

# Hosea 6:1-11

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Date: 11 August 2024

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[ 0 : 00 ] Good evening. Good evening. You all flip with me to the Old Testament this evening in the Book of Hosea.

Hosea being the first of the twelve writings that we have and what's popularly referred to as the Minor Prophets. Hosea written in a time and Hosea's preaching was directed mainly at the Northern Kingdom.

Although he refers several times in his writings to Judah, to the Southern Kingdom, he was mainly concentrating on Israel.

And we know this from the times that he brings up Ephraim, the times that he brings up Gilead, and times he's just very direct about it as well.

But he preached in a time, he preached in the same time that Isaiah would have preached in, preached in the same time that Amos would have preached in. And quite possibly Micah and Jonah as well. But those first two Isaiah and Amos were contemporaries of the Prophet Hosea here.

[ 1 : 21 ] He preached in a time where there was much, many problems in the Northern Kingdom. And if you read throughout the Old Testament, you read throughout the Chronicles in the Books of Kings, you read other historical books of the Old Testament.

You'll see that this was quite often that they were having problems, but they were in the midst of a lot of political turmoil. They were in the midst of a lot of idolatry. They were in the middle of all sorts of things.

Kind of reminds me of a certain nation that I live in today to be quite frank with you. There's political issues on every hand. There's a lot of turmoil. There's idolatry everywhere that you look.

There's lewdness. There's sin. And there seems to be no shame for any of these things. And this is the very culture that Hosea lived in and it's the very culture that he was preaching to as far as the Northern Kingdom goes here.

He preached to the Northern Kingdom again to Israel. But he mentions Judah several times. In fact, in Hosea chapter 6 where we'll be this evening, he actually brings up Judah a couple of times in the sixth chapter of his book here.

[ 2 : 46 ] But Hosea's writings in general have a lot of judgment about them. Many of the other minor prophets are laced with all kinds of judgment of God.

But it's four of these things that we just mentioned. It's for the sin of the people. Something that we need to keep in mind as we read this tonight and as we consider all these things.

This wasn't just any people. It was the sin of God's people. It was the sin of the Israelites. It was the sin of the apple of God's eye according to the Scripture.

We need to keep that in mind not only while we read here tonight but anytime we're reading from Isaiah through the book of Malachi.

When we read about these judgments that come, granted, sometimes God does bring up the heathen nations. He does bring up the pagans. But more often than not, the actual preaching was directed at the people of God and for their sin.

[ 3 : 52 ] So with all that being said, in Hosea chapter 6, we'll read all 11 verses here. Hosea 6 and verse 1 says, 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. After two days he will revive us. In the third day he will raise us up and we shall live in his sight.

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 letter rain, and the former rain unto the earth.

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.

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. For I desired mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.

[ 4 : 58 ] But they like men have transgressed the covenant, thereof they don't treacherously against me. Gilead is a city of them that work iniquity and is polluted with blood, and his troops of robbers wait for a man, so the company of priests murder in the way by consent, for they commit lewdness.

I have seen an horrible thing in the house of Israel, there is the Hordom of Ephraim, Israel is defiled. Also, O Judah, he hath said in harvest for thee, when I returned the captivity of my people.

So back to verse 1, in Hosea chapter 6, he says, 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.

And this is so locked to the Lord, not only here in Hosea, but so many other places in the Scripture that we can think of. In both the Old Testament and in the New Testament, that the people of God, they have followed along with God for a while.

They have done the things of God, they have done their best to follow the laws and to follow the ordinances. But somewhere along the way, they have fallen to the wayside, they have stopped following the laws, they have stopped following the ordinances, they have stopped gathering with the saints of God, they have stopped worshiping God, they have stopped their sacrifices, they have stopped their prayers, they have stopped their Scripture reading, they have wanted to hush the mouths of the prophets.

