

Hosea 14 Commentary

[PREVIOUS](#)

[NEXT](#)

[CLICK VERSE](#)

To go directly to that verse

[Hosea 14:1](#)

[Hosea 14:2](#)

[Hosea 14:3](#)

[Hosea 14:4](#)

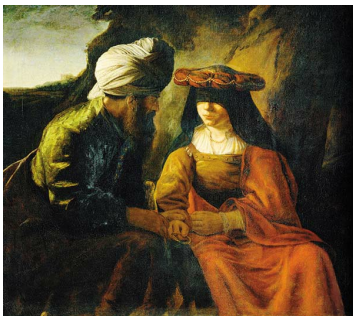
[Hosea 14:5](#)

[Hosea 14:6](#)

[Hosea 14:7](#)

[Hosea 14:8](#)

[Hosea 14:9](#)



Hosea's Unconditional Love for Gomer



Source: [ESV Global Study Bible](#)

OUTLINE OF HOSEA

I. The Prodigal Wife, Hosea 1:1-3:5

- A. Her Unfaithfulness, Hosea 1:1-11
- B. Her Punishment, Hosea 2:1-13
- C. Her Restoration and Israel's, Hosea 2:14-23
- D. Her Redemption, Hosea 3:1-5

II. The Prodigal People, Hosea 4:1-14:9

- A. The Message of Judgment, Hosea 4:1-10:15
 - 1. The indictment, Hosea 4:1-19
 - 2. The verdict, Hosea 5:1-15
 - 3. The plea of Israel, Hosea 6:1-3
 - 4. The reply of the Lord, Hosea 6:4-11

5. The crimes of Israel, Hosea 7:1-16
 6. The prophecy of judgment, Hosea 8:1-10:15
 - B. The Message of Restoration, Hosea 11:1-14:9
 1. God's love for the prodigal people, Hosea 11:1-11
 2. God's chastisement of the prodigal people, Hosea 11:12-13:16
 3. God's restoration of the prodigal people, Hosea 14:1-9
- Borrow [Ryrie Study Bible](#) - page 1292

Hosea 14:1 Return, O Israel, to the LORD your God, For you have stumbled because of your iniquity.

KJV O Israel, return unto the LORD thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity.

NET Return, O Israel, to the LORD your God, for your sin has been your downfall!

NLT Return, O Israel, to the LORD your God, for your sins have brought you down.

BGT πιστρ φητι Ισραηλ πρ ς κ ριον τ ν θε ν σου δι τι σθ νησας ν τα ς δικ αις σου

LXE Return, O Israel, to the Lord thy God; for the people have fallen through thine iniquities.

CSB Israel, return to Yahweh your God, for you have stumbled in your sin.

ESV Return, O Israel, to the LORD your God, for you have stumbled because of your iniquity.

NIV Return, O Israel, to the LORD your God. Your sins have been your downfall!

YLT Turn back, O Israel, unto Jehovah thy God, For thou hast stumbled by thine iniquity.

- return (KJV): Ho 6:1 12:6 1Sa 7:3,4 2Ch 30:6-9 Isa 55:6,7 Jer 3:12-14 4:1 Joe 2:12,13 Zec 1:3,4 Ac 26:18-20
- thou (KJV): Ho 13:9 Jer 2:19 La 5:16 Eze 28:14-16

RETURN O SINNER

Hosea's final chapter opens with one last tender and urgent appeal for repentance. After all of Israel's idolatry, spiritual adultery, self-reliance, and stubborn rebellion, Yahweh still calls His people to "Return." Judgment is deserved, but the door of repentance is still open. Compare Hosea 12:6, "Therefore, return to your God."

Return ([shub](#); LXX - [epistrepho](#) - turn back, repent), **O Israel** - [Shub](#) is one of the great words for repentance in the Old Testament. Its basic sense is to turn back, return, or reverse direction. Israel had repeatedly turned away from Yahweh (Hos 7:13; 11:7); now they are commanded to turn back to Him. Biblical repentance is therefore more than feeling sorry about sin. It involves a decisive change of direction, turning from sin and returning to God (cf. Isa 55:6-7; Jer 3:12-14; Joel 2:12-13). "O Israel" - There is tenderness in this address. Yahweh does not say, "Go away, Israel," but "Return, O Israel." After thirteen chapters documenting their persistent unfaithfulness, God is still calling His covenant people back to Himself. What amazing grace!

[Bob Utley](#) - "**Return**" This is a *Qal* IMPERATIVE. "**Return**" is a recurrent theme in Hosea (e.g. Hosea 3:5; 5:4; 6:1; 7:10,16; 11:5; 12:6; 14:1-2). True repentance brings physical and spiritual benefits! Remember that repentance is related to personal relationship (i.e. "return to the Lord your God," e.g. Hosea 2:13; 4:6; 8:14; 13:6; Amos 4:6,9,10,11) as much as it is to rules!

Notice the progression is not merely **return** from your idols to better behavior but ultimately **return to the LORD your God**. Indeed, genuine repentance is not mechanical but relational. Sin is against Yahweh and breaks fellowship while repentance brings the sinner back into fellowship with the Holy One (cf. Ps 51:4; Lk 15:18-20). This call to **return O Israel** also recalls Hosea's relationship with Gomer. Gomer had gone after other lovers, yet Hosea was commanded to go after her and love her again (Hos 3:1-3). Hosea's marriage had become a living picture of the very message with which his prophecy concludes. So just as Gomer was to return to her husband. Israel was to return to her Husband (see Israel the Wife of Jehovah)

Robert Chisholm - Though this final appeal would surely be rejected by His arrogant and stubborn nation (cf. Hos 10:12-15), it would instill hope in the hearts of a righteous remnant and provide the repentant generation of the future with a model to follow in returning to the Lord (cf. Hos 3:5; 5:15b-6:3). (See [The Bible Knowledge Commentary Minor Prophets - Page 27](#))

To the LORD your God - Notice again the beautiful covenant expression **your God** in spite of all the abominable deeds Israel had committed! The One to Whom Israel must return is not a stranger. He is Yahweh, their covenant God, the One Who redeemed them

from Egypt and had cared for them throughout their history (Hos 12:9; 13:4–5) and Who remains faithful to His Covenant.

For you have stumbled ([kashal](#); LXX - [astheneo](#) become sick, weak, powerless) **because of your iniquity** (['avon](#); LXX - [adikia](#) - generally disregard for what is right;) - **NET** = "for your sin has been your downfall!" Hosea identifies both Israel's condition and its cause. Israel had **stumbled**, and the obstacle over which they had fallen was their own **iniquity**! Is this not a picture of all of us beloved! Assyria would be the instrument of their destruction, but Assyria was not the fundamental cause. Israel was being brought down by their own sin, even as declared earlier in Hosea 5:5 "Israel and Ephraim stumble in their iniquity."

The principle to not miss is that sin is deceitful and always promises freedom but eventually will stumble the sinner. What Israel thought would strengthen and secure them (idols, kings, alliances) ultimately brought them down (cf. Pr 13:6; 14:34; Jer 2:19). But don't miss the mercy of Yahweh, for although Israel had fallen, He was still calling them to arise and return. Their iniquity was great, but God's grace is greater and in His boundless mercy the invitation to repent remained. Amazing grace indeed, for sinners such as all of us!

Bob Utley - "**stumbled**" The OT imagery for unstable footing is used to describe the spiritual life. Sure footing is a sign of a healthy spiritual life, while stumbling (*Qal*/ PERFECT) is a sign of sin (cf. Hosea 5:5b; Isa. 3:8; 59:10,14; Jer. 46:6).

No matter how far Israel had wandered, the road of repentance still led home: "Return...to the LORD your God."

THOUGHT - Hosea does not end by telling sinners to try harder but by telling them to return to God. When we stumble in our sin, our fallen flesh tempts us either to hide from God (Pr 28:13) or to attempt to repair ourselves before approaching Him. God's invitation is far more gracious: **RETURN!** Confess the sin, forsake it, and come back to the God against Whom you have sinned (1 Jn 1:9).

