

International Bible Lessons Commentary
Hosea 6:1-6

International Bible Lessons
Sunday, April 20, 2014

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The **International Bible Lesson** (*Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series*) for **Sunday, April 20, 2014**, is from **Hosea 6:1-6**. Please Note: Some churches will only study **Hosea 6:1-3**. This commentary is the first part of a two part Bible Lesson that includes Luke 24:1-12.

Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further follow the verse-by-verse *International Bible Lesson Commentary* below. **Study Hints for Thinking Further**, a study guide for teachers, discusses the five questions below to help with class preparation and in conducting class discussion; these hints are available on the **International Bible Lessons Commentary** website. The weekly *International Bible Lesson* is posted each Saturday before the lesson is scheduled to be taught.

International Bible Lesson Commentary

Hosea 6:1-6

(Hosea 6:1) “Come, let us return to the LORD; for it is he who has torn, and he will heal us; he has struck down, and he will bind us up.

Unlike many who have never heard of the true God, the Jews in Ephraim and Judah had once known, loved, and obeyed the true God. Therefore, the prophet Hosea called them to return to God and repent of their sins. God had “torn” or disciplined them in order to lead them to repent, and if they repented God would heal them. They would experience the blessing of God once again. God’s discipline is designed to lead His children back to Him so He can heal and bind them up.

(Hosea 6:2) After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will raise us up, that we may live before him.

As God sometimes included prophecies of the Messiah and how He would be recognized into the middle of what seem to be discussions about some other topics, here we see the length of time alluded to for Jesus to be dead and buried in the tomb. Jesus was “torn” and “struck” down on His way to the cross and on the cross; He died in behalf of all who would believe in Him so God could justly forgive believers in Jesus for their sins. On the third day, God raised Jesus up to live and reign as King and Savior, and if we repent and return to the true God, He will raise us up to live before Him forever.

(Hosea 6:3) Let us know, let us press on to know the LORD; his appearing is as sure as the dawn; he will come to us like the showers, like the spring rains that water the earth.”

Believers can know God through Jesus Christ, and believers need to “press on to know the Lord” more deeply and personally as they prayerfully study the Bible more intensely and often. The Apostle Paul wrote, “I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:14). Jesus Christ rose and appeared in the dawn of a Sunday morning, and when we come to know Him, His life and light will shine into us “as sure as the dawn.” Jesus will give believers in Him a new birth and a new life as “the spring rains that water the earth.”

(Hosea 6:4) What shall I do with you, O Ephraim? What shall I do with you, O Judah? Your love is like a morning cloud, like the dew that goes away early.

The sending of Jesus the Messiah was God’s answer to His questions in this verse. The morning clouds sometimes come with the promise of rain, but too quickly disappear under the light of the blazing sun. Likewise, the love of some for God too often changes into a love for the gifts of God and the things of this world; so their love for God too quickly disappears as does the morning dew.

(Hosea 6:5) Therefore I have hewn them by the prophets, I have killed them by the words of my mouth, and my judgment goes forth as the light.

Before God sent their enemies to punish or discipline His children or before He sent other perils such as drought,

earthquakes, pestilence, or famine, God always sent prophets to warn His children to repent and return to Him so He would not need to discipline them. God's light, God's truth, the Word of God, bring a warning of judgment and future punishment to the disobedient. When the disobedient understand the Word of God, their conscience condemns them and they are "killed by the word" of His mouth, which may lead them to repentance.

(Hosea 6:6) For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.

Some might think that repentance means a person must begin to practice religious rituals they have neglected. However, God says a truly repentant person will love God steadfastly, constantly or consistently throughout the day every day and seek greater knowledge of God day by day, with a corresponding increasing love for God. God answered His questions in Hosea 6:4, when He won the believer's love by sending Jesus to die a sacrificial death for our sins. Through faith in Jesus and by the work of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life, love for God and the knowledge of God motivate the actions of the believer and inspire their praise and thanksgiving.

Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

Since this is the first of a two part lesson series, only 2 of the 5 Study Questions will be asked below.

1. How might you describe God's punishment when God designs it to be discipline for those who are His children?
2. Compare Hosea 6:1 — "Come, let us return to the LORD; for it is he who has torn, and he will heal us; he has struck down, and he will bind us up," and Hebrews 12:5-6 — "And you have forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as children — 'My child, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, or lose heart when you are punished by him; for the Lord disciplines those whom he loves, and chastises every child whom he accepts'" (see Deuteronomy 8:5).

Begin or close your class by reading the short weekly *International Bible Lesson*.

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