



6/24/25

*Today's passage is such a clear picture of how sowing to the flesh is so destructive, and how our God remains faithful, loving, merciful, and gracious in the midst of our rebellion. He is the perfect parent with the perpetual rebellious teenager, letting consequences come for the purpose of restoration. So here's the question... Since God is such a wonderful, merciful, gracious parent in spite of our crazy choices, why would we ever choose to rebel against Him??? Isn't that the definition of crazy??? Sadly... I have been crazy many times! I pray that you and I will recognize the crazy and turn to the divine.*

*Blessings,*

*Jonna*

*Isaiah 30:8-22*

*Galatians 5:16-17 says, "But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do." And Galatians 6:7-8 says, "Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life." The deception of our flesh steeped in pride runs deep and long... throughout history. Sadly, the people of the Old Testament who should have been the humblest before God, the Israelites, were constantly choosing the flesh. As I look at this passage in Isaiah, Father, please expose to me where I am acting as they did rather than humbling myself before You. Like Paul said in Galatians 6, please help me not to be deceived into thinking I will be more satisfied by walking in my flesh rather than walking in the Spirit.*

*Vs. 8-11 ~ God told Isaiah to write this down as a witness of the rebellion of God's people AND I will see in later verses that this is also a reminder of God's grace and mercy. He doesn't have it written down so that I can live in shame and condemnation, but so that I can learn to turn to*

*Him, where I will find compassion and help.*

*What did God want written down about the Israelites, who He had set free from slavery over and over again? Yikes! He said, "They are a rebellious people, lying children, children unwilling to hear the instruction of the Lord." Why? Has God been cruel to them? No. He's continued to provide for them. What would cause rebellion, lying, and voluntary deafness? PRIDE! UNBELIEF! THE FLESH!!! And just in case I want to sit in judgment over their rebellion, I only have to look at my own heart. How often have I refused to listen to the Lord because I was afraid, He might lead me somewhere I didn't want to go? Or told myself lies so that I didn't have to give up something I wanted? Or refused to trust His word because I chose my feelings instead? O Lord, I'm looking into a mirror of my own soul.*

*The Israelites told the prophets and seers not to speak the truth, but to speak what their ears wanted to hear... to make up their own truth. Made up truth is a lie, no matter how you spin it. People still do this in churches all over the world. They find churches who will speak their opinions rather than the word of God. It doesn't change what's true! Psalm 18:30 says, "This God—HIS way is perfect; the word of the Lord proves true; He is a shield for all those who take refuge in Him." I can't strong arm God into following MY path. Only HIS path is "steadfast love and faithfulness" (Psalm 25:10). Let me not forget... God is not warning about a rebellious heart so that He can crush me, but so that He can rescue me!!!*

*Vs. 12-14 ~ My daughters always warn their kids when they're disobeying that if they don't "turn their attitudes to a happy heart," there will be consequences. This is exactly what God is doing here. He's giving warning of consequence so that I can turn from rebellion. He said, "Therefore, thus says the Holy One of Israel..." Let me not forget who it is that's speaking... Creator, God Most High, Ancient of Days, The One who was and is and is to come. He says, "Because you...*

- Despise this word" ~ To ignore God's word IS to despise it. It's to say I know or want better than what He has to say.*
- Trust and rely on oppression and perverseness" ~ Oppression ~ injustice, selfish gain. Perverseness ~ turning away from God. They were putting all their confidence in SELF... They were relying on self-rule, self-pleasure, self-protection, and self-pity... the flesh.*

*Because they chose self over God, deluding themselves, God was warning them of the consequences... "This sin will come crashing down around you, like a broken piece of pottery that is so small it cannot even pick up a tiny amount of water." Let me not be deceived. God is not mocked. Let me never mistake His mercy and patience for weakness.*

*Vs. 15 ~ Let me also never believe that it's too late for His forgiveness. Even when the Israelites continued to rebel against God, He never stopped calling them to repentance. Jesus solidified that call with His own death and resurrection. There is no sin too great that the*

*blood of Jesus can't cover it... neither for salvation OR for the sanctification of His people. We are never too far gone.*

*God said to these people who He loved, "In returning and rest you will be saved; in quietness and trust shall be your strength." Return to Him. He will deliver. Rest in Him. He is your refuge. Be still before Him. He will strengthen you. Trust Him (and not oppressions and perverseness). He will uphold You with His righteous right hand. 25 chapters later, He says in Isaiah 55:6-7, "Seek the Lord while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, that He may have compassion on him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon." 700 years later, Jesus said had the same message for us in Matthew 11:28-30, "Come to Me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light."*