Matthew Henry concise - Hosea 14:1-3 (Updated and Modernized) - Israel is exhorted to return to the LORD, turning from sin and idols and casting himself upon God's mercy and grace (Hos 14:1; Isa 55:6–7; Joel 2:12–13). True repentance is not merely turning from sin but turning to God in faith, worship, and obedience (1 Th 1:9; Acts 20:21). "Take away all iniquity" (Hos 14:2) is the confession of people who recognize that sin is a burden they cannot remove themselves and a stumbling block over which they have repeatedly fallen (Hos 14:1; Ps 38:4; Mic 7:19). Only God can completely forgive and remove our guilt: "As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us" (Ps 103:12; cf. Isa 1:18; 43:25; 1 Jn 1:9). "Receive us graciously" expresses complete dependence upon God's undeserved favor. They do not dictate what form His goodness must take but entrust themselves to the God Who knows what is truly good for them (Ps 84:11; Mt 7:11; Ro 8:32). Significantly, Hosea tells them, "Take words with you and return to the LORD" (Hos 14:2). They were not to come relying upon sacrifices or religious performance, but with words expressing genuine confession and repentance from the heart (Ps 51:16–17; Isa 57:15; 66:2). This beautifully pictures the sinner's return to God: recognize your sin, confess your helplessness, ask God to remove your guilt, appeal to His grace, and trust His provision of forgiveness, which finds its ultimate fulfillment in Jesus Christ, "in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins" (Col 1:14; cf. Eph 1:7; 1 Pe 2:24). And because even our praying needs divine instruction, we should come as the disciples did, "Lord, teach us to pray" (Lk 11:1), asking the Spirit to help us in our weakness (Ro 8:26). The repentant sinner does not bargain with God or attempt to remove his own guilt. He comes empty-handed, with words of confession and faith, asking God to do what only God can do: "Take away all iniquity and receive us graciously."

Hosea 14:2 Take words with you and return to the LORD. Say to Him, "Take away all iniquity And receive us graciously, That we may present the fruit of our lips.

KJV Take with you words, and turn to the LORD: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips.

NET Return to the LORD and repent! Say to him: "Completely forgive our iniquity; accept our penitential prayer, that we may offer the praise of our lips as sacrificial bulls.

NLT Bring your confessions, and return to the LORD. Say to him, "Forgive all our sins and graciously receive us, so that we may offer you our praises.

BGT λ βετε μεθ αυτ ν λ γους κα πιστρ φητε πρ ς κ ριον τ ν θε ν μ ν ε πατε α τ πως μ λ βητε δικ αν κα λ βητε γαθ κα νταποδ σομεν καρπ ν χειλ ων μ ν

LXE Take with you words, and turn to the Lord your God: speak to him, that ye may not receive the reward of unrighteousness, but that ye may receive good things: and we will render in return the fruit of our lips.

CSB Take words of repentance with you and return to the LORD. Say to Him: "Forgive all our sin and accept what is good, so that we may repay You with praise from our lips.

ESV Take with you words and return to the LORD; say to him, "Take away all iniquity; accept what is good, and we will pay with bulls the vows of our lips.

NIV Take words with you and return to the LORD. Say to him: "Forgive all our sins and receive us graciously, that we may offer the fruit of our lips.

YLT Take with you words, and turn to Jehovah, Say ye unto Him: 'Take away all iniquity, and give good, And we do render the fruit of our lips.

- with, Job 34:31,32 Joe 2:17 Mt 6:9-13 Lu 11:2-4 18:13
- away: 2Sa 12:13 24:10 Job 7:21 Ps 51:2-10 Isa 6:7 Eze 36:25,26 Mic 7:19 Zec 3:4 Joh 1:29 Ro 11:27 Tit 2:14 Heb 10:4 1Jn 1:7 3:5
- receive: etc. or, give good, Mt 7:11 Lu 11:13 15:21-24 Eph 1:6,7 2:7,8 2Ti 1:9
- the calves: Ps 69:30,31 Heb 13:15 1Pe 2:5,9

Related Passages:

Psalms 51:16-17 For You do not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it; You are not pleased with burnt offering. 17The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.

Hebrews 13:15 Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.

Isaiah 55:7 Let the wicked forsake his way And the unrighteous man his thoughts; And let him return to the LORD, And He will have compassion on him, And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon.

Take words with you and return to the LORD. Say to Him, "Take away all iniquity And receive us graciously, That we may present the fruit of our lips. Hosea not only calls Israel to repentance, but remarkably gives them the very words of repentance they are to speak. Yahweh does not leave His wandering people wondering how they can return. In effect He says, "Come back to Me, and here is what you should say." What a beautiful picture of divine grace!

Take words with you - They were not first told to bring bulls, goats, grain offerings, or money. They were to bring words, words flowing from genuinely broken, repentant hearts. This does not mean sacrifices were inherently wrong, for God Himself had commanded them under the Mosaic Law. Rather, sacrifices without repentance had become empty religious ritual (cf. 1 Sa 15:22; Ps 51:16-17; Hos 6:6; Isa 1:11-17). What Yahweh desired was heartfelt confession and genuine return. The words are important because true repentance does not merely feel sorrow; it acknowledges sin before God (Ps 32:5; 51:3-4; Pr 28:13; 1 Jn 1:9).

And return to the LORD - This repeats the command of Hos 14:1 and emphasizes that repentance is fundamentally a change of direction. Israel was not merely to stop worshiping idols. They were to turn from idols and return to Yahweh Himself. Biblical repentance is both negative and positive as Paul describes in 1Th 1:9 writing to the Thessalonians "you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God."

Say to Him - Israel is commanded to address the God against Whom they have sinned. There is no blaming Assyria, their kings, their circumstances, or one another. They must come directly before Yahweh and confess sin and request forgiveness. It is fascinating that God Himself supplies the words Israel was to say! The God Who commanded repentance graciously taught these sinners how to approach Him. This recalls David's prayer, "O Lord, open my lips, that my mouth may declare Your praise" (Ps 51:15), and the disciples' request, "Lord, teach us to pray" (Lk 11:1).

Take away all iniquity and receive us graciously- What a magnificent request! Israel was to ask Him to remove the sin itself. The word **all** is important. Genuine confession does not bargain with God over cherished sins or ask Him to forgive some while allowing us to retain others. Sin had caused Israel to "stumble" (Hos 14:1). Now they ask Yahweh to remove the very iniquity over which they had fallen. The request, "Take away all iniquity," also recognizes that only God can forgive sin, while **receive us graciously** appeals solely to His unmerited favor. They come asking not on the basis of their merit but God's grace. They have nothing with which to bargain.

Bob Utley - "**Take away all iniquity**" The VERB (BDB 669, KB 724, *Qal* IMPERFECT) is surrounded by IMPERATIVES. This phrase occurs several times (7) in the OT with YHWH as its subject (cf. Exod. 34:7; Num. 14:18; Ps. 32:5; 85:2; Isa. 33:24; Hosea 14:2; Micah 7:18) and always means "remove iniquity" (cf. NIDOTTE, vol. 3, p. 162). It is a plea from truly repentant covenant people.

That we may present the fruit of our lips - The Hebrew literally speaks of “the bulls/calves of our lips,” an unusual expression which pictures verbal praise and thanksgiving being offered to God as a sacrifice. Instead of offering animal sacrifices, the repentant people promise to offer “the fruit of our lips,” that is, sacrifices of heartfelt praise and thanksgiving flowing from forgiven hearts (cf. Ps. 51:16-17; Heb. 13:15). God has always desired genuine repentance and worship from the heart rather than mere outward ritual.

THOUGHT - We do not need elaborate words to return to God. We need honest words from a repentant heart. When we sin, our fallen flesh wants to hide, minimize, rationalize, or excuse what we have done. Hosea teaches us instead to take words and return. Name the sin, confess it, ask God to cleanse it, receive His gracious forgiveness, and then let forgiven lips become praising lips (Ps 32:5; 51:10–17; 1 Jn 1:9).

Bob Utley - present the fruit of our lips - The VERB (Piel COHORTATIVE) basically means “to complete,” here to pay a vow (e.g. 2 Sam. 15:7; Ps. 50:14; 66:13; 116:14,18; Isa. 19:21). This refers to confession, prayer, and praise (cf. Heb. 13:15). This passage is used by modern Judaism to rationalize the place of prayer as a substitute for sacrifice (cf. Ps. 50; 69:30-31). Mosaic Judaism ceased with the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in A.D. 70, by the Roman army under Titus. Mosaic Judaism requires a temple and priests! Modern Judaism is not Mosaic; it is Talmudic and rabbinical.

Hosea 14:3 “Assyria will not save us, We will not ride on horses; Nor will we say again, ‘Our god,’ To the work of our hands; For in You the orphan finds mercy.”

