

Hosea 5:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early.

Analysis

Divine withdrawal unto repentance: 'I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early.' God declares withdrawal to 'my place' (מְקוֹמִי, meqomi—likely heaven, or presence), remaining there (ad, until) they acknowledge guilt (אַשְׁם, asham) and seek His face. The phrase 'in their affliction they will seek me early' (בָּאָרֶץ לְהַמִּזְרָחָה, batssar lahem yeshacharuneni—literally 'in distress they will seek me diligently/early') suggests adversity produces desperation driving return to God. This demonstrates God's purpose in judgment: not destruction but repentance. Affliction serves redemptive purpose—suffering intended to produce seeking. Only Christ's finished work makes God permanently accessible (Hebrews 10:19-22), ending need for repeated seeking.

Historical Context

The pattern of affliction producing repentance appears throughout Judges (Judges 3:9,15; 4:3; 6:6-7; 10:10). Israel's cycle: apostasy, oppression, crying out, deliverance. Exile similarly intended to produce genuine repentance. Deuteronomy 4:29-31 promises: 'if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart...in the latter days, if thou turn to the LORD thy God.' The promise partially fulfilled in post-exilic return (Ezra, Nehemiah) but ultimately in remnant accepting Messiah. Church history similarly

shows persecution producing deeper faith—comfortable Christianity often breeds complacency; affliction refines and purifies.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does God's withdrawal in judgment serve redemptive purposes of producing genuine seeking?
2. What does 'in their affliction they will seek me early' teach about suffering's role in spiritual formation?

Interlinear Text

אָשָׁר אָלָּא מִקְוָמִים עַד וְבָהּ אָלָּא
and return to my place

H1980

and return

H413

to my place

H5704

H834

H4725

לִפְנֵי רָגְשָׁתִים וְבְּבָשָׂר וְבְּלֹד
till they acknowledge their offence and seek my face in their affliction

H816

H1245

H6440

H6862

H1992

וְשִׁפְרָנָנִי
they will seek me early

H7836

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 26:16 (Parallel theme): LORD, in trouble have they visited thee, they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them.

Psalms 78:34 (Parallel theme): When he slew them, then they sought him: and they returned and enquired early after God.

Psalms 50:15 (Parallel theme): And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.

Jeremiah 2:27 (Parallel theme): Saying to a stock, Thou art my father; and to a stone, Thou hast brought me forth: for they have turned their back unto me, and not their face: but in the time of their trouble they will say, Arise, and save us.

Jeremiah 3:13 (Parallel theme): Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the LORD thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the LORD.

Isaiah 26:9 (Parallel theme): With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.

Luke 13:25 (Parallel theme): When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are:

Ezekiel 6:9 (Parallel theme): And they that escape of you shall remember me among the nations whither they shall be carried captives, because I am broken with their whorish heart, which hath departed from me, and with their eyes, which go a whoring after their idols: and they shall lothe themselves for the evils which they have committed in all their abominations.

Ezekiel 36:31 (Parallel theme): Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall lothe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations.

Hosea 3:5 (Parallel theme): Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days.

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