

## **An Urgent Necessity**

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DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON

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"It is time to seek the Lord till He comes and rains righteousness upon you." [Hosea 10:12](#).

HOSEA uses a great many figures taken from farming. He describe the seeking of the Lord in the former part of this verse as plowing, and sowing, and breaking up fallow ground. I suppose he intends by this to describe conviction of sin, humiliation of soul as the work that plows, the reception of the Truth of the Gospel by faith in Jesus Christ as sowing, for this introduces the Living Seed into the soul. And he here gives two reasons why this matter of seeking the Lord should be attended to at once. His first reason is the season. "It is time to seek the Lord." The second is a very gracious expectation that God will rain righteousness upon us. First, then, the Prophet reasons that we should seek after the Lord because it is—

### **I. THE TIME TO SEEK GOD.**

"It is time to seek the Lord." I wish you to reflect, first, that we yet have time. It might have been otherwise. We might have been cut down in our sins. Many of our neighbors and acquaintances have died. Some of them, we have reason to fear, died in their iniquities and were taken away with a stroke. We, too, have passed through dangers. Some have escaped in shipwreck. Some have been in imminent peril in accidents—some of us have come into the very jaws of death in serious sickness. We might almost sing, or quite sing—

"Lord, and am I yet alive? Not in torment, not in Hell? Still does Your good Spirit strive With the chief of sinners dwell?" We yet have time. Let no person living say he has not time, for while life lasts, hope lasts. The sentence, "Depart, you cursed," is not yet pronounced by Christ's lips on you. Pronounce it not on yourselves! Do not conclude your case to be hopeless and make it hopeless, but rather believe that being in the assembly of God's people, listening to the testimony of His Grace, you are still on praying ground and pleading terms with God—and you yet have time given you to seek the Lord! The most aged need not despair! The most guilty need not conclude that their day of Grace is over! Until that iron bar shall fasten the door and you are shut in the pit of Hell forever, let not Satan persuade you that you are beyond all hope! While the Gospel note rings from the silver trumpet of gracious invitation, "He that has ears to hear let him hear," you yet have time—time to seek the Lord!

This time is given you for this very purpose. You think, perhaps, that your prolonged life is given you that you may mature your plans, that you may rectify mistakes of business, that you may accumulate more money, or perhaps you are gross enough to think that the

best way of using time is to get earthly pleasure out of it—and indulge animal passions and appetites! Ah, Sirs, it is not so! To whatever use you put this talent of time, God's long-suffering has been your salvation. By it God teaches you to repent while He permits you to live! His long-suffering is not that you may provoke Him further, but that you may cease to provoke Him! He cuts not down the tree that it may spread its useless branches and cumber the ground yet worse, but if, perhaps, being dug about a little longer, it may bring forth fruit! It is the very motive why the Intercessor pleads, "Spare it yet another year." He spares you that you may not depart hence till you are ready to depart. He gives you space, not for sin, but for repenting opportunity! Not for perpetrating worse offenses, but for turning from your evil ways! Your time has this mark on it, if you would but see it, "Repent! I give you space. Repent! Take heed you waste it not." There is encouragement to every unconverted person in this thought! If this time is given you to repent in, then rest assured that, repenting and believing in Jesus, you will be accepted! If the judge stands at the criminal's door and waits, and says he waits there until he is willing to receive the pardon he grants, and if the criminal is anxious to receive the pardon, there can be no difficulty in the way! The very waiting of the judge at the door proves that he does not want to execute the sentence—only desires to see some symptom of contrition, some tokens of turning from the evil way and gives space if, perhaps, these token may become apparent. Hear you, then, oh, unconverted ones! Hear you, then, and trifle not with the space allowed you!

It is time to seek the Lord, says the text. Surely it is high time! Not only the time, but high time. It is high time, you young ones, that you seek the Lord, for Satan is on the watch for you if, perhaps, your unwary footsteps may be decoyed into the paths of evil—evil which, if you are not delivered from, you will have to regret ever having trodden to life's latest hour! Oh, if you would be kept from the snare of the fowler, you young ones, it is time you seek the Lord—high time! Now when you are leaving your mother's roof—going away from a father's gentle guidance, it is time to seek the Lord. I would press this on any young man here just launching into life, or that marriage, or that business he entered upon—it is time to seek the Lord! Set up God's altar when you set up a house, and before you trade for yourself, consecrate yourself and your substance to God, who can bless you and will!