KJV Asshur shall not save us; we will not ride upon horses: neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, Ye are our gods: for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy.

NET Assyria cannot save us; we will not ride warhorses. We will never again say, 'Our gods' to what our own hands have made. For only you will show compassion to Orphan Israel!"

NLT Assyria cannot save us, nor can our war-horses. Never again will we say to the idols we have made, 'You are our gods.' No, in you alone do the orphans find mercy."

BGT Ασσουρ ο μ σ σ μ ς φ ππον ο κ ναβησ μεθα ο κ τι μ ε πωμεν θεο μ ν το ς ργοις τ ν χειρ ν μ ν ν σο λε σει ρφαν ν

LXE Assur shall never save us; we will not mount on horseback; we will no longer say to the works of our hands, Our gods. He who is in thee shall pity the orphan.

CSB Assyria will not save us, we will not ride on horses, and we will no longer proclaim, 'Our gods! ' to the work of our hands. For the fatherless receives compassion in You."

ESV Assyria shall not save us; we will not ride on horses; and we will say no more, 'Our God,' to the work of our hands. In you the orphan finds mercy."

NIV Assyria cannot save us; we will not mount war-horses. We will never again say 'Our gods' to what our own hands have made, for in you the fatherless find compassion."

YLT Asshur doth not save us, on a horse we ride not, Nor do we say any more, Our God, to the work of our hands, For in Thee find mercy doth the fatherless.'

- Asshur: Ho 5:13 7:11 8:9 12:1 2Ch 16:7 Ps 146:3 Jer 31:18-22
- we will not: De 17:16 Ps 20:7,8 33:17 Isa 30:2,16 31:3 36:8
- neither: Ho 14:8 2:17 Isa 1:29 2:20 27:9 Eze 36:25 37:23 43:7-9 Mic 5:10-14 Zec 13:2
- for: Ex 22:22-24 Ps 10:14 68:5 146:9 Pr 23:10,11 Joh 14:18

Related Passages:

Deuteronomy 17:16 “Moreover, he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor shall he cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, since the LORD has said to you, ‘You shall never again return that way.’

Isaiah 30:1-3 “Woe to the rebellious children,” declares the LORD, “Who execute a plan, but not Mine, And make an alliance, but not of My Spirit, In order to add sin to sin; 2 Who proceed down to Egypt Without consulting Me, To take refuge in the safety of Pharaoh And to seek shelter in the shadow of Egypt! 3 “Therefore the safety of Pharaoh will be your shame And the shelter in the shadow of Egypt, your humiliation.

Isaiah 31:1 Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help And rely on horses, And trust in chariots because

they are many And in horsemen because they are very strong, But they do not look to the Holy One of Israel, nor seek the LORD!

THE FRUIT OF REPENTANCE

Assyria will not save ([yasha'](#) - in Ho 1:7, 13:4, 10, 14:3) **us, We will not ride on horses; Nor will we say again, 'Our god,' To the work of our hands; For in You the orphan finds mercy.** This verse beautifully expresses the marks of genuine repentance. Notice the words "**not...not...nor...again**" describing a genuine repentance involves a decisive repudiation of former dependencies. Israel renounces the very things in which she had placed her confidence including foreign alliances ("Assyria will not save us"), military strength ("we will not ride on horses," likely an allusion to Egypt's cavalry; cf. Isa. 31:1), and idolatry ("we will not say again, 'Our god,' to the work of our hands").

Bob Utley - "**Assyria will not save** ([yasha'](#)) **us**" In this verse there are allusions to political alliances and the things that human leaders tend to trust: (1) foreign alliances (Assyria's treaties, i.e. Hosea 5:13), (2) military power (Egyptian horses, cf. Ps. 20:7; 33:17; Isa. 2:7; 30:16; 31:1), (3) idols ("work of our hands," i.e. Canaanite fertility gods) ■ **"To the work of our hands"** Hosea ridicules idolatry in Hos. 4:12; 14:3; Isaiah in Isa. 2:18,20; 17:7-9; 31:7; and Jeremiah in Jer. 10:3-5,8-9,14-15. This attitude reflects Exod. 20:4-5; 34:17; Lev. 19:4; 26:1; Deut. 4:15-19,25; 5:8.

The irony is striking for Israel had looked to Assyria as a potential savior, but Assyria would become her destroyer (2 Ki 17:3-6; Hos 11:5) This is one of Hosea's great lessons: Whatever we trust instead of God may ultimately become the very thing that exposes the foolishness of our trust.

In short, the nation finally acknowledges that no political power, military resource, or man-made idol can provide the salvation that belongs to the LORD alone. Instead, Israel is to cast herself upon God's mercy, confessing, **"For in You the orphan finds mercy."** The orphan, having no earthly protector or provider, pictures one who is utterly helpless and completely dependent upon God. True repentance always involves turning from every false refuge and turning to the Lord alone, recognizing that He is the only Savior who graciously receives and restores those who humbly trust in Him. (cf. Ps. 20:7; Isa. 31:1; Jer. 17:5-8).

We will not ride on horses - Israel's problem was confidence in **horses** instead of confidence in Yahweh. **Horses** represented military strength and human power, particularly cavalry and chariots. Israel had been specifically warned against multiplying horses and depending upon military might (Dt 17:16; cf. Isa 30:1-3, 16; 31:1). The psalmist expresses the opposite attitude declaring "Some boast in chariots and some in horses, but we will boast in the name of the LORD, our God." (Ps 20:7) And again "A horse is a false hope for victory; nor does it deliver anyone by its great strength." (Ps 33:17)

For in You the orphan finds mercy ([racham](#); LXX - [eleeo](#) - of helping someone because of pity) - Here is the theological heart of the confession. Israel finally recognizes that the helpless find their help. The orphan was one of the most vulnerable members of ancient society, lacking the father who normally provided protection, provision, and legal defense (Ex 22:22-24; Dt 10:18; Ps 68:5). Thus the orphan becomes a beautiful picture of utter dependence.

Bob Utley - "**For in You the orphan finds mercy**" YHWH is again depicted as a merciful parent as in Hosea 11:1-4 (cf. Ps. 68:5; Lam. 5:3). The orphan represents the powerless and vulnerable people of society. YHWH's people should care for these kinds of people (e.g. Exod. 22:21-24; Deut. 10:18-19; 14:29; 16:11-12; 24:17,19; 26:12-13; 27:19). The VERB "**finds mercy**" *Pual* IMPERFECT) is the same as one of Hosea's children (negated) in Hosea 1:6; 2:4, but mercy is restored in Hosea 2:1,19,23 and here! This is a covenant term like "My people" (cf. Hosea 1:9 vs. 2:1).

We may not trust Assyria, horses, or carved idols, but our fallen flesh continually manufactures modern equivalents: money, influence, intelligence, possessions, relationships, government, accomplishments, or our own abilities. Anything we depend upon to provide what ultimately only God can provide can become a functional idol (cf. Jer 17:5-8; Mt 6:24).

Mercy (have compassion, mercy)([07355](#)) [racham](#) from rechem = womb ~ suggesting a connection between the place of the developing child and the strong feelings of love a mother has toward her child) speaks a deep love of one for another rooted in some "natural" bond (cp rechem = womb). Racham manifests itself as an "emotional" response to one's needs. Racham means to feel another's pain so deeply that you are moved to do something about it. Racham means to have compassion, to have mercy, to find mercy. "The word pictures a deep, kindly sympathy and sorrow felt for another who has been struck with affliction or misfortune, accompanied with a desire to relieve the suffering." (Baker)

Racham is only used one time of a person saying he loves God (Ps. 18:1). More often racham is used of God saying He will or will not have compassion on people. Ps 103:13 compares God's compassion for those who fear Him to a father's compassion for his

children.

