

Isaiah 9:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For the people turneth not unto him that smiteth them,
neither do they seek the LORD of hosts.

Analysis

The root problem is identified: despite judgment, the people refuse to return to God. 'Turneth not' indicates deliberate refusal to repent. 'Him that smiteth them' acknowledges God as the source of judgment, yet they won't turn to Him. 'Neither do they seek the Lord of hosts' reveals lack of spiritual desire despite pain. This demonstrates total depravity—the unregenerate heart resists God even under discipline. True repentance requires more than suffering; it requires sovereign grace regenerating the heart to seek God.

Historical Context

Despite repeated Assyrian invasions (740s-720s BC), Israel persisted in Baalism, syncretism, and social injustice. Historical records show King Hoshea attempting political solutions (Egyptian alliances) rather than spiritual repentance (2 Kings 17:4). The people continued idol worship even as Assyria advanced. This pattern repeated in Judah's history—external pressure rarely produced genuine repentance without prophetic call and divine grace enabling response.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. Why does suffering alone often fail to produce repentance without the Holy Spirit's work?
2. How do we sometimes seek relief from consequences rather than restoration of relationship with God?
3. What is the difference between regret over suffering and true repentance toward God?

Interlinear Text

וְהָעָם	לֹא	שׁוּב	עַד	הַמֶּלֶךְ הוּא	וְאֵת	יְהוָה
For the people	H3808	turneth	H5704	not unto him that smiteth	H853	the LORD
H5971		H7725		H5221		H3068
וְצָבָא וְ	לֹא	דָּרְשׁוּ:				
of hosts	H3808	them neither do they seek				
H6635		H1875				

Additional Cross-References

Hosea 7:10 (References Lord): And the pride of Israel testifieth to his face: and they do not return to the LORD their God, nor seek him for all this.

Isaiah 31:1 (References Lord): Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the LORD!

Jeremiah 5:3 (References Lord): O LORD, are not thine eyes upon the truth? thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction: they have made their faces harder than a rock; they have refused to return.

Isaiah 1:5 (Parallel theme): Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.

