

RETURN TO GOD!

I. [Hosea 6:1-3](#) [Hosea 12:6](#) [Hosea 14:1-2](#) [1 Peter 1:18-20](#)

A. Hosea was a prophet during the demise of Israel, the northern tribes specifically. His prophecies were both poetic and cryptic. Hosea depicts Israel's rebellion against God with metaphoric comparisons: a cheating wife, an absentee mother; a spoiled ungrateful son; not to mention a stubborn cow and dim-witted dove.

B. Hosea prophesied during Israel's darkest days. The nation went through 6 different kings in 25 years and all of them were terrible. Though economically things were fairly good, spiritually they couldn't be worse. Israel worshiped Baal and other related pagan deities. Their worship included ritual prostitution, drunken orgies, incest, sex with animals, and human sacrifice which included babies! Idolatry is rightly called committing adultery against God. And all this takes place as the empire of Assyria was gradually approaching like the angel of death, preparing to dismember God's people piece by piece...

C. Even though Hosea points out Israel's heinous acts of idolatry and coming judgment, he still pleads with them to turn back to God. *Return* is Hosea's chief declaration. Listen to some key verses and see if you think they might apply in our day. Or perhaps you'll hear God's heart towards you in these powerful words.

D. [Hosea 6:1-3](#) (ESV) says: *1 Come, let us return to the LORD; for He has torn us, that He may heal us; He has struck us down, and He will bind us up. 2 After two days He will revive us; on the third day He will raise us up, that we may live before Him. 3 Let us know; let us press on to know the LORD; His going out is sure as the dawn; He will come to us as the showers, as the spring rains that water the earth. Hosea 12:6* (ESV) repeats the call: *6 So you, by the help of your God, return, hold fast to love and justice, and wait continually for your God. Hosea 14:1-2* (ESV) once again: *1 Return, O Israel, to the LORD your God, for you have stumbled because of your iniquity. 2 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. (But you haven't heard anything yet!)"*

E. God gives Hosea a very strange charge. He instructs the prophet to marry a woman who'll be unfaithful to him. i.e. To marry a "A wife of whoredom!" Hosea obeys and marries an adulteress named Gomer. And Gomer lives up to her reputation. Hosea becomes the father of three children. A son named, Jezreel, "God scatters;" a daughter named, "Not Loved;" and another son named, "Not My People." Gomer then abandons Hosea. She becomes a slave to another man. But then God tells Hosea to go and buy her back and make her his wife yet again. He does! Why? God uses the prophet's life to give a precise visual illustration of what Israel's spiritual adultery looks like against God but how He loves them still.

F. Throughout all the OT, we have the vivid record of God's people turning away from God. They rejected Him over and over again. They abandoned God's law and ignored His prophets. They committed adultery against their Maker over and over. Each time He pleaded for them to return. Listen to some of the other prophets:

1) Isaiah 55:6-7 (ESV) says: 6 “Seek the LORD while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near; **7** let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, that He may have compassion on him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.

2) Joel 2:12-14 (NIV) echoes: 12 “Even now,” declares the LORD, “return to Me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning.” **13** Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the LORD your God, for He is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and He relents from sending calamity. **14** Who knows? He may turn and relent and leave behind a blessing--grain offerings and drink offerings for the LORD your God.

3) Jeremiah 3:12-14 (NLT) hammers it home: 12 Therefore, go and give this message to Israel. This is what the LORD says: “O Israel, My faithless people, come home to Me again, (Return!) for I am merciful. I will not be angry with you forever. **13** Only acknowledge your guilt. Admit that you rebelled against the LORD your God and committed adultery against Him by worshiping idols under every green tree. Confess that you refused to listen to My voice. I, the LORD, have spoken! **14** “Return home, you wayward children,” says the LORD, “for I am your Master. I will bring you back to the land of Israel--one from this town and two from that family--from wherever you are scattered.

G. Just as Hosea's wife Gomer forsook her husband and became a slave to some pimp, we were once slaves to Satan. The devil owned us, sin covered us, and we were bound for eternal damnation. Just as Israel ignored the pleas of the prophets and kept their backs turned against God, we did the same. (Perhaps you're still there!) Even as Israel ignored the approaching hoofbeats of Assyria, many of you may be ignoring the gradual approach of the grave and the judgment that will follow. So what else can this preacher say? If you don't know God, turn to Him now! And if you do know Him and once walked with Him but have wandered off, or abandoned Him, RETURN! Make today the day of your return!