[ 6 : 29 ] They have wanted to do all of these things, and this extends on in to the New Testament time that we are in now. Folks, the church is no different. So much of the church world has done the same thing.

They have forgotten the things of God, they have forgotten the basis of their salvation, which is Jesus Christ, which is the redemption that we have in Jesus Christ through the washing of His blood and through the regeneration of the Holy Spirit.

They have said all these things to the side, and they have gone about their own ways. They have gone about and said, this way is much better. This is the way that draws the crowds. This is the way that will get us attention.

This is what will get the funds coming into the church. But God, in His mercy and God, in His compassion, He issues forth an invitation, and the word, come, here in Isaiah 6, and He does the same thing for the church.

I am convinced when He says, come, let us return unto the Lord. Let us go back to where it all began with us. If you can remember the time that you were saved, if you can remember when you were nothing more than a filthy rotten sinner, but God reached down in His mercy and with His grace and in His compassion, and He lifted your feet up out of the myriad play, and He set your feet upon the solid ground, and He established, you are going, come, let us return unto the Lord.

[ 8 : 00 ] Hallelujah. Praise God. Praise God. Come. Let us return unto the Lord. And it goes on. It goes on here, it says, for He hath torn, and He will heal us.

He hath smitten, and He will bind us up. Hosea is causing these Jews here, causing these Israelites to see that the cause of their suffering was brought on by God.

The cause of their suffering, it is judgment from Almighty God. He says He is the one that has caused these things. He is the one that has caused this to happen. He is the one that's allowed the foreign invasions into the land.

He's the one that's allowed us to be sold into captivity over the years. He is the one that has allowed all this to happen, but He will heal us up.

Praise God. God looks like a doctor in this verse here. Hosea is 6 and 1. It's almost as if it's describing God as a doctor.

[ 9 : 07 ] He's done the smitting, and He has done the tearing, but He will heal, and He will bind us up. Folks, sometimes bones have got to be broken in order to heal something that's ailing you.

Sometimes doctors actually have to go in and they have to break bones. Most everybody in here, I'm sure, has had a surgery of some kind or another. That surgeon must take a scalpel and he must cut you open something that God never designed for us.

We were never designed to be cut open. We were never designed to have to take pills. We were never designed for any of these things, but sometimes the doctor has to cause pain and to cause hurt in order to heal us and in order to bind us up. Sometimes God will allow judgment into our lives.

Sometimes God will allow just plain old trials into our lives, but nevertheless, whether it's judgment for sin or whether it's trial that comes our way, it is God that will heal and God that will bind us up. Praise God. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Verse 2, after two days will He revive us. In the third day He will raise us up and we shall live in His sight.

[10:25] After two days He will revive us. Folks, whether this means two literal days, whether it means two weeks, or whether it means 200 years, it is not important.

What Jose is saying here, after two days He will revive us. There will be a revival of God's people. God will not leave His people laying there in the dirt. God will not leave His people lying in the mud. The Bible says after two days He will revive us and it goes on to say in the third day He will raise us up and we shall live in His sight. Folks, the third day ever in the scripture speaks of resurrection. Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ raised on the third day. It says on the third day He will raise us up and we shall live in His sight.

It doesn't say He'll raise us up and we will sit and do nothing. It doesn't say He will raise us up and we will live, we will live our lives in the sight of Almighty God. He is an eternal God. He is an eternal God.

In His sight is eternal. Everything about Him is eternal and we will live in His sight eternally. After two days we'll be revived. And at that third day, praise God. Folks, there's a temporary revival that happens.

[11:49] There's temporary suffering that will happen up to that. That's the two days. But after that two days, there's a temporary revival that happens. But folks, I'm looking for that third day. I'm looking for that third day. I'm looking for the eternal resurrection that I promised in the scriptures.

I'm looking for that same resurrection that Jesus Christ had. If I go into the ground tomorrow, if they bury me six feet under, I promise that I will be resurrected one of these days after a while. I promise that I will have a new body like an infatuation under the Son of Man.