But, oh, you that have passed now into middle life, have you spent forty years in sin? It is high time you sought the Lord! Your best days have been given to provoking Him. Will you not give the rest, such as they are, to His service? Oh, that His Spirit might compel you to do so. And you that lean upon the staff, you who have come to the verge of human life, is it not high time to seek the Lord? I see your sun going down—the sky is scarcely bright, the red rays betoken that the sun is hiding itself. Oh, before the dark, dark, endless night comes on, seek the Lord while yet He may be found! Be grateful for having been spared so long. Oh, be not so ungrateful as to use so long a life all for sin, for remember, it will be then all used for your own destruction! You have been a fool long enough! Gray hairs and foolery

are not well matched. You have long enough sported on the brink of Hell—will you not start back from it? By God's long-suffering and patience, I beseech you remember it is high time for you to seek the Lord.

And you in whom I mark that treacherous spot upon the cheek that marks the worm beneath, and you with the pre-ternaturally bright eyes that indicates the fire of consumption within, it is time you sought the Lord! And you whose crumbling frames, or aching bones or relaxed sinews, or trembling nerves, all betoken how weak your body is and how readily it may be crumbled back into the dust—these tokens from the Lord are upon you—it is time you sought Him! He knocks gently as yet, and gives you warning. Take heed, He will soon come and remove the house of the wicked, and the tabernacle of the ungodly, and your souls must appear before His Judgment Seat! It is high time you sought the Lord. And, oh, all of you ungodly ones who listen to my voice, and have listened to it so long, I have asked the Lord to teach me how to preach that I may somehow get at your hearts. I seem not to have learned the art as yet. May His Spirit come and give the right word with a barbed shaft that shall plow its way right through your armor and pierce its way through all the hardness of your heart until it breaks the conscience and wounds you—and compels you to cry for mercy! What? All the years at Park Street, Exeter Hall and the time at the Surrey Gardens—and ever since this Tabernacle has been built—and yet unsaved? It is time to seek the Lord! The very seats you sit on cry out against you, some of you, and I, unwilling as I am to speak it, I must be a swift witness against some of you, for to the best of my ability I have pointed you to Christ, I have warned you of danger, I have told you of your great peril, I have warned you of the terrible punishment of sin, I have entreated you to fly to Jesus! It is time, you Gospel-hardened ones, that you sought the Lord! If your lusts are gods, serve them! But decide and choose this day—and may God choose for you whom you will serve! It is high time as well as time to seek the Lord!

Remember, too—and here is something solemn, but something sweet as well—it is God's time, for these are God's words put into the Prophet's mouth—it is time to seek the Lord! God says, "It is time." When God says it is time, why, then, when I come, I cannot be denied! God says, "It is time." Then if I do not come, I provoke Him! Hear you these words, you that are dull of hearing, and you whose hearts have a thick crust! Hear you, for Jehovah speaks to you this day. "Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts as in the provocation." "Today"—He limits the time—"Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, for if you do so, the day will come when He will deal with you as He did with His people, Israel, who, having long provoked Him, received this as His answer to their face, "He swore in

His wrath that they should not enter into His rest." Not yet has He spoken, but He may, and that awful voice which comes from Solomon's Proverbs may come to you. "Because I have called and you refused, I stretched out My hand and no man regarded it, I also will

mock at your calamity; I will laugh when your fear comes." "Today is the accepted time; today is the day of salvation."

Once more only. It is time to seek the Lord, and it is but time. It is but a time. You have not given to you eternity in which to seek the Lord. It is the time, and the time is limited. It is still time, but it is limited. To some of you it is most limited. It is time to seek the Lord. The vessel lies in the harbor and the favorable wind would take her out to sea and bear her on to her port, but the sailor sleeps—the captain observes not the wind. The sails are furled. Tomorrow the wind has changed. Now he may do as he will, but he is land-locked, and there must he remain. He cannot put out to sea, for he cannot command the gale. So is it with you—there is a time which God appoints you. Tis now! Slight it and it may never come again! It is but a time. Oh, take this mercy at the flood—miss it not, I pray you. While God waits, come you, lest there should come an hour when you shall knock at His door and the voice shall be heard, "Too late, too late! You cannot enter now." Ah, I would I had but power to put this as I should, and so that you would feel it, but, perhaps, you will feel it when I would wish you had no need to do so—I mean on your dying bed.