H. Hosea bought back his wife Gomer from a pimp for 15 shekels of silver and 10 bushels of barley. He paid to free his unfaithful ex from slavery then remarried her! So what did your ransom from sin and death cost? 1 Peter 1:18-20 (NLT) tells us: 18 For you know that God paid a ransom to save you from the empty life you inherited from your ancestors. And it was not paid with mere gold or silver, which lose their value. **19** It was the precious blood of Christ, the sinless, spotless Lamb of God. **20** God chose Him as your ransom long before the world began, but now in these last days He has been revealed for your sake. **(Therefore, let Jesus' shed blood for you not be in vain! Turn today! or Return today! With all your heart! Make today the day! And use your blood-bought ransom, your precious freedom, to walk with Christ the rest of your life--even to when you breathe your last and step into glory!)**

* Close with a Song...

Scriptures, Videos, & Bonus Stuff

Hosea 6:1-3 (ESV)

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day He will raise us up, that we may live before Him. **3** Let us know; let us press on to know the LORD; His going out is sure as the dawn; He will come to us as the showers, as the spring rains that water the earth.

Hosea 12:6 (ESV)

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Hosea 14:1-2 (ESV)

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Isaiah 55:6-7 (ESV)

6 "Seek the LORD while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near; **7** let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, that He may have compassion on him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.

Joel 2:12-14 (NIV)

12 "Even now," declares the LORD, "return to Me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning." **13** Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the LORD your God, for He is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and He relents from sending calamity. **14** Who knows? He may turn and relent and leave behind a blessing--grain offerings and drink offerings for the LORD your God.

Jeremiah 3:12-14 (NLT)

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Video Clips & Important Articles

"Jesus Paid It All" (O Praise the One) - Kristian Stanfill

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=38EVco7eba0>

To Whom Did Jesus Pay Our Ransom - John Piper (Audio & Script)

<https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/to-whom-did-jesus-pay-our-ransom>

What Does it Mean that Jesus Bought Us for God? - Pastor Lassman

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fZmN6ZfMoCo>

You Were Bought at a Price - Pastor Dale Thompson

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w2VIfntcC-0>

"Redeemed" - Big Daddy Weave

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VzGAYNKDyIU>

Bonus Stuff

Deuteronomy 4:25-31 (NASB)

25 “When you become the father of children and children’s children and have remained long in the land, and act corruptly, and make an idol in the form of anything, and do that which is evil in the sight of the LORD your God so as to provoke Him to anger, **26** I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that you will surely perish quickly from the land where you are going over the Jordan to possess it. You shall not live long on it, but will be utterly destroyed. **27** The LORD will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations where the LORD drives you. **28** There you will serve gods, the work of man’s hands, wood and stone, which neither see nor hear nor eat nor smell. **29** But from there you will seek the LORD your God, and you will find Him if you search for Him with all your heart and all your soul. **30** When you are in distress and all these things have come upon you, in the latter days you will return to the LORD your God and listen to His voice. **31** For the LORD your God is a compassionate God; He will not fail you nor destroy you nor forget the covenant with your fathers which He swore to them.

Zechariah 1:1-3 (ESV)

1 In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to the prophet Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, son of Iddo, saying, **2** “The LORD was very angry with your fathers. **3** Therefore say to them, Thus declares the LORD of hosts: Return to Me, says the LORD of hosts, and I will return to you, says the LORD of hosts.

Lamentations 3:39-40 (NIV)

39 Why should the living complain when punished for their sins? **40** Let us examine our ways and test them, and let us return to the LORD.

Nehemiah 1:1-11 (NASB)

1 The words of Nehemiah the son of Hacaliah. Now it happened in the month Chislev, in the twentieth year, while I was in Susa the capitol, **2** that Hanani, one of my brothers, and some men from Judah came; and I asked them concerning the Jews who had

