

APRIL 8

Deuteronomy 32:28-52

Vs. 28-33 Notice how God refers to Himself as Israel's "Rock" throughout the entire song. This is in contrast to the "rock" Israel would choose to follow. The whole point in this section is that if they were wise, they would have understood that only Yahweh could have made them able to do what has been done. This is very much like what Paul said in Romans 1:22, *claiming to be wise they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images...* Then, as Jesus said, they bore evil fruit.

Vs. 34-38 You were wondering where the verse, "vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord," came from? God is saying that although He would allow the nations to punish Israel, He will punish the nations and vindicate Israel. God will teach Israel through punishment that they chose the wrong rock.

Vs. 39-42 God declares His ownership of reality and that all who make themselves His enemy will be judged. Some of this sounds a lot like John 5. Jesus will be the one bringing this judgment.

V. 43 This sounds like the book of Revelation. It is obvious that the fulfillment of much of what is written here will take place in the Tribulation and in the Millennium.

Vs. 44-47 It looks like Joshua had a part in the "singing" of this song.

Vs. 46-47 are very powerful words and apply to each of us, too. As Christians, we still have the tendency to underplay the daily importance of the Word in our lives. As followers of Christ in the harvest, the Word, like the circulation of blood through our bodies, has to be constantly circulating through our hearts and minds. The wreckage we see in the lives of believers is directly connected to this.

V. 48 I wonder how I would feel if I knew that when I finished my sermon, I would die? That might be a reason to preach a really long sermon. But on the other hand, what does it mean to die? We show what we really think of God and heaven when we become overwhelmed by fear when we think of death. For those who work in the harvest, I think we all end up with the heart expressed by Paul in Philippians 1, "I'd rather go, but if it will do some good now in the harvest, well OK, I'll stay."

Luke 12:35-59

Vs. 35-40 Verse 35 is said with the same enthusiasm and for the same reason as v. 33, *Sell your possessions*. If our treasure is in heaven, then we are free to live with joyful abandon toward God. Here, the emphasis is on doing the work of God in the harvest until He returns. There is that sense in which we should work with joy and expectation of our Lord's return.

V. 37 Notice that this reward is only for those servants who were awake.

V. 40 Jesus will talk to His disciples a couple more times about the coming of the Son of Man. That "day" is the 7-year Tribulation. Its beginning will be totally without warning. For each of us as disciples, the day of our death, and the circumstances thereof, can come without warning too. We need to be faithfully doing His work and living in expectation of seeing Him at all times.

Vs. 41-48 The answer to Peter's question seems to be "all believers." You wouldn't call an unbeliever a "servant." We see plenty of believers lost on earth. Some people get drawn into the cultural comfort of worshiping worship and stuff, eating, drinking, being merry. Some really conservative, righteously right people miss the entire harvest by holding a loveless, military view of protecting the truth in a bunker, beating the servants. Satan is much wiser than we are and knows a million ways to get us off track and to neutralize us.

Vs. 46-47 *Cut him in pieces* is a euphemism for a beating. Unbelievers don't get a beating. My sense is that those Christians who fell asleep in the light will be saved, but only as through fire. That "fire" of judgment for the unfaithful believer will have some aspect of punishment that will be awful like fire, but not like the fire of eternal condemnation. Some of us know what we should be doing and will get punished severely for our disobedience. Some believers don't quite get it, and will still be punished, but not like those of us who really have a clear vision of what's going on.

V. 48 The privilege and the requirement. This is addressed to the disciples then who walked with Jesus and saw who He was. It also applies to us who have been gifted for the harvest.

Vs. 49-53 The meaning couldn't be clearer. Jesus came for the harvest. This life will mean great blessing from God, as we follow Him into the conflict of bearing fruit in a dying, rebellious world. How can we desire to be anything different than our Savior? How can we expect to live a life that refuses to embrace what He embraced? How can we not follow Him into the harvest?

Vs. 54-59 Now this was addressed to the unbelieving masses. They needed to see what was going on and make a decision. They, like the whole world, were walking to judgment. Now was the time to settle with God. Once before the judge there would be no chance for mercy.

I wonder what this sleeping servant looks like. I wonder if he's more common than we think.

Psalm 78:56-64

This sounds like the period of the judges before Samuel became their main judge and freed Israel from the dominance of the Philistines. To get a better idea of what is said here, read 1 Samuel 4.

Vs. 56-58 True to the behavior of their rebellious fathers in the wilderness, once in the land, they also put God to the test.

Vs. 59-64 This event sounds like the capturing of the ark of the covenant, followed by the deaths of Eli's sons, Hophni and Phinehas, then the death of Eli and finally the death of Phinehas' wife in childbirth.

Proverbs 12:24

Well, I know which guy I want to be. The word *rule* may not mean to be a governor, but in contrast to the slothful, the diligent will remain free to live his life without slavery.