I promise to live forever and forever and forever with Him, my Redeemer. Hallelujah. After two days, folks, we're going to suffer down here. Where is the suffering in this context?

The sufferings because of their own sin. The sufferings because of the people of God's own sin. But whether it's because of some sin that you or I have committed, or whether it's just trial and tribulation that we fall into, folks, it has got to be filtered through the love of God. And God will be well aware of anything that comes our way.

It will not take Him by surprise. After that two days, we will receive a revival. But folks, after that third day, after that third day, we will be resurrected. Verse three, then shall we know if we follow on to know the Lord.

[13:20] He is going forth, is prepared as the morning, and He shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter rain, and the former rain, unto the earth. First of all, before we get into this verse, I want to address something.

There's a lot of talk in the charismatic world about the latter and the former rain, and a lot of talk about a promise of a second pouring out of the Holy Spirit.

Folks, that is not scriptural at all. That is nowhere in the Bible. That is not what the latter and the former rain speaks of anywhere in Scripture. So I just want to address that real quick. Now we'll get into the verse. Then shall we know Him? When shall we know Him?

Verse two says in the third day, He will raise us, and we shall live in His sight. Then it says, then shall we know Him if we follow on to know the Lord.

If we follow on to know the Lord, this is when we shall know Him. Folks, this is what God desires of His people. This is what God wants of His people. He wants them to know Him, but not just to know Him as a word, not just to know Him as a body or a pal.

[14:32] He wants them to know Him intimately. He wants them to know Him through His word. He wants them to know Him through His Spirit. God wants to know His people, and it brings me a great, great delight to know that the Creator of this universe, the Creator of everything that we see and everything that we know, that this Creator wants to know me.

It brings me great delight and great joy to know that the God who created the heavens and the earth, the God that created the air, the God that created the water, He created me and He created you.

He could have chosen to want to know anything else in this entire world or universe, but He chose to want to know you and I.

Folks, that's incredible to me. Who am I? Who am I that God would want to know me? As it's done been mentioned tonight, I know what I was. I know who I was. I know what I'd done. I know where I'd been. I know who I'd done it with.

And God still chose to know me. God still chose to save me. Then shall we know if we follow on to know the Lord. Folks, this tells me that to know the Lord is a deliberate action on the behalf of His people. We have to want to know the Lord in order to know Him.

[16:05] How can we get to know God by reading His word and by prayer under Him? This is the only way that we will ever know God. There's too many people out there that are waiting for some great illumination of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

They're waiting on some great epiphany or some great vision that the Holy Ghost will not render under them. The only way we will ever get to truly know God is to truly get into His Word to pray for the gifts of the Holy Spirit as we read and study it.

This is the best way that we will ever get to know God, but it's got to be deliberate on our parts. We must follow after God. I said just a little while ago, He doesn't revive us and nor will He resurrect us to just sit by and do nothing.

To just sit by and do nothing. We follow Him as the psalmist said, as the heart pants after the water. So my soul thirsts for the Lord. We must thirst after God, and that is up to us to do. It is up to us to do.

To thirst after God and to long after God and to won't after God. And I promise you, the more that you want God and the more that you follow after God the more that you thirst after God, the more of God He will give you of Him. Hallelujah. But it takes desire and deliberation on our part.

[17:39] His going forth is prepared as the morning, and He shall come unto us as the rain, the latter and the former rain under the earth. His going forth is prepared as the morning. In other words, His going forth is just as sure as the morning is.

It is just as sure as the morning is, folks. Just as sure as we lay down our heads tonight. If God doesn't come back, if Christ doesn't return to take us out of this incurs world, there will be a morning, and God's going forth is just as sure as that morning is.

He also says, and He shall come unto us as the rain and the latter and former rain unto the earth.

