

As a Morning Cloud

Hosea 6:1–7 · This week: I Will Love Them Freely, Hosea 1–6; 10–14; Joel

In the manual: **Come, Follow Me lesson 47, “I Will Love Them Freely,” on Gospel Library**



START

On a summer morning, dew can cover every blade of grass. By the time the sun is high, it has disappeared. The Lord said Israel's goodness was like that (Hosea 6:4).

READ TOGETHER

Israel still offered sacrifices at the altar. At the same time, the people were breaking the covenant and hurting one another (Hosea 6:7–9).

HOSEA 6:1

¹Come, 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.

HOSEA 6:4

⁴O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee? for your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away.

HOSEA 6:6

⁶For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.

WHAT IT TEACHES

“Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us” (Hosea 6:1). The people knew the right words. Verse 4 shows the problem. Their goodness was “as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away.” It showed up and then disappeared.

“For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings” (Hosea 6:6). The Lord had commanded the sacrifices. He wanted them to come from people who were kind to each other and who knew him.

Jesus quoted this verse twice. When Pharisees complained that he ate with sinners, he told them to go and learn what it means (Matthew 9:10–13). When they condemned his hungry disciples for picking grain on the Sabbath, he said they would have judged differently if they had understood it (Matthew 12:1–7).

TALK ABOUT IT

**What is one good habit that tends to disappear on us like morning dew?
What would help it last all day?**

TAKE TO CHURCH

Hosea said Israel's goodness vanished like morning dew. The Lord asks for mercy and for real knowledge of him, the kind of goodness that is still there at noon.