

QUESTIONS WHICH OUGHT TO BE ASKED

“But none says, Where is God my Maker, who gives songs in the night; who teaches us more than the beasts of the earth and makes us wiser than the fowls of Heaven?”

Job 35:10-11

ELIHU perceived the great ones of the earth oppressing the needy and he traced their domineering tyranny to their forgetfulness of God—“None says, Where is God my Maker?” Surely, had they thought of God, they could not have acted so unjustly. Worse still, if I understand Elihu aright, he complained that even among the oppressed there was the same departure in heart from the Lord—they cried out by reason of the arm of the mighty, but unhappily they did not cry unto God their Maker, though He waits to be gracious unto all such and executes righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed. Both with great and small, with oppressors and oppressed, there is one common fault in our nature which is described by the Apostle in Romans, “There is none that understands, there is none that seeks after God.” Until Divine Grace comes in and changes our nature, there is none that says, “Where is God my Maker, who gives songs in the night?” This is a very grave fault, about which we shall speak for a few minutes and may the Holy Spirit bless the word.

1. And first, LET US THINK OVER THESE NEGLECTED QUESTIONS, beginning with, “Where is God my Maker?” There are four questions in the text, each of which reminds us of the folly of forgetting it. First, Where is God? Above all things in the world we ought to think of Him. Pope said, “The proper study of mankind is man,” but it is far more true that the proper study of mankind is God. Let man study man in the second place, but God first. It is a sad thing that God is All in All, that we owe everything to Him and are under allegiance to Him and yet we neglect Him.

Some men think of every person but God. They have a place for everything else, but no place in their heart for God. They are most exact in the discharge of other relative duties and yet they forget their God! They would count themselves mean, indeed, if they did not pay every man his own and yet they rob God. They rob Him of His honor, to which they never give a thought. They rob Him of obedience, for His Law has no hold on them. They rob Him of His praise, for they are receiving daily at His hands and yet they yield no gratitude to their great Benefactor. “None says, Where is God?”

My dear Hearer, do you stand convicted of this? Have you been walking up and down in this great house and never asked to see the King whose palace it is? Have you been rejoicing at this great feast and have you never asked to see your Host? Have you gone abroad through the various fields of Nature and have you never wished to know Him whose breath perfumes the flowers, whose pencil paints the clouds, whose smile makes sunlight and whose frown its storm? Oh, it is a strange, sad fact—God so near us and so necessary to us and yet not sought for!

The next point is, “None says, Where is God my Maker?” Oh, unthinking man! God made you! He fashioned your curious framework and put every bone in its place. He, as with needlework, embroidered each nerve and vein and sinew. He made this curious harp of twice ten thousand strings—wonderful it is that it has kept in tune so long—but only He could have maintained its harmony. He is your Maker! You are a mass of dust and you would crumble back to dust at this moment if He withdrew His preserving power—He but speaks and you dissolve into the earth on which you tread. Do you never think of your Maker? Have you not thought of Him without whom you could not think at all? Oh, strange perversity and insanity that a man should find himself thus

curiously made and bearing within his own body that which will make him either a madman or a worshipper—and yet, for all that, he lives as if he had nothing to do with his Creator—“None says, Where is God my Maker?”

There is great force in the next sentence—“Who gives songs in the night.” That is to say, God is our Comforter. Beloved Friends, you that know God, I am sure you will bear witness that though you have had very severe trials, you have always been sustained in them when God has been near you. Some of us have been sick—near death—but we have almost loved our suffering chamber and scarcely wished to come out of it, so bright has the room become with the Presence of God! Some of us here have known what it is to bury our dearest friends and others have been short of bread and forced to look up, each morning, for daily manna. But when your heavenly Father has been with you—speak, you children of God—have you not had joy and rejoicing and light in your dwellings?

When the night has been very dark, yet the fiery pillar has set the desert on a glow! No groans have made night hideous, but you have sung like nightingales amid the blackest shades when God has been with you. I can hardly tell you what joy, what confidence, what inward peace the Presence of God gives to a man! It will make him bear and dare, rest and wrestle, yield and yet conquer, die and yet live! It will be very sad, therefore, if we poor sufferers forget our God, our Comforter, our song-giver!

Two little boys were once speaking together about Elijah riding to Heaven in the chariot of fire. One of them said, “I think he had plenty of courage. I should have been afraid to ride in such a carriage as that.” “Ah!” Ah!“ said the other, “but I would not mind if God drove it.” So do Christians say! They mind not if they are called to mount a chariot of fire if God drives it! We speak as honest men what we know and feel and we tell all our fellow men that as long as God is present with us, we really don’t care what happens to us—whether we sorrow or whether we rejoice! We have learned to glory in tribulations, also, when God’s own Presence cheers our souls.