RACHAM - 45V -6X IN HOSEA - Exod. 33:19; Deut. 13:17; Deut. 30:3; 1 Ki. 8:50; 2 Ki. 13:23; 2 Ki. 13:25; 2 Ki. 14:3; Ps. 18:1; Ps. 102:13; Ps. 103:13; Ps. 116:5; Prov. 28:13; Isa. 9:17; Isa. 13:18; Isa. 14:1; Isa. 27:11; Isa. 30:18; Isa. 49:10; Isa. 49:13; Isa. 49:15; Isa. 54:8; Isa. 54:10; Isa. 55:7; Isa. 60:10; Jer. 6:23; Jer. 12:15; Jer. 13:14; Jer. 21:7; Jer. 30:18; Jer. 31:20; Jer. 33:26; Jer. 42:12; Jer. 50:42; Lam. 3:32; Ezek. 39:25; Hos. 1:6; Hos. 1:7; Hos. 2:1; Hos. 2:4; Hos. 2:23; Hos. 14:3; Mic. 7:19; Hab. 3:2; Zech. 1:12; Zech. 10:6

Matthew Henry Concise (Revised and modernized) - Hosea 14:4-8 - Israel will return and seek the LORD, and those who truly seek Him will not seek Him in vain (Hos 14:1–2; Jer 29:13). God’s anger will be turned away, and He will “love them freely” (Hos 14:4), not because they deserve His love, but because of His own grace and good pleasure (Dt 7:7–8; Eph 1:4–6; 2Ti 1:9). God Himself will become everything they need. He will be “like the dew to Israel” (Hos 14:5), quietly and graciously supplying the life and strength that produce spiritual growth and fruitfulness (Ps 133:3; Isa 44:3–4).

Israel will “blossom like the lily” (Hos 14:5), becoming beautiful and flourishing under God’s gracious care (cf. Mt 6:28–29). Yet their growth will not merely be outward. They will “take root like the cedars of Lebanon” (Hos 14:5). The lily pictures beauty above ground, while the roots picture strength and stability beneath the surface. Much of genuine spiritual growth occurs where no one else can see it, as believers become increasingly “rooted and built up in Him” (Col 2:7; cf. Eph 3:17).

Their growth will also spread outward: “His shoots will sprout” (Hos 14:6). Like a healthy vine extending its branches, a spiritually healthy life influences others through good works and godly character (Jn 15:5, 8; Col 1:10). Their “beauty will be like the olive tree” and their fragrance “like the cedars of Lebanon” (Hos 14:6). Holiness gives beauty to the life, while spiritual fruit brings blessing to others (Ps 1:3; Php 1:11).

Those who “live in his shadow” will also flourish (Hos 14:7). They do not merely run to God temporarily when trouble comes, but make Him their abiding refuge: “He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty” (Ps 91:1; cf. Ps 36:7). A life transformed by God can become a source of blessing to those around it (Ge 12:2–3; Mt 5:14–16).

The great evidence of Israel’s transformation is Ephraim’s declaration, “What more have I to do with idols?” (Hos 14:8). The idols once loved are now rejected. This demonstrates the transforming power of divine grace and the true nature of repentance: turning from sin and turning to God (1Th 1:9; Ezek 14:6). God’s promises and grace provide the power for this transformation, for it is God who works in His people “both to will and to work for His good pleasure” (Php 2:13; cf. Titus 2:11–12).

Even Israel’s painful discipline had served God’s gracious purpose. Through judgment He exposed the folly of their idolatry and brought them to repentance. As Isaiah says concerning God’s discipline of Israel, “the full price of the pardoning of her sin” would be demonstrated in the removal of her idols (Isa 27:9; cf. Heb 12:10–11). Sanctified affliction can therefore produce the “peaceful fruit of righteousness.”

Finally, God declares, “I have answered and will regard him. I am like a luxuriant cypress; from Me comes your fruit” (Hos 14:8). Everything Israel needs ultimately comes from Him. God is their refuge, protection, life, strength, and source of fruitfulness. The same principle is expressed by Jesus: “He who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing” (Jn 15:5; cf. Gal 5:22–23).

The great message of Hosea 14:4–8 is that the God who restores His people also transforms them. His grace produces deeper roots, wider branches, beautiful character, abundant fruit, and a decisive turning away from idols. And behind it all stands God’s declaration: “From Me comes your fruit.”

Hosea 14:4 I will heal their apostasy, I will love them freely, For My anger has turned away from them.

KJV I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him.

NET "I will heal their waywardness and love them freely, for my anger will turn away from them.

NLT The LORD says, "Then I will heal you of your faithlessness; my love will know no bounds, for my anger will be gone forever.

BGT σομαι τς κατοικας ατν γαπ σω α το ς μολγως τι π στρεψεν ργ μου π ατν

LXE I will restore their dwellings, I will love them truly: for he has turned away my wrath from him.

CSB I will heal their apostasy; I will freely love them, for My anger will have turned from him.

ESV I will heal their apostasy; I will love them freely, for my anger has turned from them.

NIV "I will heal their waywardness and love them freely, for my anger has turned away from them.

YLT I heal their backsliding, I love them freely, For turned back hath Mine anger from him.

- heal: Ho 11:7 Ex 15:26 Isa 57:18 Jer 3:22, 5:6, 8:22, 14:7, 17:1,4 33:6 Mt 9:12,13
- I will love: De 7:7-8 Zep 3:17 Ro 3:24 Eph 1:6 Eph 2:4-9 2Ti 1:9 Titus 3:4

Related Passages:

Exodus 15:26 And He said, "If you will give earnest heed to the voice of the LORD your God, and do what is right in His sight, and give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have put on the Egyptians; for I, the LORD, am your healer."

Isaiah 57:18 "I have seen his ways, but I will heal him; I will lead him and restore comfort to him and to his mourners,

Jeremiah 3:22 "Return, O faithless sons, I will heal your faithlessness." "Behold, we come to You; For You are the LORD our God.

Jeremiah 14:7 "Although our iniquities testify against us, O LORD, act for Your name's sake! Truly our apostasies have been many, We have sinned against You.

Hosea 6:1 "Come, let us return to the LORD. For He has torn us, but He will heal us; He has wounded us, but He will bandage us.

Deuteronomy 7:7-8 "The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any of the peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples, 8but because the LORD loved you and kept the oath which He swore to your forefathers, the LORD brought you out by a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

Zephaniah 3:17 "The LORD your God is in your midst, A victorious warrior. He will exult over you with joy, He will be quiet in His love, He will rejoice over you with shouts of joy.

Ephesians 2:4-5 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

1 John 4:10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

1 John 4:19 We love, because He first loved us.

I will heal ([rapha/rophe](#); LXX - [iaomai](#) - figuratively of deliverance from sin and its evil consequences restore, make whole) **their apostasy** ([meshubah](#) - waywardness, faithlessness, backsliding) Hosea concludes on a magnificent note of grace and restoration. "Apostasy" ([meshubah](#)) describes turning away, backsliding, or faithlessness. Israel's fundamental disease was not Assyria, military weakness, or economic instability. It was a heart continually turning away from Yahweh (cf. Hos 11:7; Jer 3:22). Notice God's remedy: "**I will heal.**" **Apostasy** is pictured as a spiritual sickness requiring divine healing. Israel was called to recognize the disease and return to Yahweh, but only Yahweh could heal the diseased heart (cf. Jer 17:14; 30:17). Jeremiah contains a striking parallel "Return, O faithless sons, I will heal your faithlessness." (Jer 3:22) The Great Physician does more than treat the symptoms. He heals the underlying disease that caused Israel repeatedly to wander from Him.

There is a beautiful word relationship here. The noun translated "**apostasy**" comes from the same word family as "return" ([shub](#)). Israel had turned away from Yahweh. Yahweh commanded them to turn back to Him. When they returned, Yahweh promised to heal their turning away. That is grace dealing not merely with the consequences of sin but with its underlying problem.

Bob Utley - "**I will heal their apostasy**" In verses 4-8 YHWH speaks! The VERB is a *Qal* IMPERFECT. **Healing** is an OT imagery for forgiveness (cf. Hosea 5:13; 6:1; 7:1; 11:3; Ps. 103:3; Isa. 57:18; Jer. 3:22). The term "**apostasy**" is literally "turning back" (cf. Hosea 11:7). It is used in Jeremiah for turning away from YHWH (cf. Jer. 2:19; 3:22; 5:6; 8:5; 14:7; Judah is called faithless in Hosea 3:6,8,11,14; also notice 7:24). If Israel "turns back" (i.e. repents) from sin (cf. Hosea 14:1) YHWH will "heal their turning back" (i.e. apostasy) tendencies! His anger has "turned away from them" (cf. Deut. 30:1-10). Notice the series of sound word plays on [shub](#) (BDB 996; see note below).