*Sadly, the end of vs. 15, after God is promising deliverance and strength if we would just humble ourselves and repent, He said, "But you were unwilling." O Lord, You have had to say those same words to me so many times in the past!!! I pray that You will never have to say them again!!!*

*Vs. 16-17 ~ Unwillingness to humble myself before God IS walking in the flesh. Do not be deceived... sowing to the flesh reaps corruption. That never changes. God said to the Israelites, "You said, 'No! We will flee on horses.'" Instead of turning to the Lord in repentance when He brings the consequences, choosing the flesh is saying, "I will take my chances. I will learn the hard way. Or maybe I just won't learn at all... but I will be master of my destiny." Oh... what a crazy statement! I am never master of my destiny. All I do when I refuse to surrender to God is place myself in the path of the enemy where I have no protection, no strength.*

*God said, "You WILL flee and your enemy will swiftly pursue you until you are left like a flagstaff on top of a mountain, like a signal on a hill." God will let us experience the natural consequences of our rebellion because, if He doesn't, we will just keep going back to the lie and we will blame Him. Whether my enemy is physical or not, I always have a spiritual enemy I can't see. 1 Peter 5:8 says, "Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour." When I take myself out of the protection and strength of the Lord, I am a walking target for the devil. He is not afraid of me. He IS afraid of "The Holy One of Israel, MY God."*

*Vs. 18-22 ~ Does God care? Does He abandon me when I arrogantly refuse to trust Him and follow Him, when I refuse to walk in the Spirit? No. He never does. "Therefore... because you have run FROM God rather than TO God... He WAITS to be GRACIOUS to you." The Lord waits to pour out His favor, His pleasure, His delight on me. He is always active one way or another. He is either actively saving and strengthening and discipling me, or He's actively waiting for me to return to Him... because He loves me. I don't understand that kind of love,*

*but it's true.*

*Not only does He wait to be gracious to me but He EXALTS Himself... for a purpose... to show MERCY to me. God is lifted up in honor SO THAT I can experience His compassion! What other ruler would do that WITHOUT FAIL? Any other ruler, any other idol demands perfect obedience and crushes those who fail. God is a shepherd who calls me to follow Him, not a cowboy who whips me until I go where he forces me to go.*

*God is not weak. He is not uncaring. He has all authority and He IS a God of justice. He is waiting on me, and He's calling me to wait on Him. That takes patience and mercy on His part, and humility and surrender on mine. But when I do humble myself before Him, He blesses me. Idols and the flesh promise blessing but bring destruction.*

*This is the love, favor, and compassion of the Lord... even when I have been rebellious... WHEN I return to the Lord and wait on Him, He replaces my weeping with joy. As soon as I cry out to Him, choosing to walk by the Spirit and not by the flesh, He hears me and answers me.*

*My rebellion brought the Lord's discipline because He loves me. I was sowing to my flesh and on the path of reaping destruction. He loves me too much to help me do that. His discipline was "the bread of affliction and the water of adversity." But that was to bring me back to Him. He says in Hebrews 12:11 says, "For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it."*

*The peaceful fruit of righteousness is that my prayers no longer feel like they're falling on deaf ears. It was never that God wasn't listening; it was that He wasn't giving me what I wanted because what I wanted was taking me down a path of destruction. The peaceful fruit of righteousness is that He not only hears me, but He helps me to hear HIM! The Spirit speaks to my heart and says, "This is the way. Walk in it." When I taste and see how good the Lord is, and walk in the Spirit, I defile all the idols that I had set up in my heart as more satisfying than God. I scatter them and I say, "Be gone." And I never go back!*

*O Lord, where am I trusting in my flesh rather than trusting in You right now? I think it's when I feel overwhelmed. I see the mountain of responsibility in front of me rather than the God who moves mountains. Lord, I am returning to You and resting in You. I believe You will deliver me. I am choosing to be still before You and to trust You because You are my strength. Please... before I focus on the circumstances and my responsibilities, help me to focus on You and filter everything through Your sovereign hand. Please help me to sow to the Spirit and not to the flesh. Help me to know that YOU are what's true and good. Help me to find my strength and deliverance from selfish desires in YOU. Help me to wait on YOU. Help me to listen to YOU. Help me to be repulsed by what I used to rely on and trust. YOU are my refuge. YOU are my confidence. I am willing.*