

Where, O Death, Are Your Plagues?

Hosea 13:14

Ephraim is Northern Israel

- **Hosea was a prophet to the 10 Tribes of Israel that left to follow Jeroboam because Rehoboam, Solomon's son, refused to follow the advice of his elders, and instead chose to follow the advice of those his own age.**
- **If you have yet to read this whole book of Hosea, take the time to read it because it is a very interesting story. Be thankful that the Lord hasn't called you to be a prophet!**
- **One thing to note about Israel is that it never had a godly king, but actually did everything to rebel the Lord.**

The Questions

- **In this verse the Lord asks two questions. The first question He uses the word "ransom," and in the second question He uses "redeem." Ransom means to give a sum of money to someone in order to have them released from bondage. Redeem means to compensate for the faults or bad aspects of someone.**
- **The question implies Israel's situation. They are in bondage and at fault in their way of living.**
- **"Shall" puts the question to Israel; Should I, or why should I? You have totally turned your back on me.**

The Taunt Song

- **The next two lines have been called a “taunt song.” It was Israel that taunted YHWY as they refused to worship Him. Now it is YHWH taunting them. Isn’t that how we learn? “What goes around will come around?” We think this the way humans get revenge, but isn’t it right for YHWH to do the same, if that will get the attention of us humans?**
- **YHWH reminds Israel of their spiritual death, their physical death, and how it compares to a thorny miserable death, and that they need to know of their destiny being in Sheol “Hell” where they will always feel the sting of their rejection of their God.**

Compassion?

- **I thought YHWH was a God of compassion. He is! But He also has to judge righteously against an unrighteous people.**
- **Israel had lived in rejection of YHWH for a couple of hundred years. Was He compassionate toward them? Of course, but it was hidden from them because of their rebellion. If He wasn't compassionate, He would have sent Assyria sooner to take them captive.**

The Compassion shown

- **So as we read the last chapter, we see His compassion. The call to return is repeated to Israel through Hosea, and the promise to rescue them is revealed. There is healing, protection and love proclaimed if they will just repent and return to Him.**
- **So if we reread verse 14 again in light of chapter 14, it might read, "I shall ransom you from the power of Sheol. I shall redeem you from a thorny death, which will not hurt you, nor will the sting of Sheol touch you. My compassion will no longer be hidden from you."**

Our NT reminder

- **1 Corinthians 15:54-57. Paul uses similar language to remind us Christians of what Jesus has done for us. He has removed the penalty of a sinner's death, and has taken away its sting that would last for eternity.**
- **Jesus, through His death on the cross and His resurrection, has given us a victorious life!**
- **Then Paul tells us in verse 58, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord." You have the victory, Praise the Lord!!!!**