

Hosea 6:1-11 (1)

Tragically, for all the gospel truth and the moving appeal in Hosea's moving call for the people's repentance (**Hos. 6:1-3**), his words went largely unheeded.

Summary

In Hosea 6:4-11, the prophet's call to repentance goes unheeded and the Lord, in accommodated language, expresses bewilderment and wrath.

1. Accommodated Language vs. 4

We know that God is infinite, eternal, simple, unchangeable, and sovereign. So, how can God ever be spoken of in terms of being moved or experiencing frustration? (**Hos 6:4**).

God cannot be anything than that which He is and cannot be changed or moved in his being to be something this He is not already.

We express this theologically in the doctrines of divine simplicity (God is not made up of parts), divine immutability (God does not change), divine impassibility (God does not undergo emotive change in His being).

God is never uncertain or confused or frustrated or bewildered; and He is never thwarted. Since God is never changed or moved, we can rely on him to fulfill all that He has promised, remaining forever the infinite, eternal unchangeable, holy, loving God that the Bible reveals him to be.

The Bible often uses accommodated language of God, however, to help us understand what He reveals to us of Himself and His ways and the seriousness of situations in which men find themselves.

2. Apparent Bewilderment vs. 4a

This brings us to God's apparent frustration and bewilderment over Israel's willingness to repent (**Hos 6:4**).

This is said of God as would be said of a man in this situation to show the foolish and dismaying nature of Israel's behavior. The offer of salvation had been plainly stated by the Lord's prophet but the people rather than gladly and gratefully receiving God's grace and mercy responded with a shrug of indifference. Such willful disdain for God's saving grace will result in sinful man receiving the fiercest retribution (cf. **Matt. 11:21**).

3. Offensive Love vs. 4b

The problem was not only the Israel's idolatry and sin, but the offensiveness of the people's love (**Hos 6:4b**). Think of clouds that gather briefly but then dissipate or the morning dew that soon evaporates as the sun grows hotter. What would God say about our love for Him?

Sadly, the people of Israel did not really love God at all.

It might be argued that ancient Israel was no more idolatrous or immoral than any of the surrounding nations but Israel was God's covenant people. Theirs alone was the offense of covenant-breaking with the God of grace.

4. Severe Judgment vs. 5

Because of their covenant breaking God's response was severe (**Hos 6:5**).

Hosea's prophecy was given during the years when the Assyrian army was steadily conquering Israel's territory, taking its people into captivity.

So there is little doubt what judgment is being referred to here (Assyria).

What is striking is that Lord ascribes his judgment to his Word as spoken by the prophets.

Here we see the central place given to the preaching of God's Word in this world. The Lord does not merely woo Israel with sweet promises of love.

Hard hearts call for hard words, and true prophets spoke them.

This is why the message of God's judgment for sin must be sounded in our culture, which has turned from his Word.

Israel was like a scarred and hardened block of wood, so God's Word hewed it with great force. The aim was both that some might be saved and that the Lord would be glorified in the justice of his wrath when it came.

God adds, "My judgment goes forth as the light" (**Hos. 6:5**).

The dawning of light brings clarity to affairs on earth.

Turn ever a rock, and the light will expose worms and ether creeping things.

Likewise, the judgments spoken by the prophets revealed the sin of Israel against God.

In the beginning, God spoke and there was light.

God's gospel Word of Jesus Christ shined truth in his coming but, as Jesus lamented, "people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil" (**John 3:19**).

When God warns, an offer of mercy is always involved for those who will awaken to their danger, respond to his warning of judgement and seek the salvation that he so generously offers in His Son, Jesus Christ.

Paul noted something about the exodus that applies to the entire Old Testament: **1 Cor 10:11** these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction."

God is still speaking today.

Heed His voice; repent and believe in the One He has sent.