The Puritans tell a story of a woman convinced of sin on her deathbed, who lived near Cambridge, who was visited by several ministers, all of whom had great skill in comforting seeking souls. When five or six of them had spoken gently and comfortingly to her, she opened her eyes upon them with a glare, and all she said was this, "Call back the time, call back the time, for otherwise I am damned!" And so she died. And there are many, I hear, who might say that. "The time is gone! The time is gone! I cannot call it back!" Oh, take it on the wing while yet it is time to seek the Lord. You know, perhaps, the story of the traveler on the prairie, when a fire in the distance could be seen. The prairie was on a blaze, and he knew that his only hope for life was to fight fire with fire. He searched for his matches. If he could make a ring around him and burn the grass so that when the fire came up, it would have nothing to feed upon, then he might escape. He found but three matches in his box. He took one and struck it with some degree of care, but, alas, before he could light the train which he had laid, the match had gone out. He took another, and this time, very tremblingly, with much of tremulous anxiety about him, struck it. There was a light—he thought he was safe, but a gust of wind blew it out. And now all depended on the last match! He would be burnt to ashes, with no help, no pity from a friend, if that match failed him. Down he falls and breathes the prayer—"God help me, God help me! Grant this may succeed." He struck it! You may guess with what care he had laid all the grass around it, and then he struck it as though he were loath to run the terrible risk, but he praised God when he saw its success and that his life was saved!

You have but one match left, O Sinner! Use it well—one light, one time—the time to seek the Lord. Oh, seek Him now—tonight! This moment in the pew say, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" Is that your prayer? 'Tis well. God hear and answer it! But now I must, by

your patience, speak for a little while upon the second part of the text. There is another reason given for seeking the Lord—and that is—

## II. THE BLESSED EXPECTATION.

It is that in due time He will rain righteousness upon us! I understand by this that the plowing and the sowing are ours, but these are nothing without the heavenly rain of Grace. But God will be sure to send that in due time. In fact, our plowing and sowing are results and tokens of His Grace, and the Grace of comfort will come where the Grace of humiliation has already come. When it says, "righteousness," I think it means to assure us that God can, in a way of righteousness, be gracious to us. Through His dear Son, who bore the punishment of our sins, God can righteously rain upon sinners. Now just a moment or two. You say you have not Grace. You say you are not what you should be. 'Tis even so. But seek the Lord and He will rain righteousness upon you! Observe all Divine Grace must come from Him. Rain comes from God. He rains it. Every drop of Grace comes from Heaven. You, Sinner, can never get any Grace unless He gives it you! Remember this, and wait upon Him for it now. It must be heavenly Grace, or it will be no Grace at all. It can come to you. There are some parts on earth that never could be watered if it did not rain. Nobody would ever think of watering the hilltops. But He waters His hills from His chambers. We cannot give Grace to you—you are in such a desolate, lonely, mountainous place, but He can get to you and He will! See how it is He will rain righteousness upon you. Then, as there is a straight way for rain even to the wilderness, so is there a straight way for God's Grace to drop into your desertheart. Rain comes Sovereignly as God wills it, where He wills it, when He wills it. And in degree and duration according to His will. So does Grace. Lift up your soul, then, to Him for it, and bow your head, feeling that you deserve it not!

But in the metaphor of rain there is the idea of plenteousness. He will rain righteousness upon you. If you have no Grace, He will give you much Grace if you have great needs. He will give you great supplies. He will rain it upon you. God is not stinting in His love—He will not give you a drop or two, but He will give you a sea of mercy. "I will pour water upon him who is thirsty and floods upon the dry ground." Now is not this good reason for seeking the Lord? You cannot get Grace anywhere but from the Lord. God can give it to you very abundantly. It is in His hands to give or not as He wills. Oh, seek it. He holds the stars! He guides the clouds! He wing the tempest! Seek Him for His Grace—He will give it to you. It can come from none besides. But it will come. There is the mercy of it. And you are told in the text to seek it until it does come. Seek Him until the Grace comes! I have known a sinner cry to God once, and mercy has come immediately, but there have been many cases where souls have cried again and again, and only after a long while have they had success. I saw as I came here tonight—it all happened in a moment—I saw a little child just come home from school, I suppose. A very little child and she tapped at her mother's door, and the mother did not come, and she did what was the best thing to do under the circum-

