



11/13/25

So... Yesterday I mentioned our women's Christmas event coming up in December. You'll be hearing more about it this Sunday. BUT until then... Every year we have a wonderful group of women who contribute time and talents to help make the day not only filled with worship but also filled with a "beautiful" worship experience and yummy food. We are always looking for volunteers... so if you're interested in helping, we'd love to include you! Please contact Joanne McHenry at jmchenry@summitpoint.org, and she'll let you know all the possibilities of how you can help.

*Blessings,
Jonna*

Isaiah 30:8-18

Can you imagine having your name written in the Bible not just for the whole world to see your life choices in writing, but for ALL people of ALL TIME in the whole world to see it??? Yikes! This is the thing that blows my mind, though... When we read about the people in Hebrews 11, called the Hall of Faith... God does not have their failures recorded, but their acts motivated by faith! BUT for those who did not turn to God in faith like Cain, nothing good about them is recorded. I find so much hope from Hebrews 11... to see that God is not focusing on all my failures, but He's celebrating my faith. So I say, "Lord! Please grow my faith!!!"

Hebrews 11:29 even speaks of the faith of the Israelites! It says, "By faith the people crossed the Red Sea as on dry land, but the Egyptians, when they attempted to do the same, were drowned." The whole Old Testament is FILLED with the unfaithfulness of the Israelites... how they even turned to foreign idols and worshiped them! And yet, God points out their faith. This gives me hope for what He sees in me.

But I also know that He allows the truth of what happened in the Old Testament to be recorded for a purpose. Romans 15:4 says, "For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the

Scriptures we might have hope." So... what is the purpose of recording Isaiah 30, and what is the hope He has for me? It all points to His heart.

Vs. 8-11 ~ God told Isaiah to record His words "before them (the Israelites) on a tablet and inscribe it in a book that it may be for the time to come as a witness FOREVER." I will see in this passage that God is trying to help the Israelites see what they're doing so that they can turn from it and turn to Him. And He wants ME to learn from this.

God said the Israelites were rebellious liars. They were like little children who stick their fingers in their ears and yell, "lalalalalala" so that they don't have to hear God's instructions for them. Not only do they want to ignore what God has to say, but they actively run the other direction.

They tell the "seers" who are supposed to be receiving visions from the Lord and giving insight into what He desires, "Don't see!" They tell the prophets who are supposed speaking forth the word of God, "Don't prophecy what is right!" Yikes!!! Why don't they want to know what's right? They don't want to have to change.

The crazy thing is, ignoring what is right doesn't change the truth. But when we do ignore the truth, we can delude ourselves into thinking that what we're doing is not wrong... for a while... but it always catches up. God wants to protect me from my own dumb choices. It is never God who sabotages me... it is ME who sabotages me!

What did the Israelites want to hear instead? The same thing I want to hear when I'm being a fool. "Speak to us smooth things. Prophecy illusions." Don't make me feel bad for my sin. Tell me things that will help me rationalize and justify my sin.

Then the Israelites say, "Let us hear NO MORE about the Holy One of Israel." Whoa! You mean don't tell you about the One who delivered you from slavery? Who provided manna in the desert? Who protected you over and over again? Wow. They spoke of Him as if He was some distant, inanimate idol they could just throw away. But He IS the Holy One of Israel, the Most High God with all authority and all power... and all love. He didn't want to let them go... because He loved them even when they refused to love Him... just like He loves me now, and loved me even when I was completely rebelling against Him.

If God was not merciful, He wouldn't have cared. He wouldn't have warned them. He would have just let them be destroyed. But He does care! Even when He's bringing "the bread of adversity and the water of affliction" (vs. 20), it is all to draw us back to Him, to be gracious to us. He loves us. And in His love, He disciplines us, so that we will come back to Him where we find peace and rest and love.

Vs. 12-14 ~ But before I can find His rest, peace, and love when I'm rebelling against Him, I will experience the consequences of my rebellion. Hebrews 12:5-7 says, "And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? 'My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the

Lord, nor be weary when reproved by Him. For the Lord disciplines the one He loves, and chastises every son whom He receives.' It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons."

Here is the warning from the Lord. He's calling them to repentance. He said, "Therefore thus says the Holy One of Israel, 'Because you despise this word and trust in oppression and perverseness and rely on them...' " Let me not miss this, when I'm putting my trust and relying on ANYTHING other than the Lord... whether it be another person or myself or money or body image or position or whatever... I am trusting in and relying on oppression and perverseness.

- Oppression ~ the antithesis of mercy and justice... taking for SELF and hurting others. Leviticus 6:4 says this is sin AGAINST THE LORD. Being harsh with someone is oppressive... taking what someone has is oppressive... disparaging someone is oppressive... fulfilling selfish desires always oppresses someone else, regardless of the motives. Living in fear oppresses others because I try to control them. Living in anger clearly oppresses others because I try to overpower them. Living in foolish pleasures oppresses others because I either coerce them into joining me or I hurt them by using them for my selfish pleasure. Living in despair... the motive I personally struggle with the most... oppresses others because I want them to prove their love for me when I am not considering how I'm not loving them. Regardless of the reason I rebel, the only answer is to turn to the Lord and repent.*
- Perverseness ~ a conscious departure from God's wisdom. Proverbs 14:2 says, "Whoever walks in uprightness fears the Lord, but he who is devious (same Hebrew word for perverse) in his ways DESPISES Him." Wow. When I choose to trust in and rely on anything or anyone other than the Lord, I am DESPISING the Lord. That's so harsh... and yet it's the reality.*