I will love ([ahab/ahab](#); LXX [-agapao](#)) **them freely** ([nedabah](#); LXX - homologos = openly, willingly) - **NLT** = "my love will know no bounds" **Freely** carries the idea of voluntarily, willingly (used of "freewill offering" Lev 7:16), graciously, without payment or merit. God's love is not something Israel would earn or merit. Yahweh's love is solely because it is His gracious disposition to do so, completely independent of any merit on the loved one's part! This is particularly striking after everything Hosea has recorded about Israel. They had committed spiritual adultery, pursued Baal, trusted foreign nations, practiced injustice, and repeatedly rejected God's prophets. What could Israel possibly offer to make herself worthy of Yahweh's love? Nothing! Amazing grace indeed! To be sure, God's love ultimately finds its explanation not in the loveliness of its object but in the character of the One Who loves (cf. Eph 2:4–5; 1 Jn 4:10, 19).

Bob Utley - "**I will love them freely**" This VERB **love** (*Qal* IMPERFECT) is parallel to "heal" in line 1. Grace (YHWH's unchanging character, cf. Mal. 3:6), not merit (humans ever-changing heart and motives), is the key to the New Covenant (cf. Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek. 36:22-36; Eph. 2:8-9,10). However, an initial and ongoing response is demanded, not only repentance and faith (cf. Deut. 30; Mark 1:15; Acts 2:21), but also obedience and perseverance.

For My anger has turned away from them. Because His righteous anger has been fully satisfied by Christ on the Cross, His covenant love can once again be poured out upon His repentant people. This fitting conclusion echoes the central message of Hosea's own life: just as Hosea loved ('āhab) Gomer and graciously restored her despite her unfaithfulness, so the LORD will one day love Israel again and restore her according to His covenant promises. Thus, the book that begins with Israel's spiritual adultery ends with God's triumphant grace. The gospel is always good news for the repentant backslider, for God's final word to those who return to Him is not condemnation but forgiveness, healing, and restoration.

How could God's anger turn away from them? Ultimately the only way is because their sins had been placed on His Son on the Cross (1Pe 2:24). Thus His anger will only be turned away from the believing Jewish remnant, but unbelieving Israel will still experience His wrath.

Bob Utley - "**My anger has turned away from them**" The term "anger" (BDB 60) is from the Hebrew root "nose" or "face." Anger can be seen in a red face and hard breathing. Here, it is an anthropomorphism for YHWH's deep feelings. There is a play on the word "turn back" or "return" ([shub](#)) in this context: return, Hosea 14:1, return to, Hosea 14:2, turn away, Hosea 14:4, also in Hosea 14:7

There is tremendous encouragement here for anyone who has wandered from God. The answer to apostasy is not merely "try harder." God's call is "Return," and His promise is "I will heal." We come confessing our sin and renouncing our false objects of trust, but the healing itself comes from God.

Apostasy (04878) [meshubah](#) describes turning away, apostasy, disloyalty, or faithlessness toward God. Derived from [shub/sub](#), "to turn," it pictures a change of direction in which God's people turn away from Yahweh and their covenant responsibilities. It can describe forsaking God for idols (Jer 5:6–7), persistently refusing to return to Him (Jer 8:5), trusting human or political power rather than Yahweh (Hos 11:5–7), or adopting a generally rebellious way of life. Proverbs warns that "the waywardness of the naive will kill them" (Pr 1:32). In Hosea, Israel had become "bent on turning from Me" (Hos 11:7), showing that backsliding had become an entrenched pattern of life. Yet meshûbâ does not describe an incurable condition. God graciously promises, "I will heal their apostasy, I will love them freely, for My anger has turned away from them" (Hos 14:4; cf. Jer 3:22). Thus, meshûbâ portrays the tragedy of turning away from God, while Hosea 14:4 displays the greater grace of God who is able to heal the backslider who returns to Him.

MESHUBAH - 12V - apostasies(3), apostasy(2), faithless(4), faithlessness(1), turning(1), waywardness(1). Prov. 1:32; Jer. 2:19; Jer. 3:6; Jer. 3:8; Jer. 3:11; Jer. 3:12; Jer. 3:22; Jer. 5:6; Jer. 8:5; Jer. 14:7; Hos. 11:7; Hos. 14:4

Turned (turn away or back, bring or go back, restore) (07725) [shub/sub](#) is a common verb (over 1000x) meaning to turn, to return, to go back, to do again, to change, to withdraw, to bring back, to reestablish, to be returned, to bring back, to take, to restore, to recompense, to answer, to hinder.

In his discussion of [shub/sub](#), **Victor Hamilton** writes that "The Bible is rich in idioms describing man's responsibility in the process of repentance (**Ed**: The examples Hamilton gives do not however use sub/shub). Such phrases would include the following: "incline your heart unto the Lord your God" (Josh 24:23); "circumcise yourselves to the Lord" (Jer 4:4); "wash your heart from wickedness" (Jer 4:14); "break up your fallow ground" (Hos 10:12) and so forth. All these expressions of man's penitential activity, however, are subsumed and summarized by this one verb **sub**. For better than any other verb it combines in itself the two requisites of repentance: **to turn from evil and to turn to the good**" In the Qal stem it has been suggested

that there are ten different meanings for šûb with subdivisions within each, plus a few uses difficult to pinpoint (Holladay, p. 59ff.). Of these two or three merit special observance. To begin with, the basic meaning of šûb “to (re)turn” implying physical motion or movement appears over 270 times. A few times God is the subject, “At the appointed time I will **return** to you (Sarah),” (Ge 18:14). Most often the subject is a person: “I (Abraham) and the lad (Isaac) will go yonder and worship, and **return** to you” (Gen 22:5). In the Hiphil there are eighty-seven occurrences of šûb in the sense of “bring back, carry back.”

Second, often (over 120 times) šûb acts as a sort of an auxiliary verb whose function is to repeat the action of the second verb: “and ‘again’ Isaac dug the wells (wayyāšōb yīāq wayyapōr,” Ge 26:18).

The third important use of šûb in the Qal, and theologically the most crucial, is in passages dealing with the covenant community’s return to God (in the sense of repentance), or turning away from evil (in the sense of renouncing and disowning sin), or turning away from God (in the sense of becoming apostate). In such contexts šûb in the Qal is used 129 times. By contrast, in the Hiphil šûb is used only eleven times when discussing the divine-human relationship. “turn back (Qal imperative) and ‘let yourself be turned from your idols’ (Hiphil) from your idols” (Ezek 14:6).

Taking all stems into consideration, Holladay (p. 117) concludes that there are a total of 164 uses of šûb in a covenantal context. The majority of them, as one might expect, are to be found in the classical/literary prophets 113 times, with Jeremiah leading the way (forty-eight times). By way of contrast with Jeremiah, the covenantal usage of šûb is found only six times in the first thirty-nine chapters of Isaiah (maybe only five if we read Jer 30:15 not, “in returning (to God) and rest shall you be saved,” but “in sitting still yāšab, i.e. abstention from foreign alliances, resting shall you be saved”). In the remaining twenty-seven chapters it is found only four times: Jer 44:22; 55:7; 57:17; 59:20. Thus, we encounter the interesting phenomenon of two prophets back to back in the canon, the first virtually silent on the subject and the second quite vocal. Perhaps the paucity of references in Isaiah is the prophet’s way of saying the die has already been cast. Quite poignantly God says to Isaiah, “Make the heart of this people fat ... lest they be converted (šûb) and healed.” A point of no return has been reached. God has foreseen the stubbornness of his people and has incorporated it into his plan. The prophet, therefore, is not to be frustrated (Mt 13:13ff.).

It should be noted that in a number of places šûb means “to return from exile.” In the Qal: naturally in Ezra and Neh (Ezra 2:1; Neh 7:6); also Isa 10:22; Jer 22:10; Zech 10:9, inter alia; in the Hiphil: 1Ki 8:34; Jer 12:15, inter alia. The association between the ideas of a return from exile and a return to the covenant should be obvious. A return from exile was reclamation as much as a return from any form of sin. That God should permit either return is corroborative of his covenantal faithfulness.

To be sure, there is no systematic spelling out of the doctrine of repentance in the OT. It is illustrated (Psalm 51 - see also sub in Ps 51:13) more than anything else. Yet the fact that people are called “to turn” either “to” or “away from” implies that sin is not an ineradicable stain, but by turning, a God-given power, a sinner can redirect his destiny. There are two sides in understanding conversion, the free sovereign act of God’s mercy and man’s going beyond contrition and sorrow to a conscious decision of turning to God. The latter includes repudiation of all sin and affirmation of God’s total will for one’s life. (Online - [Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament- R Laird Harris, Gleason L Archer Jr., Bruce K Waltke](#))

Hosea 14:5 I will be like the dew to Israel; He will blossom like the lily, And he will take root like the cedars of Lebanon.