Folks, not only is His going forth sure and certain as the morning is, but His going forth brings nourishment unto us, unto His people. His going forth brought nourishment to the Israelites.

It brings nourishment to the bride of Christ, the church now, and it's just like the latter and the former rains, folks. The farmers of this region, they depended upon the latter rains. They sold their crops depending upon this rain, and the former rain as well.

It's the same way that you and I, by using all my nowadays, we go by certain days. We go by certain times. We go by certain this and certain that, knowing when to plant our crops, and that's what these people done with the latter and the former rain.

[19:05] If they missed out on either one of those rains, their crops would not survive. They're depending on God, and this verse here is saying that His going forth is prepared as the morning.

He shall come unto us as the rain is the latter and the former rain unto the earth. Not only is His going forth sure, the folks His going forth is helpful to His people. It nourishes us, and it helps us. It is sure. It is steadfast. It is immovable.

It is immutable as the Scripture describes God. The folks His going forth is sure, and His nourishment for His people that are following after Him is just as certain. It is just as helpful. Verse 4, O Ephraim, what shall I do unto the old Judah? What shall I do unto thee?

For your goodness is as the morning cloud and as the early dew that goeth away. God here is rebuking His people through the man, Hosea. He is rebuking His own people. Not only, as I said in the introduction to Ephraim or to the northern kingdom, but unto Judah as well.

He says, what shall I do unto thee? For your goodness is as the morning cloud. He tells us what the comparison is there. And as the early dew that goeth away, saying their goodness. In other words, they are following after Him that we read about just a couple of verses ago.

[20:37] It is very short-lived, folks. And we as the church of Jesus Christ, we need to do some soul searching ourselves to determine what our motives are for following God, to determine the sincerity of our lives following after God. We as the church need to do this. The Israelites need to do it.

We need to look within ourselves. We need to pray unto God to show us the sin that may be separating us from fellowship with Him. We need to search after God, seek after God, follow after God, and thirst after God.

But once again, as the heart peneth after the water, we need to do these things after God so that we can have good relationship with Him.

Hallelujah. It disappears. He says, the morning cloud and the early dew that goeth away, it reminds me of James talking about a man's life.

In James chapter 4, he says, your life's but a vapor. It's here for a little while, and then it vanishes away. But God here is talking about the sincerity of these Jews. Fast forward to our time. Fast forward to the New Testament church.

[ 21 : 52 ] God will be talking about our sincerity as Christians. Are we following for the right reasons? Do we do what we do? Do we come to church for the right reasons? Do we pray for the right reasons?

Or do we pray for selfish reasons? Do we pray that we might consume it upon our own lust? Again, as the book of James talks about, folks, we follow after God because He is God.

We follow after Him because He is God, because He is our Redeemer. He is our Savior. He is our salvation. The Bible teaches that the salvation is of the Lord, and the Bible also teaches that the Lord is salvation.

These are the reasons that we follow after God. There's so many people who want to follow for so many different reasons, and much of that is the church's fault, because the church has wrongly taught whom God is, and they have wrongly taught what the Scripture says.

Praise God, I haven't heard that here at this church, but I have several other churches. I'm talking about the church as a whole for decades now. For decades, the church has taught things as fact that are not Biblical, and they've taught things about God that the Bible never speaks of, and this is why the world is full of people that are seeking after God, that they have made up in their own minds, that they have made up in their own hearts, and that God is what is ruling the throne of their hearts, and not the God, the Maker of the universe.

[ 23 : 20 ] And much of that, much of that is the church's fault, I'm afraid to say. Therefore, verse 5, therefore have I healed them, by the prophets I have slain them, by the words of my mouth and my judgments, and therefore have I healed them, by the prophets I have slain them, by the words of my mouth, which our minds should immediately go to Hebrews chapter 4, which talks about the Word of God, how it is quick, how it is powerful, and how it is sharper than any two edges of the earth.

