

# Hosea 6:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

## Analysis

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God's lament: '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.' This expresses divine frustration - not helplessness but anguish over Israel's superficial repentance. Their 'goodness' (hesed) is transient like morning fog or dew that vanishes quickly. Repentance motivated by desire to escape consequences (6:1-3) rather than genuine grief over sin proves temporary. Jesus condemned similar religion (Matthew 15:8): 'This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.' True repentance produces lasting transformation through Spirit's regenerating work (2 Corinthians 3:18).

## Historical Context

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Israel's pattern throughout history: crisis provokes temporary reform, prosperity brings renewed apostasy. Judges cycle demonstrates this: oppression, crying out, deliverance, apostasy, oppression. Kings occasionally reformed (Jehu, Jehoash), but changes didn't last. Hosea 6:1-3 presents shallow repentance - quick 'let us return' without deep heart change. Context (6:4-6) shows God rejecting such superficiality. Modern parallel: crisis conversions that don't produce lasting discipleship. Only Spirit-wrought regeneration creates permanent transformation, not circumstantial religion.

## Related Passages

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**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

## Study Questions

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1. How do I distinguish between temporary crisis-motivated repentance and genuine Spirit-wrought transformation in my life?
2. What evidence demonstrates that my 'goodness' is lasting fruit of regeneration rather than vanishing morning cloud?

## Interlinear Text

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מָה H4100	אֶעֱשֶׂה H6213	לְבָבִי H0	אֶפְרַיִם H669	מָה H4100	אֶעֱשֶׂה H6213	לְבָבִי H0
	what shall I do		O Ephraim		what shall I do	
יְהוּדָה H3063	וְעַד H0	וְעַד H0	וְעַד H0	בְּקָרְבָן H6051	בֹּקֶר H1242	וְעַד H2919
unto thee O Judah		unto thee for your goodness		cloud	is as a morning	dew
מִשְׁכֵּה יוֹם H7925	וְעַד H0	וְעַד H0	וְעַד H0	וְעַד H0	וְעַד H0	וְעַד H0
and as the early		it goeth away				

## Additional Cross-References

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**Hosea 11:8** (Parallel theme): How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together.

**Hosea 13:3** (Parallel theme): Therefore they shall be as the morning cloud, and as the early dew that passeth away, as the chaff that is driven with the whirlwind out of the floor, and as the smoke out of the chimney.

**Matthew 13:21** (Parallel theme): Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.

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