KJV I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon.

NET I will be like the dew to Israel; he will blossom like a lily, he will send down his roots like a cedar of Lebanon.

NLT I will be to Israel like a refreshing dew from heaven. Israel will blossom like the lily; it will send roots deep into the soil like the cedars in Lebanon.

BGT σομαι ς δρ σος τ Ισραηλ νθ σει ς κρ νον κα βαλε τ ς ζας α το ς Λ βανος

LXE I will be as dew to Israel: he shall bloom as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Libanus.

CSB I will be like the dew to Israel; he will blossom like the lily and take root like the cedars of Lebanon.

ESV I will be like the dew to Israel; he shall blossom like the lily; he shall take root like the trees of Lebanon;

NIV I will be like the dew to Israel; he will blossom like a lily. Like a cedar of Lebanon he will send down his roots;

YLT I am as dew to Israel, he flourisheth as a lily, And he striketh forth his roots as Lebanon.

- as the dew: De 32:2 2Sa 23:4 Job 29:19 Ps 72:6 Pr 19:12 Isa 18:4 26:19 Isa 44:3 Mic 5:7
- he shall: Song 2:1,2,16 4:5 Mt 6:28 Lu 12:27
- grow: or, blossom
- cast: Heb. strike, 2Ki 19:30 Ps 72:16 Isa 27:6 35:2 Eze 17:22-24 Eph 3:17

The imagery now changes dramatically from judgment to restoration, from barrenness to flourishing.

I will be like the dew to Israel - In Israel's climate, with its long dry season and limited summer rainfall, **dew** was essential for sustaining vegetation (cf. Ge 27:28; Dt 33:13, 28). It provided refreshing moisture during periods when rain was scarce. Thus Yahweh pictures Himself as the source of Israel's renewed vitality and fruitfulness. This is especially striking because Hosea had previously used dew to picture Israel's fleeting faithfulness declaring "Your loyalty is like a morning cloud and like the dew which goes away early." (Hos 6:4) On one hand Israel's love was like dew, quickly disappearing. On the other hand Yahweh Himself will be like dew, continually giving life. This prophecy promises a complete reversal of Hosea 13:15, where judgment was pictured as the scorching east wind that would dry up Israel's spring and fountain.

He will blossom like the lily - The lily provides a picture of beauty, freshness, and abundant growth. Israel, formerly withered by sin and judgment, will once again blossom under Yahweh's gracious provision. Earlier Hosea had declared "Ephraim is stricken, their root is dried up, they will bear no fruit." (Hos 9:16) Now God graciously completely reverses the picture. Israel does not blossom in order to obtain God's blessing, but blossoms because God has blessed her. The fruitfulness is the result of His grace, not the cause of it.

And he will take root like the cedars of Lebanon - The words *the cedars* is supplied to convey the imagery, for Lebanon was famous for its magnificent, enduring trees, particularly its cedars (Ps 92:12; 104:16) and these cedars were well known to have deep roots. A lily might blossom beautifully but appear fragile. Yahweh therefore adds the picture of deep roots. Israel's restoration will not merely be attractive above ground; it will possess stability beneath the surface.

THOUGHT - The same principle applies to our spiritual lives. Fruitfulness cannot be manufactured independently of God. Jesus said, "He who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing" (Jn 15:5). As roots draw unseen nourishment from the soil, believers must continually draw upon Christ and His Word (Col 2:6-7; 3:16). And there is an important balance here. God desires both blossoms and roots: visible fruit in our lives and deep, hidden dependence upon Him. A flourishing Christian life is never merely external. Deep roots in God produce beautiful fruit before men (Ps 1:1-3; Jer 17:7-8).

God supplies the dew; we produce the blossom.

His grace is the root of all our fruit.

Hosea 14:6 His shoots will sprout, And his beauty will be like the olive tree And his fragrance like the cedars of Lebanon.

KJV His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon.

NET His young shoots will grow; his splendor will be like an olive tree, his fragrance like a cedar of Lebanon.

NLT Its branches will spread out like beautiful olive trees, as fragrant as the cedars of Lebanon.

BGT πορε σονται ο κλ δοι α το κα σται ζ λα α κατ καρπος κα σφρασ α α το ζ λιβ νου

LXE His branches shall spread, and he shall be as a fruitful olive, and his smell shall be as the smell of Libanus.

CSB His new branches will spread, and his splendor will be like the olive tree, his fragrance, like the forest of Lebanon.

ESV his shoots shall spread out; his beauty shall be like the olive, and his fragrance like Lebanon.

NIV his young shoots will grow. His splendor will be like an olive tree, his fragrance like a cedar of Lebanon.

YLT Go on do his sucklings, And his beauty is as an olive, And he hath fragrance as Lebanon.

- branches: Ps 80:9-11 Eze 17:5-8 31:3-10 Da 4:10-15 Mt 13:31 Joh 15:1 Ro 11:16-24
- spread: Heb. go
- and his beauty: Ps 52:8 128:3
- his smell: Ge 27:27 Song 4:11-15 2Co 2:14,15 Php 4:18

Related Passages:

Isaiah 61:3 To grant those who mourn in Zion, Giving them a garland instead of ashes, The oil of gladness instead of mourning, The mantle of praise instead of a spirit of fainting. So they will be called oaks of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified.

Jeremiah 11:16 The LORD called your name, "A green olive tree, beautiful in fruit and form"; With the noise of a great tumult He has kindled fire on it, And its branches are worthless.

His shoots will sprout - **Shoots** refers to the young branches that extend outward from a healthy, growing plant. The picture is one of expansion and vigorous new growth. Israel had previously been pictured as having a dried-up root that could bear no fruit (Hos 9:16), but now the root is alive and the branches are spreading.

John Walton - plant metaphors. Yahweh's relationship with Israel is likened to dew that provides the only moisture available to flowers and trees during the dry months of summer (see Is 26:19). The lily is not common in Palestine today, though it can be found in some areas. There is dispute whether it was more common in antiquity or not. In addition, God's life-giving essence insures the fertility and virility of the nation so that it continues to grow and expand, like the massive root system of the olive tree. Comparison is also made to the great cedars of Lebanon—considered the most useful of the large growth trees in the ancient Near East. It was prized for its lumber (1 Kings 6:9-10), a source for construction and a symbol of wealth in Mesopotamian literature, including the Gilgamesh Epic and the annals of many kings from the Sumerians through the Assyrians. (Page 760 [The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament](#))

And his beauty will be like the olive tree - The **olive tree** was one of the most familiar and valuable trees in Israel. It was an evergreen, retaining its distinctive silvery-green foliage and often living for centuries. Thus it provides a fitting picture of beauty, vitality, usefulness, and enduring life (cf. Ps 52:8; 128:3; Jer 11:16).

And his fragrance like the cedars of Lebanon - **Lebanon** was famous for its magnificent forests, particularly its cedars (Ps 92:12; 104:16). The cedar was prized not only for its strength and durability but also for its distinctive fragrance. Thus Israel's restoration would not only be visible in her beauty but perceptible in the pleasing character of her renewed life.

In summary, God's grace does not merely bring His people back from death; it causes them to flourish with new growth, enduring beauty, and a fragrance that testifies to the life He has given them.

Hosea 14:7 Those who live in his shadow Will again raise grain, And they will blossom like the vine. His renown will be like the wine of Lebanon.

KJV They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon.

NET People will reside again in his shade; they will plant and harvest grain in abundance. They will blossom like a vine, and his fame will be like the wine from Lebanon.

NLT My people will again live under my shade. They will flourish like grain and blossom like grapevines. They will be as fragrant as the wines of Lebanon.

BGT πιστρ ψουσιν κα καθιο νται π τ ν σκ πην α το ζ σονται κα μεθυσθ σονται σ τ κα ξανθ σει ς μπελος τ μνημ συνον α το ς ο νος Λιβ νου

LXE They shall return, and dwell under his shadow: they shall live and be satisfied with corn, and he shall flower as a vine: his memorial shall be to Ephraim as the wine of Libanus.

CSB The people will return and live beneath his shade. They will grow grain and blossom like the vine. His renown will be like the wine of Lebanon.

ESV They shall return and dwell beneath my shadow; they shall flourish like the grain; they shall blossom like the vine; their fame shall be like the wine of Lebanon.