stances—cried as loud as ever she could—and her mother came to her! If you have knocked at Mercy's door and Mercy has not come, cry for it! Oh, a groan, a tear, a cry, a sigh will quicken the steps of Mercy! God cannot linger when a sinner cries. When a sinner weeps, Christ will soon have pity on him. But, anyhow, keep on till He comes. Seek till He rains righteousness upon you.

Elijah got the fire in prayer very soon, but he did not get the rain very soon. He had to say to his servant, "Go and look towards the sea." There was Elijah, with his head between his knees, in mighty prayer, but not a drop of rain or sign of a cloud. "Go again, go again," he repeated till he had commanded his servant seven times—and then there is a cloud the size of a man's hand! Sinner, have you prayed? Pray again. Have you prayed twice? Pray again! Has it come to three times? Pray again! Has it come to four times? Pray again! Does it amount to six times? Pray again! Let there be no stint in prayer. You have kept God waiting long enough. You must not marvel if He should now tarry awhile. Pray again! Pray again! Say, "I am resolved that I will not give it up until You shall rain Your comfort, Your righteousness, Your Grace, upon me." He will surely do it and you do not know how soon—you do not know how soon—you will get comfort. And when it comes it will make up for all delays. You know the woman, when the child is born, remembers no more the travail, for joy that a man is born into the world—and, oh, when Christ is yours, you will forget your travail in your joy and your rejoicing!

I am thinking just now of Columbus and his crew. They had sailed long across the Atlantic, and had not found the golden land, the El Dorado, and so the sailors talked of going back, and many a scheme he had, by which he tempted them a little further on to that unknown shore! At last it came to this, they mutinied—they would go no further! They would not seek the land again—why should they drift away and be lost forever? He said, "Give me but three days, and if between now and the third day we see not the shore, then we will reverse the helm." Within those three days there stood the fair shores of the New World before the mariners' eyes! Suppose they had turned back the second day, and had gone home and never found it? Well, I don't know that it would have mattered much to those sailors. Somebody else would have found it, but you are, perhaps, within three days now of being accepted in the Beloved—perhaps within three hours! Pray God that it may be within three minutes! And will you not go on little farther? Will you not still cry and will you not take the Gospel step, the grand step of believing on the Lord Jesus Christ? Do, and you shall be saved! That brings you to the El Dorado, to the land of gold, to the land of mercy, to the bosom of Christ, to the safety of the blessed, to the security of the Glory that shall be revealed hereafter! Oh, Sinner, be not discouraged, but seek the Lord, for you have His promise He will be found of you!

Some even of God's servants have been a good while seeking and they have not found Him. When that dear martyr of Christ, Mr. Glover, lay in prison, he was in a very sad state

of heart, and he said, "I love Him, and I will burn for Him, but, oh, that I had some glimpses of His face!" And his fellow sufferer who lay in prison with him used to tell him, "He will appear to you—you shall have joy." But day after day all through that weary time spent in prison, he would constantly be saying, "Am I His? Has He forgotten to be gracious? Has He shut up the heart of His compassion?" "But," said Glover, "if He never speak comfortably to me again, I know His Truth and I know His Gospel, and I will burn for Him. By His Grace, I will never turn away!" And the morning came on which he was to be burned—and he awoke with some heaviness of his spirit. There seemed to be no comfort in any promise to which he turned, and prayer brought no relief. And they came and put the chains on him, and they led him out. He came to where the stake was and where the firewood was and he was about to strip and put on his shirt for the burning—and suddenly he leapt up and said, "He is come! He is come! He is come! Glory be unto His name!" His friends had asked him to give some sign that his spirit had revived—and he stood and burned as though he scarcely felt the fire, singing Psalms and praying!

