AT CHRISTMAS-TIME

IF you cannot pause, at Christmas-time
To read the Christmas story,
Or hear afresh the angels’ song,
And glimpse the heavenly glory;
If your days are filled to overflow
With business or with pleasure;
If you never stop to bow the knee,
Or offer Him your treasure;
If you've missed the shepherds' midnight thrill —
That heavenly revelation —
And hastened not to Bethlehem
With eager expectation;
If you cannot see that Guiding Star
And feel no urge to follow —
Do you wonder that the Festival
Seems meaningless and hollow?

* * *

So why not pause, this Christmas-time,
To read again the story —
It could be just the word you need
To fill your soul with glory!

ERIC S. HORN

JONAH 4:2

O LORD, is this not what I said?
To spare them has long been my dread.
They’re vile, and your cov'nant they hate;
They’re cruel; and true justice can’t wait.
So why do you cancel their sin?
Compassion is now stretched too thin:
You pardon, but can't hide guilt's spread.
O Lord, is this not what I said?

* * *

Is anger the answer to need?
Must grace now be captive to greed?
If love can't extend to the vile,
Then how is my cov'nant worth-while?
Are you a great prophet, preferred —
Above all mankind — by a gourd?
Your anger's elitism's creed:
Is anger the answer to need?

D.A. CARSON

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