

FOR IT IS TIME

HOSEA 10:12

Text: Hosea 10:12

(Hosea 10:12) "Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you."

Introduction:

What should we think of a farmer who allowed his finest field to lie fallow year after year? Yet men neglect their souls; besides being unprofitable, these inward fields become full of weeds and exceedingly foul.

Israel had sinned against God in several areas, which I believed was summed up in verse 13.

(Hosea 10:13) "Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity; ye have eaten the fruit of lies: because thou didst trust in thy way, in the multitude of thy mighty men."

Notice:

1. PERIOD CLARIFIED ... FOR IT IS TIME

(Hosea 10:12) "Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you."

A. Now is the time.

B. Now is all that we have

2. PREPARATION COMMENDED ... BREAK UP YOUR FALLOW GROUND SOW TO YOURSELVES IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

(Hosea 10:12) "Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you."

A. In order for good seed to grow there must be some preparation done.

(Isaiah 28:23-25) "Give ye ear, and hear my voice; hearken, and hear my speech. {24} Doth the plowman plow all day to sow? doth he open and break the clods of his ground? {25} When he hath made plain the face thereof, doth he not cast abroad the fitches, and

scatter the cummin, and cast in the principal wheat and the appointed barley and the rie in their place?"

(Jeremiah 4:3) "For thus saith the LORD to the men of Judah and Jerusalem, Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns."

1. Weeds grow with no preparation.

- B. You reap that which you sow.

(Galatians 6:7-9) "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. {8} For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. {9} And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

(Proverbs 22:8) "He that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity: and the rod of his anger shall fail."

(2 Corinthians 9:6) "But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully."

1. Principle of Sowing and Reaping

- a. Reap what you sow

b. Reap later than you sow

c. Reap more than you sow

3. PERSISTENCY COMMANDED ... SEEK THE LORD UNTIL HE COME AND RAIN RIGHTEOUSNESS UPON YOU.

(Hosea 10:12) "Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you."

A. Draw nigh to God; seeking him in worship, prayer, etc.

(Psalms 105:4) "Seek the LORD, and his strength: seek his face evermore."

B. Suppose there is a pause between the seeking and the blessing, do not look in some other direction, but continue to seek the Lord.

(John 6:68) "Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life."

C. The problem is with most of us is that we grow impatient.

(Luke 11:5-13) "And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; {6} For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him? {7} And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. {8} I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth. {9} And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. {10} For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. {11} If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? {12} Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? {13} If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"

4. PROMISED CERTAINTIES ... REAP MERCY ... RAIN RIGHTEOUSNESS UPON YOU.

(Hosea 10:12) "Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you."

A. Reap a crop of mercy.

B. Rain righteousness

1. Notice it is the very thing we are to sow, truly we do reap what we sow and certainly more than we sow.

Close:

(1 Kings 18:17-45) "And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? {18} And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim. {19} Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table. {20} So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel. {21} And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word. {22} Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, remain a prophet of the LORD; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men. {23} Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay

it on wood, and put no fire under: and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: {24} And call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken. {25} And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal, Choose you one bullock for yourselves, and dress it first; for ye are many; and call on the name of your gods, but put no fire under. {26} And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped upon the altar which was made. {27} And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked. {28} And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them. {29} And it came to pass, when midday was past, and they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded. {30} And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD that was broken down. {31} And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the LORD came, saying, Israel shall be thy name: {32}

And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD: and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed. {33} And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood. {34} And he said, Do it the second time. And they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time. And they did it the third time. {35} And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water. {36} And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. {37} Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. {38} Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. {39} And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God. {40} And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there. {41} And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of abundance of rain. {42} So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the

top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees, {43} And said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, There is nothing. And he said, Go again seven times. {44} And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not. {45} And it came to pass in the mean while, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel."

God help us not to get weary in well doing and to "Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you."