And God here is saying that he has used his words through his prophets, he says, I have healed them, I have slain them, I have told them the way, and I have also pronounced judgment through my prophets, and they still have not turned unto me.

Folks, many times, many times in our life, and again I will say whether it be sin in your life or my life, or whether it be trial in your life or my life, God uses those things to bring people to him, to bring people closer to him.

Maybe it's somebody that's been saved for 50 years, and maybe they've gotten complacent, maybe they've gotten too comfortable sitting in the church house pew, and God will allow calamity into their lives.

God might allow disease, he might allow financial disaster, he might allow any number of things into their life, but it is not to destroy us when God does these things, it is to bring his people back to him.

[ 25 : 06 ] God does not wish for us to be destroyed, it's not his will that any shepherds, but that all should come to repentance. Praise God. God doesn't want to destroy his people.

I have slain them by the words of my mouth, and thy judgments, I want you to pay attention to that, and thy judgments are as the life that goes forth.

Well, Hosea here is speaking the words of God. He says, therefore have I hewed them by the prophets. God's saying that through Hosea, I have slain them by the words of my mouth, God's saying that through Hosea, and thy judgments, your judgments, whose judgments?

It's something about the judgments of God that he pronounced through his prophets, not only through Hosea, but through any other number of prophets, but towards the people, it is their judgment.

It is what they have earned, it is what God is trying to get across to these Jews, to the Israelites here. It is your judgments, he says, and thy judgments are as the life that goes forth.

[ 26 : 20 ] In other words, your judgments that are coming your way, that are coming forth from me, from God. There is the life that goes forth. In other words, it's very clear that it's from God.

It's very clear, and it shines just as bright and just as clear as the sky does it down. And it's very clear that these judgments are from God.

God is trying to bring his people back to him. God pronounces judgment. If you read through the major prophets and the minor prophets both, God pronounces judgment on all of his people, on Israel as a whole, on the northern kingdom, and on the southern kingdom.

But as far as Hosea's writings go, and as far as several of the other prophets go, more judgment was pronounced upon Ephraim and upon the northern kingdom than ever was the southern kingdom.

The southern kingdom had their time coming, and they had judgment coming to them, but they were not as caught up in adultery as the northern kingdom was. Here he's speaking to both though.

[ 27 : 24 ] He's speaking to both, we know that from verse 4. But he says, your judgments and thy judgment are as the light that goeth forth. It's plain as day that the calamities again and the foreign invasions from outside countries, disease that may have hit, crops failing, pestilence, all these other things that we can think about.

It is clear that this is judgment from God on these people because of their sin. Verse 6, for I desired mercy and not sacrifice.

And the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings. God here's saying what he desired. He said, I desired mercy and not sacrifice. He is rebuking his people for their anti-religious practices.

He is rebuking his people for those that were still bringing sacrifices. They weren't doing it to have that relationship with God.

Several months ago we went through the offerings in Leviticus chapters 1 through chapter 7, and all those offerings had to do with relationship with God beginning at the burnt offering and going on through the rest of the offerings.

[ 28 : 45 ] The burnt offering was given in place of sin that was to bring us into the right relationship with God so that we could have a relationship with God. And God here is saying that he wanted mercy and not sacrifice.

The Jews could have sacrificed thousands and thousands and tens of thousands and hundreds of thousands of rams and bullocks and lambs and everything else that we read about in the Scriptures.

But what God wanted was mercy. He says that himself. Y'all have heard me quote time and time again from the Book of Micah. He has chewed the old man. What is good and what does the Lord require of thee?

But to do justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God. These are the things that God required of his people in the Old Testament, and it is no different in the New Testament.

We the people of God, we the people that have been bought by the blood of Jesus Christ. We should do justly, we should do justice, and we should love mercy.

[ 29 : 46 ] We should love showing mercy because we have received mercy from God and we because we've received this mercy and because we received it from a just God.

