

Deuteronomy 4:29

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.

Analysis

But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.

After the storm of judgment comes the rainbow of hope. The conditional uvikkashtem (וְבַקְשָׁתֶם, 'if you seek') introduces the possibility of restoration even from exile. The remarkable promise umatsa'ta (עָמַתָּה, 'thou shalt find') assures that seeking God is never futile—the God who scatters can be found by those scattered among the nations.

However, conditions apply: seeking must be bekhhol levavkha uvekhhol nafshekha (בְּכָל לְבָבֶךָ וּבְכָל נֶפֶשֶׁךָ), 'with all thy heart and with all thy soul'). This echoes the Great Commandment (Deuteronomy 6:5) and reverses the half-hearted worship that led to exile. Superficial religious observance will not suffice; God requires total, undivided devotion. The same wholehearted commitment expected in obedience is required in repentance.

Jeremiah 29:13-14 quotes this promise to the Babylonian exiles, demonstrating its ongoing relevance. The New Testament universalizes it: 'Seek, and ye shall find' (Matthew 7:7). God is not far from anyone who genuinely seeks Him (Acts 17:27), though saving faith comes through Christ alone. The seeking heart finds a seeking God who was seeking it first.

Historical Context

Despite predicting exile and judgment, Moses offers hope of restoration through wholehearted repentance. This promise was partially fulfilled when the remnant returned from Babylonian exile under Ezra and Nehemiah (538 BC onward), and continues to have theological significance for God's faithfulness to covenant promises.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. What does it mean to seek God 'with all your heart and soul' rather than with partial or divided commitment?
2. How does the promise that sincere seekers will find God encourage you in seasons of spiritual distance or dryness?

Interlinear Text

וְבָקַשְׁתָּם אֶת מֶלֶךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם
But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God
H1245 H8033 H853 H3068 H430

וְבָקַשְׁתָּם אֶת מֶלֶךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם
thou shalt find him if thou seek him with all thy heart
H4672 H3588 H1875 H3605 H3824 H3605

וְבָקַשְׁתָּם
and with all thy soul
H5315

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 119:2 (Parallel theme): Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart.

2 Chronicles 15:4 (References God): But when they in their trouble did turn unto the LORD God of Israel, and sought him, he was found of them.

Psalms 119:10 (Parallel theme): With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments.

Deuteronomy 30:10 (References God): If thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which are written in this book of the law, and if thou turn unto the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul.

Psalms 119:58 (Parallel theme): I intreated thy favour with my whole heart: be merciful unto me according to thy word.

Psalms 119:145 (References Lord): I cried with my whole heart; hear me, O LORD: I will keep thy statutes.

Joel 2:12 (References Lord): Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning:

Jeremiah 3:10 (References Lord): And yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah hath not turned unto me with her whole heart, but feignedly, saith the LORD.

2 Kings 23:3 (References Lord): And the king stood by a pillar, and made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to keep his commandments and his testimonies and his statutes with all their heart and all their soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people stood to the covenant.

2 Chronicles 15:15 (References Lord): And all Judah rejoiced at the oath: for they had sworn with all their heart, and sought him with their whole desire; and he was found of them: and the LORD gave them rest round about.