Jews who also manifest sincere loyalty to God. Some theologians insist that the repentance predicted here will only occur after Christ's return in the Millennium. But note in **5:15** that the Jews will seek Him amidst affliction which do not fit the Millennium and surely, how can God not respond as promised, when there are so many true repentance among the Jews today?

B. Hos. 11:8-11: Chapter 7-10 confirms the verdict of Israel's guilt for they are all like thieves and bandits (**7:1**); and immersed in idolatries (**8:5-6**). Their enemy, Assyria will destroy them (**8:1**), drives them from the land (**9:17**) and cuts off their King (**10:17**). But God's heart in **11:1** churns for His people, for He still loves them and in **v8-9** He will not totally annihilate Israel as it occurs for Sodom, for Admah and Zeboiim are nearby towns that are destroyed at that same time. It is because unlike man, His heart and compassion will not let Him. Then **v10-11** is a promise of restoration that they will one day walk after the Lord and will come trembling, meaning with the right attitude of fear. Note that it is not just from Assyria but wider areas, including the west and Egypt and so it is more than the return from Babylon. They will fly in orderly like doves and He will work mightily as a roaring lion to settle them in their houses. It matches well with the Messianic Jews who truly tremble before Him and whose roots are from all over the world, living in Israel.

C. Hos. 14:4-7: Chapter 12-13 is His final call for Israel to return (**12:6**) but they remain bound to sins (**13:12**). Then **14:1-3** envisages a true return, praying for removal of all sins (2), with admission that only God can save them (3). God's response is in **v4-7** and firstly He will heal them. Next **v5-6** is a prediction in metaphorical terms, of substantial spiritual growth, which is truly observed among the Messianic Jews of today. Lastly, **v7** is on the non-Jews living in their shadows. It's not God's shadow for He is speaking and it does not say "My shadow". Indeed the Messianic Jews are leading Arabs to Christ who are similarly blessed. It seems that these prophecies are being fulfilled before our very eyes.