We should walk humbly with him. Hallelujah. Again he says, but they, I'm sorry, for I desired mercy and not sacrifice in the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.

This is a very important verse here, and I know it's important because Jesus Christ quotes it twice in the New Testament. The first time he quotes it, he goes into a house to eat.

It says there are many publicans and sinners that came around. And the Pharisees came, they said, why did you a master eat with the publicans and the sinners? He says, go and learn what it means. I will have mercy and not sacrifice.

For the Son of Man came not to seek the roaches, but to call sinners to repentance. And again, that's in Matthew chapter 9, Matthew chapter 12. He and the disciples are going through a field and they're plucking ears of corn to eat.

[ 30 : 52 ] And those religious elite, they say, why are you doing this on the Sabbath day? You're working on the Sabbath day. And Christ says, as thou not read, that David, David went into the house of God, he went into the house of the Lord, and he ate the shoe bread that was meant for the priest.

He tells them, if you knew what it meant, I will have mercy and not sacrifice. You would understand. Jesus Christ quotes this very verse twice in the New Testament.

What does it mean? I desired mercy and not sacrifice. He doesn't want our lip service. He doesn't want empty religion. He doesn't want us to go through the motions God desires and wants relationship with His creation.

And He has that with those that have been redeemed, those that have been born again by showing them mercy, by showing them mercy. But He wants us to exhibit that mercy as well.

God expects us to exhibit mercy to the outside world. He expects us to exhibit mercy to fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. We are to show mercy.

[ 32 : 07 ] God says, for I desired mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings. I just want my people to know me. And I want to know them intimately, closely, and personally.

Again, folks, it blows my mind that God would even take one thought of me, let alone want to know me and want me to know Him.

But He does. But they, like men, have transgressed the covenant. There have they dealt treacherously. They can't do that. Men have transgressed the covenant. There have they dealt treacherously against me.

They, like men, have transgressed the covenant. Who, like men? Again, we can go back to both kingdoms, the northern kingdom and the southern kingdom, because it's the context that we are in right now, right now.

But they, like men, have transgressed the covenant. They've broken the covenant that God made with them. And folks, it is no different. When the Israelites sin, when the Israelites set up battles, when the Israelites set up groves, when the Israelites burn incense, and they worship Baal, or any number of other gods, of the pagan nations that were around them, it is no different for us when sin comes into our life, that we have broken a covenant that God has made with us.

[ 33 : 30 ] Our covenant, though, praise God, it's a new covenant. It's a run-up out covenant that we have in Jesus Christ and He alone. But when we allow sin in, sin will come, it'll creep.

One little thing here, one little thing there, and before you know it, I'm talking about true Christians here, they'll think, well, God didn't get a hold on me too bad for that.

God didn't fuss that me too bad for that. I heard these sermons come from the pulpit addressing that. God hasn't tamed my backside for that. It must be okay.

And then they'll go on and they'll sin a little bit more and a little bit more. Folks, that is a direct and blatant abuse of the grace of God to have that type of mindset about God and His mercy that He shows.

They like men have transgressed the covenant. The Hebrew word here for men is adon, which is the same way that Adam in our English translations is translated.

[ 34 : 44 ] So if we take that into consideration, not only have these Jews broken the covenant that God made with them further over in the Old Testament here, beginning with a man named Abraham over in the book of Genesis, that goes back even further than that.

God created Adam. Did He not? He created Adam. He created Eve out of Adam's rib. And why did He create Adam to serve Him and to commune with Him and to have relationship with Him?

And God created Adam perfect. He put him in a perfect environment. All He wanted Adam to do was to tend the garden. That's all He wanted to do and make me, myself, I'm convinced there wasn't one briar in that garden.

I'm convinced there wasn't one sticker on a rose bush. I'm convinced there were no pesky mosquitoes. If there were, they didn't bite you. I'm convinced of all kinds of things as far as the perfection of that garden goes.

