1:5 *And also swear*- Repeatedly the Bible condemns the human tendency to worship both the true God and also idols (1 Cor. 10:21). Yahweh has loved us so much that He is rightfully jealous over us, and our loyalty must be to Him alone.

1:12 *With candles*- Alluding to the Jewish custom of searching their homes for yeast, representing sin, at Passover time.

In weak moments we all tend to assume that God is somehow in limbo, indifferent and not paying attention to our behaviour or situation here on earth. The temporary silence of God doesn’t mean that He is not watching intently. These people who thought that God was indifferent were themselves “settled on their dregs”, they hadn’t moved for a long time, and they thought God was like them. We must resist the temptation to think that God’s attitudes to things and people, our own selves included, are merely a reflection of *our* attitudes (Ps. 50:21). The Bible reveals to us God’s judgments, positions and emotions, and we must accept this revelation rather than assuming that God is somehow created in our own image.

1:17,18- a series of allusions to Sodom, showing that God’s sinful people were no better than the worst Gentiles. Mere association with God’s people and knowing truths about God doesn’t mean of themselves that we are any better than the worst sinners.

2:3 Humility is a height which we should aspire to. This is a complete inversion of human thinking and values.

2:11 The pagan gods didn’t exist at all, but God speaks of starving them to death. He speaks as if they exist, and then shows by exercising His great power that effectively they don’t. God and His Son adopted the same approach with the demons or idols which were believed in.

2:12 *My sword*- God used the swords of pagan nations to do His judgments, but effectively they were *His* swords. The fact God uses people to do His will doesn’t mean they are righteous. When bad things happen to us at the hands of evil people, we needn’t think that God has left us at the whim of the wicked and forgotten us. He is actually using those people according to His plan.

2:15 *I am*- An allusion to the meaning of ‘Yahweh’- ‘I am that I am’. Those who effectively deny the existence of God are themselves playing God, claiming that *I* am, rather than accepting that *He* is. Acceptance of the fact that Yahweh is the only “I am” means that we will not be “I” centred, but God centred.

3:5 *Know no shame*- The righteous admit their sins and do know shame for them; and so they will come to a position where in the Kingdom of God, they will be aware that they have sinned but will not know shame for those sins (:11), so fully acceptant will they be of the work of Christ which has left them genuinely spotless and blameless before God’s throne (Jude 24). Verse 19 continues the irony around the theme of “shame” by saying that the shame of sinners is known by everyone else- apart from they themselves, who “know no shame”. The point is that we might as well be ashamed for our sins before others, because actually they do or will see the shame of our sins anyway.

3:7 God’s judgments could have been averted *if* they repented. God may ‘appoint’ things to happen to a person, but if they repent, then that potential which He has designed will in fact not happen. In this lies the wonderful significance of repentance.

3:13 *Refuge in the name*- In our times, we can do this by being baptized into the Name.

3:18 In the Kingdom of God on earth, God will empower those who now long to be obedient to God’s commands but cannot be due to circumstance or weakness. We will all then be able to serve God as strongly as we now wish. Our experiences in this life, even of our own weaknesses, are preparing our desire for that eternity which we will then be given.