

# **Journey to Restoration: Rising on the Third Day**

## **Introduction**

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, as we gather here today, we are presented with a profound truth woven throughout Scripture—the divine call to return to the Lord, a call encapsulated beautifully in Hosea 6:1-2 (KJV): “Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight.” This passage serves not just as an ancient prophetic lament, but as a timeless invitation for all of us to acknowledge God’s healing power in our lives.

Today, we will analyze the themes of repentance, divine restoration, and resurrection in the context of our Christian faith. We’ll explore how these themes illuminate our understanding of the death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, affirming the pattern we find in Acts 2:38. Along the way, we will emphasize the spiritual journey that leads us from the depths of despair to the heights of joy—through the difficult but transformative act of turning back to God and embracing His promises.

## **I. A Divine Call to Repentance**

Our journey begins with an essential invitation to return to God. Hosea's directive to “Come, and let us return unto the LORD” speaks volumes about the human condition. Sin creates disconnection; it distorts our relationship with the Almighty. Hosea lived in a time when Israel was lost, indulging in spiritual idolatry and moral decay. The prophet, acting as God’s mouthpiece, calls the people to recognize their state and return to Him. Repentance is often misunderstood as merely feeling sorry for our mistakes. In reality, it is a radical reorientation of our hearts and minds towards God. It compels us to acknowledge where we have strayed, to grieve over the separation, and to take deliberate steps back into the embrace of God. Hosea vividly illustrates this in the phrase, “for he hath torn, and he will heal us.” The act of tearing is painful—it signifies God’s righteous judgment against sin and a painful wake-up call to our spiritual apathy. Yet, there is hope: God is also the healer.

The connection between repentance and healing reveals an important truth: true healing can only come when we first confront the depth of our brokenness. By acknowledging

our transgressions, we open ourselves to God's restorative work in our lives. This mirrors the call in Acts 2:38 where Peter says, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." The pathway to healing is paved with the courage to repent and seek forgiveness.

## **II. The Act of Baptism: A Binding Covenant**

As we turn to God in repentance, the next crucial step in our journey is baptism—a profound act that signifies our commitment to this newfound relationship with Christ. Hosea's assurance that God "will bind us up" draws our attention to the healing and relationship-restoring aspects of baptism. In biblical terms, baptism signifies our immersion into Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. Romans 6:4 (KJV) affirms this transformative power: "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Through baptism, we don the righteousness of Christ, thereby binding ourselves to His covenant of grace.

This act is not merely a ritual; it is a sacred commitment where we publicly declare our intention to follow Christ as Lord and Savior. We are no longer captives of our past; instead, we are reborn into a new identity. The act of baptism represents a spiritual garment, wrapping us in God's love, mercy, and grace. Galatians 3:27 (KJV) states, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ," highlighting how baptism binds us to a richer identity where we are fully accepted and loved by God. Historically, early Christians viewed baptism as a crucial threshold—a moment of transition from a life of sin to walking in the light of Christ. The early church understood the depth and significance of this covenant, viewing it as integral to their community and individual faith journeys.

## **III. Resurrection: Reviving the Spirit on the Third Day**

We now turn our focus to the glorious promise found within Hosea's prophecy—"After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up." This is central to our faith as Christians, summoning reflections on Christ's resurrection. Resurrection denotes the profound truth that, in Christ, death does not have the final word. The promise of revival and raising on the third day is remarkable; it signifies divine purpose and hope against the backdrop of darkness. Just as the apostles experienced despair at Christ's crucifixion, their subsequent

encounter with the risen Christ marked a transformative moment for their faith. The initial grief and disillusionment they faced on Good Friday transitioned into joy and empowerment by Sunday morning. This transitional journey from death to life is echoed in our spiritual journeys today.

After Jesus was crucified, His followers were left in a state of fear and despair. The morning of the third day began with confusion and mourning, yet it culminated in the awe-inspiring revelation of the Resurrection. They were in hiding, paralyzed by their circumstances, much like we can find ourselves when we face the death of hope or dreams due to sin or life's struggles. However, the moment they discovered the empty tomb and encountered the resurrected Jesus, their entire perspective changed. They were filled with the Holy Spirit, boldly proclaiming the message of Christ to the world.

This transformation is not just a historical event; it is a profound spiritual truth. When we return to God and partake in His grace through repentance and baptism, we too experience a spiritual resurrection. This revival is the work of the Holy Spirit. Romans 8:11 (KJV) reassures us, "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." The very same Spirit that raised Jesus from the grave brings life to our spirits, empowering us to live victoriously and purposefully.