escaped and had survived the captivity, and about Jerusalem. **3** They said to me, “The remnant there in the province who survived the captivity are in great distress and reproach, and the wall of Jerusalem is broken down and its gates are burned with fire.” **4** When I heard these words, I sat down and wept and mourned for days; and I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven. **5** I said, “I beseech You, O LORD God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who preserves the covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments, **6** let Your ear now be attentive and Your eyes open to hear the prayer of Your servant which I am praying before You now, day and night, on behalf of the sons of Israel Your servants, confessing the sins of the sons of Israel which we have sinned against You; I and my father’s house have sinned. **7** We have acted very corruptly against You and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the ordinances which You commanded Your servant Moses. **8** Remember the word which You commanded Your servant Moses, saying, ‘If you are unfaithful I will scatter you among the peoples; **9** but if you return to Me and keep My commandments and do them, though those of you who have been scattered were in the most remote part of the heavens, I will gather them from there and will bring them to the place where I have chosen to cause My name to dwell.’ **10** They are Your servants and Your people whom You redeemed by Your great power and by Your strong hand. **11** O Lord, I beseech You, may Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant and the prayer of Your servants who delight to revere Your name, and make Your servant successful today and grant him compassion before this man.” Now I was the cupbearer to the king.

Matthew 20:26-28 (ESV)

26 It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, **27** and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, **28** even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.”

1 Timothy 2:5-6 (ESV)

5 For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, **6** who gave Himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time.

Acts 20:26-28 (NIV)

26 Therefore, I declare to you today that I am innocent of the blood of any of you. **27** For I have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will of God. **28** Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which He bought with His own blood.

1 Corinthians 6:18-20 (ESV)

18 Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. **19** Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, **20** for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

1 Corinthians 7:23 (NKJV)

23 You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men.

Hebrews 9:14-15 (ESV)

15 Therefore He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant.

Quote by Jonathan Edwards

"The redeemed are dependent of God for all. All that we have-- wisdom, the pardon of sin, deliverance, acceptance in God's favor, grace, holiness, true comfort and happiness, eternal life and glory--we have from God by a Mediator; and this Mediator is God. God not only gives us the Mediator, and accepts His mediation, and of His power and grace bestows the things purchased by the Mediator, but He is the Mediator. Our blessings are what we have by purchase; and the purchase is made of God; the blessings are purchased of Him; and not only so, but God is the purchaser. Yes, God is both the purchaser and the price; for Christ, who is God, purchased these blessings by offering Himself as the price of our salvation."

- Jonathan Edwards, *Closer Walk*, July, 1988, p. 15.

A Little Boy and His Lost Boat

A favorite story of the little boy who built a sailboat. He built the sail and had it all fixed up, tarred and painted. He took it to the lake and pushed it in hoping it would sail. Sure enough a wisp of breeze filled the little sail and it billowed and went rippling along the waves. Suddenly before the little boy knew it, the boat was out of his reach, even though he waded in fast and tried to grab it. As he watched it float away, he hoped maybe the breeze would shift and it would come sailing back to him. Instead he watched it go farther and farther until it was gone. When he went home crying, his mother asked, "What's wrong, didn't it work?" And he said, "It worked too well."

Some time later, the little boy was downtown and walked past a second hand store. There in the window he saw the boat. It was unmistakably his, so he went in and said to the proprietor, "That's my boat." He walked to the window, picked it up and started to leave with it. The owner of the shop said, "Wait a minute, Sonny. That's my boat. I bought it from someone." The boy said, "No, it's my boat. I made it. See." And he showed him the little scratches and the marks where he hammered and filed. The man said, "I'm sorry, Sonny. If you want it, you have to buy it." The poor little guy didn't have any money, but he worked hard and saved his pennies. Finally, one day he had enough money. He went in and bought the little boat. As he left the store holding the boat close to him, he was heard saying, "You're my boat. You're twice my boat. First you're my boat 'cause I made you and second you're my boat 'cause I bought you!"

If you ever think that you aren't worth much and if you think you're cheap, just remember what God thinks of you. He thinks you're His. Twice His. First you're His because He made you. And second you're His because He bought you on the cross. He

paid a price to redeem you. So let go of your stress to God's care, and let go of your sins to God's cross.

- Original Source Unknown

How and to Whom Did Jesus Pay Our Ransom?