But what happened? Adam broke covenant. Adam broke covenant. Adam broke the law of God. God said, I'm going to put you here. I want you to tend my garden.

[ 35 : 56 ] I want you to take care of this for me. And the only thing I'm asking of you and your wife Eve is not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And Adam broke that covenant as well as Eve.

They broke that covenant. The Israelites have broken their covenant. Folks, we as Christians have broken our covenant more times than we could count. We have gone against the ways of God, knowing what grace we have received, knowing what cleansing we have received, knowing what

forgiveness that God has given us.

And yet, we get the attitude of, I'll do it now, as forgiveness later. We get the attitude once again, while I've done it and God hasn't punished me for it yet, folks.

That is the wrong attitude for Christians to have, for the people of God to have, but they like men to transgress the covenant. There have they dealt treacherously against me because they broke the covenant.

They've dealt treacherously against me. Folks, I can promise you, the last being in this universe I want to deal treacherously with is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

[ 37 : 05 ] That is the last one that I want to deal treacherously with. Verse 8, Gilead is a city of them that worked iniquity and is polluted with blood. Folks, this shows that even a city that once upon a time it was known for its healing, it was known as a refuge, even that has become corrupted, even that has become polluted.

Fast forward to the days that we live in now, to the New Testament church. Folks, I've seen it with my own eyes. Churches that were once on fire for God, churches that once preached the gospel, churches that you couldn't fit another person into the pews or into the seats, churches where they actually had to open up the back doors of the church and line middle chairs out onto the porch to get the people in for the service have become polluted and they've become corrupted.

Those churches were once refuge. Those churches were once places of healing, places where people had received forgiveness, places where people had received restoration.

And now they're just like Gilead. Gilead, we all know about the balm of Gilead. The balm is actually only brought up really twice in the scripture, three times if you won't count one time in Genesis where it's not referred to as from Gilead.

When Joseph's brother is going to sell him into slavery and he talks about the Israelites' lives coming down and they're on their way to Egypt and one of the things they were selling was balm. But that could have very well come from this area of Gilead, but that's all beside the point.

[ 38 : 42 ] That's better for a Sunday school lesson. But Gilead was known as a place of healing. It was known as a place of refuge and it had become polluted folks.

It is my desire that this church never become corrupted and this church never become polluted. But if we stray from the things of God and we allow idols into our lives, I'm talking about the congregation of this particular church, the free gift, gospel mission, if we allow these things to happen, that is precisely what will happen.

It will become corrupt, it will become polluted. And then it won't be worth, as my daddy would have said, a plug nickel to the rest of the world.

We can't be a blessing if we're that way. We can help people, we can help people all day long, but to be a true godly blessing, we must be true godly people in a true godly environment doing true godly things to the glory of God.

But if we allow these other things into our lives, that will cease to happen. In our own lives, and as a body, a local body of belief is verse 9, and as troops and robbers wait for a man, so the company of priests murder in the way by consent for their commit lewdness.

[ 40 : 02 ] And as troops and robbers wait for a man, so the company of priests. Folks, the priests were the mediators between man and God. That was their role. That's what they did.

That's what Levi was set to the side for, and all of his descendants were set to the side for. They were the ones that were to give the offerings. They are the ones that burned the incense.

They are the ones that went to God on behalf of the rest of Israel. And they have become just as polluted. They have become just as polluted and just as corrupted.

The church leaders are accountable to the congregations. And the congregations need to hold church leaders accountable for their actions. They need to hold church leaders accountable for their interpretation of scripture, for how they teach scripture or preach scripture.

The congregations need to do that. Folks, this says here very plainly as troops and robbers wait for a man, so the company of priests murder in the way by consent.

[ 41 : 08 ] By consent of who? By consent of the people. The priests have become corrupted, and the people said nothing about it.

And that happens a lot in churches. That happens a lot in churches. We'll point our fingers at preachers that run off the church secretaries.