#### **IV. The Journey of Agony: A Radical Departure from the Old Self**

To understand the fullness of this resurrection promise, we must recognize the agony of following Christ. It is not a journey sprinkled with ease and comfort; rather, it requires profound sacrifice and the willingness to endure hardships. When Jesus invites us in Matthew 16:24 (KJV) to "take up his cross," He is calling us to a radical reconfiguration of our priorities, desires, and identities. Following Jesus means engaging in self-denial, a challenging yet vital process of letting go of our worldly attachments and sinful behaviors. The world often emphasizes comfort, indulgence, and self-promotion, but to follow Christ is to turn away from these enticements. It requires embracing an agonizing death to the old self, a theme often explored throughout biblical narratives.

Consider the example of Lot's wife, who looked back at the burning city of Sodom and was turned into a pillar of salt (Genesis 19:26). Her longing for the past demonstrates the

struggle to sever ties from a life of sin. This pivotal moment signifies the danger of failing to fully commit to God's call. Like her, many struggle with leaving behind their old lives, but true following necessitates cutting all ties with sin in a revolutionary act of faith. A more hopeful example is Noah, whose story parallels this concept of radical departure. When God instructed Noah to build the ark, He called him to abandon the old world steeped in sin. Noah's obedience, despite the mockery and disbelief of those around him, signifies profound faith. Through the flood, Noah experienced a complete cleansing of the old world and entered a new covenant with God. His life was transformed; he became a vessel of salvation for his family and a new beginning for humanity (Genesis 6-9). Noah's experience illustrates the truth that following God can be a painful and lonely venture, yet it ultimately leads to salvation and a fresh start. Like Noah, when we surrender our former selves to God and embrace His will, we open ourselves to the beauty of restoration.

## **V. Embracing the Divine Promise of Restoration**

As we weave together the themes of repentance, baptism, resurrection, and the agonizing journey of faith, we must rest in the promise that God offers—restoration. Hosea's prophetic words remind us: "After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight." This divine promise echoes throughout Scripture and serves as a foundation for our hope. God's desire is not to condemn but to heal. In the heart of the Gospel lies the beautiful truth that we are granted a fresh start through Christ's sacrifice. God meets us where we are—broken, weary, and in need of healing—and restores us to life through Jesus. As we repent, we are not merely seeking self-improvement but are invited into an intimate relationship with the Father who binds up our wounds.

Let us return to the call of Hosea, understanding that our return is often a collective journey that involves community and support. Just as the early church shared their lives, struggles, and victories with one another, we too are encouraged to lean on each other in our journey toward restoration. Together, we find strength, encouragement, and empowerment through the Holy Spirit, allowing us to rise and live in the light of His presence.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the call to return to the Lord is constant and ever-relevant. Through Hosea's words, we are reminded of the profound cycle of human brokenness, divine healing, and

resurrection life that all lead to restoration. Each part of our journey—repentance, baptism, and the experiences of heart-wrenching trials—serves to prepare us for the ultimate triumph found in Christ. As we reflect on our own lives, it is essential to ask ourselves: Are we willing to confront our wounds, allowing God to tear away the barriers created by sin? Are we ready to hear His inviting call beckoning us to return, to be healed and bound together in relationship with Him? And once we take that step of faith, are we prepared to embrace the radical transformation that comes through engaging with God’s powerful grace as we rise from the ashes of our past?

Just as the apostles transitioned from despair on the first day to jubilation on the third, we too can experience a dynamic change in our lives by accepting the message of hope and renewal in Christ. The story of Noah teaches us that drastic changes can yield incredible results when we are obedient to God’s directives. The flood washed away the sin of the old world, preparing for a new beginning; likewise, our willingness to let go of the past allows us to embrace the future God has in store for us. Moreover, as followers of Christ, our journey does not exist in isolation. We are called to be part of a larger body of believers, encouraging and uplifting one another in our shared experiences of repentance and resurrection. The beauty of our faith community lies in the stories we share—testimonies of how God has healed, restored, and transformed lives. Each shared experience is a testament to the power of returning to God and the radical love He has for each of us.

Thus, as we strive to live in the light of Christ’s resurrection, we must remember the enduring promise found in Hosea: God is eagerly waiting to heal us and bind us up. He longs to revive our spirits and elevate us into a life filled with hope, joy, and purpose. Beloved in Christ, let us accept His invitation today. Let us return to the Lord with contrite hearts, partaking in the powerful act of baptism and positioning ourselves to receive the Holy Spirit fully. Allow God to mold us, transform us, and revive us. For after repentance, there is restoration, and after the crucifixion, there is resurrection. Together, let us rise on the third day—filled with the Spirit, empowered in faith, and ready to proclaim the good news of God’s love to a world yearning for hope and healing. Amen.