And so it will be with every earnest seeker. If the looks of love have never come to you for years, you will have them yet, for never soul believed but what was safe! Some have believed, but not been comfortable, but they are safe—the comfort will come. Only seek Sinner, for He will rain righteousness on you—

"So I must maintain my hold,  
'Tis the goodness makes me bold;  
I can no denial take,  
For I plead for Jesus' sake."

Oh, Sinner, never let go! Cling close to Christ and He cannot cast you away, for this is His promise, "Him that comes, I will in no wise cast out." Come, then, and the Lord bless you! Amen and amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: DEUTERONOMY 32:1-39.

A very marvelous Chapter it is—a song and a prophecy, in which the poet-seer seems to behold the whole future spread before him as in a map—and it is so vivid to him that he describes it rather as a matter present or past, than as a thing which is yet to be. It is the story of God's dealing His chosen and peculiar people, Israel, from the beginning to the end. The commencement is exceedingly noble.

Verses 1-3. Give ear, O you heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distill as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass because I will publish the name of the LORD: ascribe you greatness unto our God. All through, the song is for the glorification of God! Not a syllable, indeed, in which man is held up to honor, but the Lord, alone, is exalted in His dealings with His people. He is the Rock. All other things are the mere cloud that hovers on the mountain's brow. But—

4. He is the Rock Immutable, eternal.

4. His work is perfect. Sometimes very terrible and very mysterious, but His work is perfect,

4. For all His ways are judgment; a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He. But as for His people, what a contrast between them and their God!

5. They have corrupted themselves, their spot is not the spot of His children: they are a perverse and crooked generation. What a stoop from the God of Truth, without iniquity, to a people full of iniquity—a perverse and crooked generation! We never know so much of our own vileness as when we get a clear view of the excellency of God. What said Job? "I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eyes see You, therefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes."

6. Do you thus requite the LORD, O foolish people and unwise? Is not He your Father who has bought you? Has He not made you, and established you? Who made the Jews to be a people? Who set Israel apart to be a nation? Who, but God, who bought them with a price when they came out of Egypt and, in his fatherly care, led them through the wilderness?

7. 8. Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask your father, and he will show you; your elders, and they will tell you. When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel God's first point in the government of the world was His own people. Everything else was mapped out after He had set apart a place for them—a place sufficient, large, fruitful and in an admirable position, that there they might multiply and enjoy all the good things which He so freely gave them. And to this day dynasties rise and fall, kings reign or are scattered by defeat, only with this one point in God's eye and purpose in His mind—the upholding of the Church in the world—the spread of His glorious

Truth!

9-12. For the LORD'S portion is His people; Jacob is the lot of His inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; He led him about, He instructed him, He kept him as the apple of His eye. As an eagle stirs up her nest, flutters over her young, spreads abroad her wings, takes them, bears them on her wings: So the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him. This is the history of the tutoring of Israel in the wilderness. When they came out of Egypt they were a mere mob of slaves, degenerate by the debasing influence of long bondage. They had to be trained before they were fit to be a nation. Now in all this, let us try to see ourselves. What has God worked for those of us who are His people in bringing us out from the bondage of sin? And how graciously does He this day preserve us as a man guards the apple of "his eye"? No sooner does anything come near the eye than up goes the hand instinctively to shield the eye. And let anything happen to the people of God—and the power of God is ready at once for their



defense. An eagle has to teach her young eaglets to fly. She will take them on her wings, so they say, and cast them off, and let them flutter, and then dash down and come under them and bear them up again till she has taught them to use their wings. And the Lord has been doing this with many here—apparently casting them off, only that, when they fall, underneath them may be the everlasting arms. We have to be trained to faith. It is a difficult exercise for such poor creatures as we are. We are being trained for it at this day. After they had thus been tutored, they were brought into the promised land, which Moses never entered, but yet in his vision of prophecy he sees it all.

13, 14. He made him ride on the high places of the earth, that he might eat the increase of the fields: and He made him to suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock; curds from the cattle, milk of the flock, with fat of lambs, and rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats, with the choicest wheat: and you did drink the pure blood of the grape. It was a very fruitful land, abounding not merely in necessities, but in luxuries. Palestine gave to its inhabitants all that heart could wish, and for a long time, while they were faithful to God, they lived in the midst of plenty.