We'll point our fingers and look down our noses at song leaders that run off and do this or that. But the congregation never once points at the finger at themselves and says, you know, we should have helped them accountable.

We should have suspected this, or when we suspected it, we should have said something about it instead of letting it continue on and on and on. These priests were allowed to do what they did by consent.

They commit lewdness, I have seen, and horrible thing in the house of Israel. There is Hortom in Ephraim. Israel is defile. He says there is Hortom in Israel, or in Ephraim.

[ 42 : 13 ] And because there is Hortom in Ephraim, all of Israel is defiled. Now me personally, I think he's talking about all the Israelite people here, not just the northern kingdom.

That could be, that could not be. But I believe that that is the case. He brings up Ephraim though. Ephraim was not only a powerful tribe of Israel, but it was a powerful city within the northern kingdom.

It was a powerful city. It had a lot of influence. It had a lot of clout. And God is saying that there was Hortom in Ephraim. And because of the Hortom of Ephraim, it had trickled out and it had infiltrated the rest of Israel.

And folks, that's exactly how it will happen. It's exactly how it will happen. It will begin at the top. And it will filter on out. Don't believe me. Look at the United States government.

That's exactly how it happens. It starts at the top. And the people will say, well, they're doing it. I can do it. It was the same way with the Israelites.

[ 43 : 15 ] The Israelites, Samaria, being a capital city, it was the same way there. And God held Samaria accountable for their actions for polluting the rest of the kingdom.

Don't believe me? Read Micah chapter 1. God will hold responsible though. Those that are not... Now listen, I understand we're all responsible for our own sin. I get that. And we're accountable to God for that.

But it does trickle down from the top. Verse 11 will be done. Also, old Judah, He has sent in harvest for thee when I return the captivity of my people.

Folks, as much judgment as we've read about tonight, and that you can read about throughout the rest of Hosea, as much judgment as we have read about.

Hosea, the book of Hosea, chapter 6 of Hosea, is not without hope. It is not without hope. It is like so many other writings in the Old Testament that we read about judgment after judgment after judgment.

[ 44 : 20 ] On cities, on people, on countries, on kingdoms, on individuals, on families. We read about judgment on all these things. But folks, there is hope. And that hope can only be found in Almighty God.

He says, Alas, old Judah, He has sent in harvest for thee. Many times in the Scripture, harvest is talking about the gathering of the people for God, gathering of God's own people.

I personally think that maybe what Hosea is getting at here. However, that's not always the case. We read the book of Joel. Joel uses the harvest as a judgment on God's people.

He uses a scenario of a judgment on God's people. But he says, also old Judah, as I said before, Ephraim. Ephraim was so involved in all this idolatry and all this wickedness and all this sin, they allowed it to go on for so long and it had trickled in to the rest of Israel.

Not just the northern kingdom, but on down into the southern kingdom of Judah. And here, God says through Hosea, also old Judah, He has sent in harvest for thee when I return the captivity of my people.

[ 45 : 36 ] Folks, there is hope in this book. There is hope in verse two and there is hope in 11 for the people of God. But to receive that hope, we must repent of our ways.

We got to repent of our sin. And folks, it is no different for a lost individual. There is hope in Jesus Christ and there is only hope in Jesus Christ.

The poor lost sinner can come to Jesus Christ. He can spill out his heart under Christ. He can say, I've done this and I've done that. Why would you save me? But he comes in true faith and true repentance.

Jesus Christ will save his soul. That's the only hope that the sinner has. Folks, it is no different for us, the people of God. God is still the only hope that we have.

He is still the only hope that we have. When I return the captivity of my people, folks, that goes right back to verse two.

[ 46 : 41 ] It talks about, after two days he will revive us. And after three days we shall live in his sight. There is hope. There is hope for the people of God and there is hope for the center of me.

And it is all found in Jesus Christ. God bless you all. I appreciate your attention. Amen.