

Hosea 2:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And she shall follow after her lovers, but she shall not overtake them; and she shall seek them, but shall not find them: then shall she say, I will go and return to my first husband; for then was it better with me than now.

Analysis

Desired repentance: 'And she shall follow after her lovers, but she shall not overtake them; and she shall seek them, but shall not find them: then shall she say, I will go and return to my first husband; for then was it better with me than now.' God's obstacles (v. 6) produce futility: pursuing lovers without success. This is covenant curse (Deuteronomy 28:29, 'you shall grope at noonday as the blind gropes in darkness'). Frustration should prompt reflection: 'then was it better with me than now.' Comparison between relationship with YHWH and pursuit of idols reveals emptiness of false worship. 'Return to my first husband' shows repentance as homecoming—recognizing the covenant relationship forsaken. Yet context questions sincerity: is this pragmatic (seeking benefits) or genuine (grieving sin)? Verses 8-13 suggest shallow repentance motivated by desire to escape consequences rather than sorrow over offense. True repentance grieves sin itself, not merely consequences. Only Spirit-wrought regeneration produces such repentance.

Historical Context

Historically, Israel's 'returns' to YHWH were often superficial and temporary. Kings like Jehu destroyed Baal worship yet maintained Jeroboam's golden calves (2 Kings 10:29-31). Reforms under various kings didn't produce lasting change. Hosea 6:1-4

presents Israel's shallow repentance: quick 'let us return to the LORD' followed by God's complaint 'your goodness is as a morning cloud.' External religious activity doesn't equal heart transformation. Josiah's later reforms (640-609 BC in Judah) came too late and too shallow to prevent exile (2 Kings 23:25-27). This demonstrates that religious activity divorced from genuine heart change doesn't satisfy God. Jesus condemned such religion in Matthew 15:8: 'This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.'

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. Is my repentance motivated by desire to escape consequences or genuine sorrow for offending God?
2. How do I discern between pragmatic 'returning' to God for benefits versus true heart transformation?

Interlinear Text

וְרַקְפֵּתְךָ	אֶת	אַתְּ	וְלֹא	מַאֲכֵב יְהִי	תֵשְׁגַג	אַתְּ
And she shall follow	H853	after her lovers	H3808	but she shall not overtake	H5381	H853
H7291		H157		H5381		
וְבַקְשֵׁתְךָ	תִּמְצֵא	אַל	וְלֹא	תִּמְצֵא	וְאַמְכֵן	הִי
them and she shall seek	H3808	them but shall not find	H4672	them then shall she say	H559	
H1245				H559		
וְאָלָכְךָ	אַל	וְאָשָׁוֹבָה	אַל	בָּרָאשׁ וְיִ	וְ	ט וְ
and return	H413	husband	H376	to my first	H3588	for then was it better
H1980		H7725		H7223		H2896
מִעְתָּה	אַזְלִי					
with me than now	H227					
H0		H6258				

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 2:2 (Love): Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the LORD; I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown.

Hosea 5:13 (Parallel theme): When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah saw his wound, then went Ephraim to the Assyrian, and sent to king Jareb: yet could he not heal you, nor cure you of your wound.

Jeremiah 14:22 (Parallel theme): Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain? or can the heavens give showers? art not thou he, O LORD our God? therefore we will wait upon thee: for thou hast made all these things.

Ezekiel 23:4 (Parallel theme): And the names of them were Aholah the elder, and Aholibah her sister: and they were mine, and they bare sons and daughters. Thus were their names; Samaria is Aholah, and Jerusalem Aholibah.

Hosea 13:6 (Parallel theme): According to their pasture, so were they filled; they were filled, and their heart was exalted; therefore have they forgotten me.