NIV Men will dwell again in his shade. He will flourish like the grain. He will blossom like a vine, and his fame will be like the wine from Lebanon.

YLT Return do the dwellers under his shadow, They revive as corn, and flourish as a vine, His memorial is as wine of Lebanon.

- that: Ps 91:1 Song 2:3 Isa 32:1-2
- revive: Ho 6:2 Ps 85:6 138:7 Isa 61:11 Joh 11:25 12:24 1Co 15:36-38
- grow: or, blossom, Ho 14:5 *marg: Song 6:11 Zec 8:12

Related Passages:

Psalm 91:1 He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High Will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.

Isaiah 32:1-2 Behold, a king will reign righteously And princes will rule justly. 2Each will be like a refuge from the wind And a shelter from the storm, Like streams of water in a dry country, Like the shade of a huge rock in a parched land.

Isaiah 4:6 There will be a shelter to give shade from the heat by day, and refuge and protection from the storm and the rain.

Isaiah 25:4 For You have been a defense for the helpless, A defense for the needy in his distress, A refuge from the storm, a shade from the heat; For the breath of the ruthless Is like a rain storm against a wall.

Hosea 6:2 "He will revive us after two days; He will raise us up on the third day, That we may live before Him.

ISRAEL'S FUTURE RESTORATION CONTINUED

Those who live in his shadow - The picture is of people finding shelter, protection, and refreshment beneath the shade of a flourishing tree. In the hot climate of Israel, shade was a vivid image of relief and security (cf. Ps 91:1; Isa 4:6; 25:4). Israel, once spiritually barren and unable even to save herself, will become a source of blessing to others because Yahweh has first restored and blessed her.

Robert Chisholm on in his shadow - His shade (or shadow) could refer to the Lord's protection (cf. Hos 14:8, where He is compared to a "pine tree"; also cf. Isa. 4:6). However, as **Keil** notes, it is more likely that "Israel is itself the tree beneath whose shade the members of the nation flourish with freshness and vigor" This seems more consistent with the imagery in Hosea 14:5-6, which compares Israel to trees. (See [The Bible Knowledge Commentary Minor Prophets - Page 28](#))

Will again raise grain - Again is important, for it points out what had been lost through judgment will be restored. Earlier Hosea had warned that Israel's threshing floor and wine press would fail to feed them (Hos 9:2), and that their crops would be consumed (Hos 8:7). Now the imagery is completely reversed. The land once devastated under divine discipline becomes productive again.

Compare this prophetic promise to that in Hosea 2:21–22...

"It will come about in that day that I will respond," declares the LORD. "I will respond to the heavens, and they will respond to the earth, 22 And the earth will respond to the grain, to the new wine and to the oil, And they will respond to Jezreel.

Robert Chisholm - The picture of Israelites again growing grain points to the return of covenantal blessing (cf. Deut. 28:4, 8, 11; 30:9; Hosea 2:21-23; Amos 9:13-15). (See [The Bible Knowledge Commentary Minor Prophets - Page 28](#))

Note how Hosea's prophecy moves from barrenness to abundance, from famine to harvest and from judgment to restoration.

And they will blossom like the vine - The vine was a familiar biblical symbol of fruitfulness, abundance, and blessing (Ps 80:8–11; Isa 27:6). This imagery is particularly striking because Hosea had earlier described Israel as **"a luxuriant vine"** that selfishly produced fruit and used its prosperity to multiply idolatrous altars (Hos 10:1).

His (Israel's) renown will be like the wine of Lebanon - Lebanon was celebrated for the excellence of its agricultural produce, and its wine apparently enjoyed a notable reputation. Hosea uses that reputation as a picture of Israel's future fame, attractiveness, and excellence. Earlier Israel had become notorious for idolatry, injustice, deceit, and rebellion. Her name would be associated with shame and judgment. But God's restorative grace will so thoroughly transform her that her renown will become something desirable and excellent.

Hosea 14:8 O Ephraim, what more have I to do with idols? It is I who answer and look after you. I am like a luxuriant cypress; From Me comes your fruit.

KJV Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard him, and observed him: I am like a green fir tree. From me is thy fruit found.

NET O Ephraim, I do not want to have anything to do with idols anymore! I will answer him and care for him. I am like a luxuriant cypress tree; your fruitfulness comes from me!

NLT "O Israel, stay away from idols! I am the one who answers your prayers and cares for you. I am like a tree that is always green; all your fruit comes from me."

BGT τ Εφραιμ τ α τ τι κα ε δ λοις γ ταπε νωσα α τ ν κα γ κατισχ σω α τ ν γ ς ρκευθος πυκ ζουσα ξ μο καρπ ς σου ε ρηται

LXE What has he to do any more with idols? I have afflicted him, and I will strengthen him: I am as a leafy juniper tree. From me is thy fruit found.

CSB Ephraim, why should I have anything more to do with idols? It is I who answer and watch over him. I am like a flourishing pine tree; your fruit comes from Me.

ESV O Ephraim, what have I to do with idols? It is I who answer and look after you. I am like an evergreen cypress; from me comes your fruit.

NIV O Ephraim, what more have I to do with idols? I will answer him and care for him. I am like a green pine tree; your fruitfulness comes from me."

YLT O Ephraim, what to Me any more with idols? I -- I afflicted, and I cause him to sing: 'I am as a green fir-tree,' From Me is thy fruit found.

- What: Ho 14:2,3 Job 34:32 Ac 19:18-20 1Th 1:9 1Pe 1:14-16 4:3,4
- I have: Job 33:27 Jer 31:18-20 Lu 15:20 Joh 1:47,48
- I am: Isa 41:19 55:13 60:13
- From me: Joh 1:16 15:1-8 Ga 5:22,23 Eph 5:9 Php 1:11 2:13 4:13 Jas 1:17

O Ephraim, what more have I (Yahweh speaks in v8) **to do with idols?** **NET** = "I do not want to have anything to do with idols anymore!" **NLT** = "O Israel, stay away from idols!" The rhetorical question, "What more have I to do with idols?" expects a negative response and signifies Yahweh's charge for the complete and final end of Israel's idolatry. The LORD Himself has decisively broken the power of idolatry, so that idols no longer have any place in His people's lives.

Robert Chisholm - The contrast with Ephraim's earlier attitude is stark (cf. Hos 2:8; 4:17; 8:4-6; 13:2). (See [The Bible Knowledge Commentary Minor Prophets - Page 28](#))

It is I who answer and look (shur) after you - **NLT** = "I am the one who answers your prayers and cares for you." Israel had repeatedly sought answers from the wrong sources. They consulted idols (Hos 4:12), appealed to Assyria (Hos 5:13), and pursued foreign alliances (Hos 7:11; 12:1). But idols cannot hear, speak, answer, save, or deliver (Ps 115:4-8; Isa 44:9-20; 46:5-7). Instead of seeking guidance from all these godless sources, Israel will discover that it is the LORD alone Who answers their prayers and watches over them with continual care. The phrase **look after you** conveys the idea of looking upon, watching, observing, and caring for. Israel had looked everywhere else for protection and provision, but Yahweh in effect reminds them, "*I am the One watching over you.*"

Look (shur) is the same verb used to describe the leopard in Hos 13:7 "So I will be like a lion to them; Like a leopard I will **lie in wait** (shur) by the wayside.

I am like a luxuriant cypress -The exact identification of the tree is uncertain; translations include cypress, fir, pine, or evergreen tree. The important point is that Yahweh compares Himself to a flourishing evergreen, providing enduring life, shelter, and fruitfulness. There may also be deliberate irony here. Israel had practiced idolatry under luxuriant trees (Hos 4:13). Now Yahweh declares, in effect, "You do not need the sacred trees associated with your false worship. I am your true source of life."

From Me comes your fruit - The irony is that once Israel had sought fruitfulness from their worship of Baal, the supposed fertility god, but now Yahweh says He is the Source of their fruit. Every spiritual blessing, every measure of fruitfulness, and every evidence of life originates in Him alone. This recalls the words of Jesus regarding fruitfulness of believers, our Lord declaring "I am the vine,

you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing." (Jn 15:5).

When we recognize that God answers us, watches over us, sustains us, and produces our fruit, idols lose their attraction.