And then there is a fourth point. “None says, Where is God my Maker, who teaches us more than the beasts of the earth and makes us wiser than the fowls of Heaven?” Here we are reminded that God is our Instructor. God has given us intellect. It is not by accident, but by His gift that we are distinguished from the beasts and the fowls. Now, if animals do not turn to God, we do not wonder, but shall man forget Him? Strange to say, there has been no rebellion against God among the beasts or the birds. The beasts obey their God and bow their necks to man. There are no sin-loving cattle or apostate fowls, but there are fallen men!

Think, O Man, it may have been better for you if you had been made a frog or a toad than to have lived a man if you should live and die without making peace with your Maker. You glory that you are not a beast—take heed that the beasts do not condemn you. You think yourself vastly better than the sparrow which lights upon your dwelling—take heed that you do better and rise to nobler things. I think if there were a choice in birds and souls dwelt in them, their singing would be as pure as it is now—they would scorn to sing loose and frivolous songs as men do! They would carol everlastingly sweet Psalms of praise to God.

I think if there were souls in any of the creatures they would devote themselves to God as surely as angels do. Why then, O Man, why is it that you, with your superior endowments, must be the sole rebel, the only creature of earthly mold that forgets the creating and instructing Lord? Four points are then before us. Man does not ask after his God, his Maker, his Comforter, his Instructor—is he not filled with a four-fold madness? How can he excuse himself?

II. Supposing you do not ask these questions. Let me remind you that THERE ARE QUESTIONS WHICH GOD WILL ASK OF YOU. When Adam had broken God’s command, he did not say, “Where is God my Maker?” but the Lord did not, therefore, leave him alone! No, the Lord came out and a Voice, silvery with Divine Grace, but yet terrible with Divine Justice, rang through the trees, “Adam, where are you?” There will come such a Voice to you who have neglected God. Your Judge will inquire, “Where are you?” Though you hide in the top of Carmel, or dive with the

crooked serpent into the depths of the sea, you will hear that Voice and you will be forced to answer!

Your dust, long scattered to the wind, will come together and your soul will enter into your body and you will be obliged to answer, "Here I am, for You did call me." Then you will hear the second question, "Why did you live and die without Me?" And such questions as these will come thick upon you, "What did I do that you should slight Me? Did I not give you innumerable mercies? Why did you never think of Me? Did I not put salvation before you? Did I not plead with you? Did I not entreat you to turn to Me? Why did you refuse Me? "You will have no answer to those questions and then there will come another question—ah, how I wish it would come to you while there is time to answer it—"How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?"

Tonight I put it to you that you may propose a way of escape if your imagination is equal to the task. You will be baffled even in trying to invent an escape, now—but how much more when your time of judgment really comes! If you neglect the salvation of God in Christ you cannot be saved. In the next world how will you answer that question—"How shall we escape?" You will ask the rocks to hide you, but they will refuse you that dread indulgence. You will beseech them to crush you, that you may no longer see the terrible face of the King upon the Throne, but even that shall be denied you. Oh, be wise and before you dare the wrath of the eternal King and dash upon the bosses of His buckler, turn and repent, for why will you die?

III. Now, if any seek an answer to the grave enquiries of the text and do sincerely ask, "Where is God my Maker?" let us GIVE THE ANSWERS. Where is God? He is everywhere! He is all around you now. If you want Him, here He is. He waits to be gracious to you. Where is God your Maker? He is within eyesight of you. You cannot see Him, but He sees you. He reads each thought and every motion of your spirit and records it, too. He is within earshot of you. Speak and He will hear you! Yes, whisper—no, you need not even form the words with your lips, just let the thought be in your soul He is so near you! For in Him you live and move and have your being—He knows what is in your heart before you know it yourself!

Where is your Comforter? He is ready with His "songs in the night." Where is your Instructor? He waits to make you wise unto salvation. "Where, then, may I meet Him?" asks one. You cannot meet Him—you must not attempt it—except through the Mediator. "There is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus." If you come to Jesus you have come to God. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself; not imputing their trespasses unto them and has committed unto us the Word of reconciliation," which Word we preach. Believe in Jesus Christ and your God is with you! Trust your soul with Jesus Christ and you have found your Creator and you shall never again have to say, "Where is God my Maker?" for you shall live in Him and He shall live in you!

You have found your Comforter and you shall joy in Him, while He shall joy in you. You have also, in Christ Jesus, found your Instructor who shall guide you through life and bring you to perfection in yonder bright world above. For Christ's sake may the Holy Spirit use this little sermon as a short sword to slay your indifference!