So God says, "Because you trust and rely on oppression and perverseness, therefore this iniquity shall be to you like a breach in a high wall, bulging out and about to collapse, whose breaking comes suddenly, in an instant; and its breaking is like that of a potter's vessel that is smashed so ruthlessly that among its fragments not a shard is found with which to take fire from the hearth, or to dip up water out of the cistern." Yikes. It WILL NOT END WELL FOR ME when I turn away from the Lord and ignore Him. Let me not respond like the person in Proverbs 19:3, "When a man's folly brings his way to ruin, his heart rages against the Lord." God will allow me to experience the consequences of rebelling against Him and pulling myself away from His loving arms... because He LOVES me. He says, "I love you too much to let you keep going this direction. I won't force you to return to Me, but I also won't help you rebel against Me."

I don't know... Is it worth it to ignore God and try to satisfy myself with fragments of shard while I wallow in the rubble? Will I be that pig headed? I definitely have been in the past!!!

And it never went well. The most miserable time of my life was the 2 years in college that I purposely turned away from the Lord because I believed a lie about Him. And I was definitely in the rubble with little shards. I don't ever want to go back there!!!

But I know there are still things He has to help me let go of... things that gratify my flesh for the moment... and then bring regret. There are things in my life where I NEED His instruction, but maybe don't really want to hear His instruction. O Lord, please help me to see that the temporary pain of obedience to You (when I don't want to obey) is worth denying myself and listening to You!!!

Vs. 15-18 ~ This is the thing that amazes me about the heart of God... Even when I'm disobedient, He is always calling me back to Him... ready to be merciful and gracious. He says, "For thus said the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, 'In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and in trust shall be your strength.'" God is always waiting for me to return to Him when I rebel. He wants to GIVE me rest. He doesn't say, "When you do everything that is right and clean yourself up, then you can come to Me." He says, "Come to Me and I will clean you up. I will give you rest. I will save you from the enemy and from your own bad choices. I will pull you out of the pit of destruction (Psalm 40:1-2). Be still before Me and trust in Me. I will strengthen You." God is not weak in calling me back to Him. He is compassionate and tender hearted toward me. But He does not compromise His holiness.

Here's the sad sad part of this verse. He's calling us to repentance, and the verse ends with, "But you were unwilling." O Lord! Please let me never be in that spot again! Please show me where I'm still unwilling and help me to release it to You... to return to You and rest in You, to be still before and trust You wholeheartedly.

Let me not be like the Israelites who said, "No! We will flee on horses... We will ride on swift steeds." When I knuckle down and say, "I don't care about living in this rubble. I will avoid You and run the other direction," You say, "Okay. That's your choice. But know this. Your enemy is not afraid of you. The only thing that keeps the enemy away is his fear of Me. So if I'm out of the way, he's coming for you... and you will be left like a flagstaff on the top of a mountain, like a signal on a hill."

Let me just say... that's not good. I raced in a triathlon in Tennessee called, "Storm the Fort" about 10 years ago. The last mile of the 10k run after the swim and the bike on extremely hilly roads, was straight up the very large hill. At the top was a finish line, and I could see it from far far away. I could see my brothers and my sister and my dad waiting for me long before I got there... They were like a flagstaff and a signal. In that case, I was looking forward to the finish line, but as one running from the Lord into the hands of the enemy? Not so much!

I would think at this point... when God has repeatedly warned me of both the consequences AND His beautiful mercy if I would just repent... and then I say NO... I would think He would say, "Fine. I'm done with you. You made your bed... lie in it." But that not what He says!

He says, "Therefore the Lord WAITS to be GRACIOUS to you, and therefore he exalts himself to show MERCY to you. For the Lord is a God of justice; blessed are all those who wait for him."

He waits to be gracious... to pour out blessing and favor as soon as I'm ready to return to Him.

Yes, He exalts Himself... He rises... for the purpose of showing me mercy! Compassion!

"God is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love" (Psalm 103:8). He is ALSO a God of justice. How do mercy and grace exist next to justice? It means that He won't enable my sin and say, "That's okay. Go ahead and do what's totally against Me. I'll be your magic genie and make it all better." He says, "I can't bless this behavior, but as soon as you turn to Me and turn away from oppression and perverseness, I will be here to help you pick up the pieces. I will set you on solid ground. I will be here with You to save you and strengthen you... AND I will bless you as you wait on Me."

Wait... long for the Lord, and not for those things that completely go against His holiness. The blessing comes in being with the Lord. Isaiah 40:31 says, "They who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint."

O Lord, I turned my heart back to You over 30 years ago, after defiantly choosing to believe a lie rather than the word of God. I justified my choice when I rebelled against You by making myself a victim... YOUR victim... as though YOU had deceived me. I praise You for Your patience and how You tenderly led me back to You... that You would care so much for me still blows my mind! I know that I am Yours forever... but Lord, every day is a choice to deny myself, take up my cross, and follow You... and not gratify my selfish desires... and every day I fail. I praise You that You are not demanding my perfection... but You do want my trust. I praise You that, if there's a hall of faith in some museum in heaven, my picture will be on the wall. I praise You that You don't look at me for all my failures, but You celebrate and grow my faith. Here I am, Abba Father... I will return to You every single day. I will rest in You. I will be still before You. I will trust You. I will wait for You and Your instructions. Please let it be so... more and more until there is not a hint of SELF left in me. I love You so much!!!