Look (behold, regard)(07789) **shur** means "to look," "to gaze," "to behold," "to regard," and, in certain contexts, "to lie in wait." It occurs in the OT only in the Qal (simple) stem. The basic idea is that of looking at or observing something. It can describe looking out from a high place. In the Song of Solomon, the bridegroom calls his bride, "Come with me from Lebanon... look from the summit of Amana, from the summit of Senir and Hermon" (Song 4:8). Similarly, Balaam "looked" upon Israel from the heights (Nu 23:9). Job uses **shûr** in the sense of seeing or gazing when he laments, "The eye of him who sees me will behold me no longer" (Job 7:8). Elihu likewise commands, "Look at the heavens and see; and behold the clouds, they are higher than you" (Job 35:5).

Shûr can also mean to regard, pay attention to, or take notice of. Elihu declares concerning empty cries, "Surely God will not listen to vanity, nor will the Almighty regard it" (Job 35:13). Job similarly describes the adulterer who waits for darkness, saying, "No eye will see me" (Job 24:15).

In other contexts, **shûr** carries the idea of watching closely or lying in wait. Jeremiah describes wicked men who "lie in wait as a fowler", setting traps to catch people (Jer 5:26). Hosea uses the same vivid imagery of divine judgment: because Israel became proud, forgot the LORD, and persisted in sin, God declares, "Like a leopard I will lie in wait by the wayside" (Hos 13:6–7). The One Israel had forgotten was now watching them, not to overlook their rebellion, but to bring the judgment their sin deserved.

The word also appears in forms or constructions that may convey the idea of going with, accompanying, or presenting something, as in the prophetic descriptions associated with Israel's unfaithfulness (cf. Isa 57:7ff). The feminine participial form is also used of a "caravan" in Ezekiel 27:25.

Thus, the central picture behind **shûr** is focused observation: to look, behold, watch, regard, or watch for someone. In Hosea 13:7, the meaning becomes ominous: Yahweh is pictured as a leopard concealed beside the road, watching and waiting to confront His rebellious people.

SHUR - 14V - behold(5), beholds(1), lie in wait(1), look(2), notices(1), regard(1), regards(1), see(1), watch(1). Num. 23:9; Num. 24:17; Job 7:8; Job 17:15; Job 20:9; Job 24:15; Job 33:14; Job 34:29; Job 35:5; Job 35:13; Job 35:14; Jer. 5:26; Hos. 13:7; Hos. 14:8

TREE, TREES The special status of trees (even individual trees) in the Bible is explainable partly by the fact that the Palestinian world is arid, with trees scarce. Buildings made from wood are not the norm (as in the Western world) but a luxury. In such a world, even the planting of a single tree (Gen 21:33) or the burial of someone under an oak tree (Gen 35:8) might merit mention. If wood as a building material is scarce, it becomes a mark of superiority if a royal bower boasts a house with beams of cedar and rafters of pine (Song 1:17). The 250 generic references to trees in the Bible are thus not to be interpreted as evidence of their abundance (with the exception of the common olive tree) but of the special status of trees in a world where they are scarce. ([see full discussion on page 2990 - Dictionary of Biblical Imagery](#))

Hosea 14:9 Whoever is wise, let him understand these things; Whoever is discerning, let him know them. For the ways of the LORD are right, And the righteous will walk in them, But transgressors will stumble in them.

KJV Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the LORD are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein.

NET Who is wise? Let him discern these things! Who is discerning? Let him understand them! For the ways of the LORD are right; the godly walk in them, but in them the rebellious stumble.

NLT Let those who are wise understand these things. Let those with discernment listen carefully. The paths of the LORD are true and right, and righteous people live by walking in them. But in those paths sinners stumble and fall.

BGT τς σοφς κα συνσει τατα συνετς κα πινυνεται ατ διτι εθει α δο το κυρου κα δ καιιο πορε σονται ν ατας ο δ σεβες σθεν σουσιν ν ατας

LXE Who is wise, and will understand these things? or prudent, and will know them? for the ways of the Lord are straight, and the righteous shall walk in them: but the ungodly shall fall therein.

CSB Let whoever is wise understand these things, and whoever is insightful recognize them. For the ways of the LORD are right, and the righteous walk in them, but the rebellious stumble in them.

ESV Whoever is wise, let him understand these things; whoever is discerning, let him know them; for the ways of the LORD are right, and the upright walk in them, but transgressors stumble in them.

NIV Who is wise? He will realize these things. Who is discerning? He will understand them. The ways of the LORD are right; the righteous walk in them, but the rebellious stumble in them.

YLT Who is wise, and doth understand these? Prudent, and knoweth them? For upright are the ways of Jehovah, And the righteous go on in them, And the transgressors stumble therein!

- wise: Ps 107:43 Pr 1:5,6 4:18 Jer 9:12 Da 12:10 Mt 13:11,12 Joh 8:47 Joh 18:37
- for: Ge 18:25 De 32:4 Job 34:10-12,18,19 Ps 19:7,8 119:75,128 Eze 18:25 33:17-20 Zep 3:5 Ro 7:12
- and the: Job 17:9 Ps 84:5,7 Pr 10:29 Isa 8:13-15 Mt 11:19
- but: Lu 2:34 4:28,29 7:23 Joh 3:19,20 9:39 15:24 Ro 9:32,33 2Co 2:15,16 2Th 2:9-12 1Pe 2:7,8

Related Passages:

Psalm 25:8 Good and upright is the LORD; Therefore He instructs sinners in the way.

Psalm 18:30 As for God, His way is blameless; The word of the LORD is tried; He is a shield to all who take refuge in Him.

TWO RESPONSES TO THE SAME REVELATION

Whoever is wise, let him understand these things - Hosea concludes with a timeless call for every reader to respond wisely to the message of his prophecy. **These things** most naturally embraces the truths Hosea has proclaimed throughout the book. The wise person learns from Israel's tragic history and from Yahweh's dealings with His people. Biblical wisdom is not merely possessing information; it is seeing life from God's perspective and responding appropriately to His revelation (Ps 111:10; Pr 1:7; 9:10). Hosea is saying, in effect, "Do not merely read Israel's history. Learn from it!"

1 Corinthians 10:6; 11 Now these things happened as examples for us, so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved....10:11 Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

Romans 15:4 For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

Whoever is discerning, let him know them - **Know** goes beyond mere awareness. The discerning person recognizes, accepts, and takes to heart the spiritual realities Hosea has presented. Jesus repeatedly issued a similar challenge: "He who has ears to hear, let him hear" (Mt 11:15; 13:9, 43). Godly wisdom is not merely intellectual knowledge but spiritual discernment that recognizes God's truth and responds in obedient faith. Such wisdom is found only in those whose minds have been enlightened by God and whose hearts are devoted to Him (cf. 1 Cor. 2:6-8; Col. 2:3; 2 Tim. 1:7).

For the ways of the LORD are right - Here is the theological foundation for everything Hosea has said. Yahweh's ways are always right. His commands are right. His judgments are right. His discipline is right. His call to repentance is right. His mercy is right. His restoration is right. The "ways of the LORD" are always right because they reflect His holy, righteous, and unchanging character. In contrast to "a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death" (Pr. 16:25), God's path always leads to life, blessing, and fellowship with Him. The same divine truth, however, produces two radically different responses in next passages.

And the righteous will walk in them - Here we move from understanding to walking. This is biblical wisdom in action. The righteous do not merely agree that God's ways are right; they walk in them. (cf Dt 5:33; Ps 119:1-3; Jas 1:22-25) **Walk** describes the habitual direction of one's life. The righteous person is not sinlessly perfect, but the trajectory of his life is to order his steps according to God's revealed will (direction not perfection).

***Knowledge of Scripture without obedience
is not biblical wisdom.***

But - This term of contrast separates all of mankind into two groups with radically different behaviors and destinies.

Transgressors will stumble in them - The same ways of God in which the righteous walk become the occasion for the rebellious

to stumble.

Hosea thus ends with a clear choice before every generation: walk in the Lord's righteous ways and live, or reject them and stumble to your own ruin.

THOUGHT - Israel's history has been placed before us as a warning (1 Co 10:6, 11). We have watched Israel repeatedly hear God's Word without obeying it, receive God's blessings without thanking Him, experience God's discipline without immediately repenting, and seek from idols what only Yahweh could provide. The wise reader does not finish Hosea saying merely, "What a terrible thing Israel did." He asks where am I trusting something other than God? Where am I resisting His Word? Where am I walking in my own way rather than His? Where do I need to return?

God's ways are always right, so the only question is whether we will walk in them or stumble over them.