15. But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked. "The little holy nation"—for I suppose that is the meaning of "Jeshurun." It is a diminutive word—"the little religious nation waxed fat. It abounded in prosperity. It grew stout and kicked."

15. You are waxen fat, you are grown thick, you are covered with fatness: then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation. Alas, alas! Alas! They set up calves in Bethel. They turned aside to Ashtoreth, and worshipped the Queen of Heaven!

16, 17. They provoked Him to jealousy with strange gods, with abomination provoked they Him to anger They sacrificed unto devils, Demons—not to God.

17. Not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not There is nothing new in religion that is true. The truth is always old. But only imagine a new God! And verily we have had lately some new fashions brought up—some new styles of worship. I think they call them mediaeval. They certainly are no older than that—"new gods that newly came up, whom your fathers feared not."

18. Of the Rock that begat you, you are unmindful, and have forgotten God that formed you. Israel was nothing apart from God—a little tribe of people—nothing to be compared with the great nations of the earth. Its only reason for existence was its God. He was its center, its light, its glory, its power. They had got away from Him that formed them.

19, 20. And when the LORD saw it, He abhorred them, because of the provoking of His sons, and of His daughters. And He said, I will hide My face from them, I will see what their end shall be: for they are a very forward generation, children in whom is no faith. There is the mischief—lack of faith. Lack of faith leads to all manner of sin. Oh, that we had a strong elastic faith to realize the unseen God and keep to purely spiritual worship, not needing

symbols, signs and outward tokens—all of which are abominable in His sight, but worshipping the unseen in spirit and in truth. But the Lord said—

21. They have moved Me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked Me to anger with their vanities: and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation. And so the idolatrous nations came and conquered Judea. One after another they trampled down the holy city and let them see that God could use the nations that they despised to be a scourge upon them!

22-25. For a fire is kindled in My anger, and shall burn unto the lowest Hell and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains. I will heap mischief upon them; I will spend My arrows upon them—they shall be burnt with hunger, and devoured with burning heat, and with bitter destruction. I will also send the teeth of beasts upon them, with the poison of serpents of the dust. The sword without, and terror within, shall destroy both the young man and the virgin, the suckling also with the man of gray hairs. Now read the story of the destruction of Israel and Judea—the overthrow of these two kingdoms—and you will see how, word for word, all this came true!

26, 27. I said, I would scatter them into corners, I would make the remembrance of them to cease from among men. Were it not that I feared the wrath of the enemy, lest their adversaries should behave themselves strangely, and lest they should say, Our hand is high, and the LORD has not done all this. God always looks out for some reason for mercy when He is dealing with His people—and He found it here—that the heathen nations would not admit that God had thus been chastening His erring people, but would begin to ascribe their victories to their own demon gods! Therefore He said He would scatter them.

28-30. For they are a nation void of counsel, neither is there any understanding in them. O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end! How should one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, except their Rock had sold them, and the LORD had shut them up? That little people would have been victorious over all their enemies if God had still been with them, but they were defeated and scattered because they had grieved the Lord. Oh, what strength Believers might have if they would but believe! If we could but cast ourselves upon God in simple, childlike faith, we might play the Samson over again and smite our thousands! But we, too, have little faith in God, even those who have most of it—and when the time of trial comes, we also are a stiff-necked and unbelieving generation, as our fathers were!

31-34. For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges. For their wine is of the wine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah: their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter: Their wine is the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps. Is not this laid up in store with Me, and sealed up among My treasures? What an awful text! God lays man's sins by—seals them up among their treasures, that they should not be forgotten—and He will bring them to account.

35, 36. To Me belongs vengeance, and recompense; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste. For the LORD shall judge His people. He will not always let His enemies triumph over them. He will come back to His people whom He seemed to cast away. "The Lord shall judge His people."

36. And have compassion on His servants, when He sees that their power is gone, and there is none shut up, or left. He seemed very angry, but how soon He comes back in love and tries His people over again.

37-39. And He shall say, Where are their gods, their rock in whom they trusted? Which did eat the fat of their sacrifices, and drank the wine of their drink offerings? Let them rise up and help you, and be your protection. See now that I, even I, am He, and there is no god with Me. I kill, and I make alive: I wound, and I heal; neither is there any that can deliver out of My hand