By S. Michael Houdmann

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Jesus-pay-ransom.html>

Question: *"How and to whom did Jesus pay our ransom?"*

Answer: A ransom is something that is paid to provide for the release of someone who is held captive. Jesus paid our ransom to free us from sin, death, and hell. Throughout the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy are found God's requirements for sacrifices. In Old Testament times, God commanded the Israelites to make animal sacrifices for substitutionary atonement; that is, an animal's death took the place of a person's death, death being the penalty for sin ([Romans 6:23](#)). [Exodus 29:36a](#) states, *"Each day you must sacrifice a young bull as an offering for the atonement of sin."*

God demands holiness ([1 Peter 1:15-16](#)). God's Law demands holiness. We cannot give God full holiness because of the sins we commit ([Romans 3:23](#)); therefore, God demands satisfaction of His Law. Sacrifices to Him satisfied the requirements. This is where Jesus comes in. [Hebrews 9:12-15](#) tells us: *"Once for all time He took blood into that Most Holy Place, but not the blood of goats and calves. He took His own blood, and with it He secured our salvation forever. Under the old system, the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a young cow could cleanse people's bodies from ritual defilement. Just think how much more the blood of Christ will purify our hearts from deeds that lead to death so that we can worship the living God. For by the power of the eternal Spirit, Christ offered Himself to God as a perfect sacrifice for our sins. That is why He is the one who mediates the new covenant between God and people, so that all who are invited can receive the eternal inheritance God has promised them. For Christ died to set them free from the penalty of the sins they had committed under that first covenant."*

Also, read [Romans 8:3-4](#), *"The law of Moses could not save us, because of our sinful nature. But God put into effect a different plan to save us. He sent His own Son in a human body like ours, except that ours are sinful. God destroyed sin's control over us by giving His Son as a sacrifice for our sins. He did this so that the requirement of the law would be fully accomplished for us who no longer follow our sinful nature but instead follow the Spirit."*

Clearly, Jesus paid the ransom for our lives to God. That ransom was His own life, the shedding of His own blood, a sacrifice. Due to His sacrificial death, each person on earth has the opportunity to accept that gift of atonement and be forgiven by God. For without His death, God's Law would still need to be satisfied—by our own death.

- While he is not the author of every article on GotQuestions.org, for citation purposes, you may reference our CEO, S. Michael Houdmann.

Christ Our Ransom

Ligonier Ministries

<http://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/christ-our-ransom/>

“For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” ([Mark 10:45](#)). - [Mark 10:35–45](#)

In today’s passage, Jesus tells His disciples that He came to earth in order to offer His life as a “ransom for many” ([Mark 10:45](#)). This concept of ransom is extremely important for rightly viewing the work of the Savior and is related to several other concepts, all of which we will consider in turn.

In the ancient world, a ransom was paid in order to secure the release of a captive. A price could be paid to buy a slave’s freedom or to release a hostage, for example. Today the term is most commonly associated with kidnapping, where money or some other service is demanded in exchange for the safe return of a victim.

Importantly, the kidnapper determines the price that sets the hostage free. Some in church history have said the devil is the person to whom Christ pays the ransom. But if this were the case, the devil would be the one who wins the victory. After all, the person who receives the ransom payment is the one whose goals have been met. Scripture routinely presents Satan as the foe whom Jesus defeated ([1 John 3:8b](#)), and so clearly the evil one cannot demand any ransom.

God alone determined the ransom amount, and so Jesus bought us out of the wrath rightly due our sin. Consider how some of us might exchange “green stamps” or tokens for some good or service. In a similar manner, Jesus gave His life in exchange for our safety from divine judgment. By faith we are saved — but not from Satan. We are saved from the wrath of God ([1 Thess. 1:9–10](#)).

Propitiation and expiation are the two final theological terms that we will examine today. Expiation conveys the idea of cleansing sinners of their sin or of removing the penalty of our sins. It is readily associated with the Old Testament sacrificial system and also with the work of the one who “takes away the sin of the world” ([John 1:29](#)).

Yet Christ’s death on the cross involves more than covering our sins, it also placates the wrath of God. This is what propitiation means. The Lord’s holiness demands punishment for sin, and in Jesus, God satisfies His own wrath ([Rom. 3:21–26](#)). He is therefore propitious, that is, favorable to His children.

Coram Deo

Dr. R.C. Sproul reminds us that the Bible teaches “both Father and Son willed the salvation of the elect and worked together to bring it to pass” (Essential Truths of the Christian Faith, p. 174). On the cross, Christ did not persuade the Father to do something He did not want to do. His coming into the world to save the elect was a result of the love of our triune God. Take time to meditate on this love and illustrate it by doing a favor for someone today.

Passages for Further Study

[Isa. 57:14–19](#)

[Rom. 5:6–11](#)

[2 Cor. 5:11–21](#)

[1 John 4:7–12](#)