**Hosea 14**

**Sincere Conversion and New Life**

**Lesson 29**

1. **When did you feel closest to God this week? Was there a particular verse or lesson in our study of Hosea this week that you found inspiring in some way?**
2. **Read verses 14:2-4. How is the tone and message here different from earlier verses in Hosea?**

**Compare to Hosea 13:9-10 and Hosea 5:3.**

**Hosea 14:2-4**

Return, Israel, to the Lord, your God;
    you have stumbled because of your iniquity.
**3**Take with you words,
    and return to the Lord;
Say to him, “Forgive all iniquity,
    and take what is good.
    Let us offer the fruit of our lips.
**4**Assyria will not save us,
    nor will we mount horses;
We will never again say, ‘Our god,’
    to the work of our hands;
    for in you the orphan finds compassion.”

**Hosea 13:9-10**

 I destroy you, Israel! Who is there to help you?
**10**Where now is your king, that he may rescue you?

 **Hosea 5:3**

Now, Ephraim, you have practiced prostitution,
    Israel is defiled.
**4**Their deeds do not allow them
    to return to their God;
For the spirit of prostitution is in them,
    and they do not know the Lord.

1. **Read the above verses closely once again.** **Are these Hosea’s words or those of the LORD?**
2. **What is the meaning of “Take with you words” in verse 3? Check footnotes and read Psalm 50, and Hosea 6:6 below for clues.**

**Psalm 50: 7-15**

“Listen, my people, I will speak;  Israel, I will testify against you;
    God, your God, am I.
**8**Not for your sacrifices do I rebuke you,  your burnt offerings are always before me.
**9**I will not take a bullock from your house, or he-goats from your folds.
**10**For every animal of the forest is mine, beasts by the thousands on my mountains.
**11**I know every bird in the heights; whatever moves in the wild is mine.
**12**Were I hungry, I would not tell you, for mine is the world and all that fills it.
**13**Do I eat the flesh of bulls or drink the blood of he-goats?
**14**Offer praise as your sacrifice to God; fulfill your vows to the Most High.
**15**Then call on me on the day of distress; I will rescue you, and you shall honor me.”

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

1. **Read verse 5-7. Which verses here are the words of the LORD? Which are Hosea’s words?**

**Hosea 14:5-7**

I will heal their apostasy,
    I will love them freely;
    for my anger is turned away from them.
**6**I will be like the dew for Israel:
    he will blossom like the lily;
He will strike root like the Lebanon cedar,
**7**    and his shoots will go forth.
His splendor will be like the olive tree
    and his fragrance like Lebanon cedar.
**8**Again they will live in his shade;
    they will raise grain,
They will blossom like the vine,
    and his renown will be like the wine of Lebanon.

1. **Read verses 9-10. Look in footnotes for the meaning of “evergreen cypress”. What does this add to our image of the LORD or the beauty of these words?**

**Hosea 14: 9-10**

Ephraim! What more have I to do with idols?
    I have humbled him, but I will take note of him.
I am like a verdant cypress tree.
    From me fruit will be found for you!

**10**Who is wise enough to understand these things?
    Who is intelligent enough to know them?
Straight are the paths of the Lord,
    the just walk in them,
    but sinners stumble in them.

1. **Reflect on the final verse. Where do we find wisdom and understanding about the ways of the LORD?**
2. **What causes one to stumble on the paths of the LORD?**
3. **Look back and reflect on what we have discussed this year.**

**From Jonah did you find insights about the Lord’s ways or about the prophets’ role in His plan?**

1. **From our reading of Daniel, reflect on lessons learned about faith and perseverance.**
2. **In all three books, what was the significance of the political world in these texts?**