



7/28/26

Isaiah 30:8-22

The reason for rehearsing the gospel to ourselves for today goes so well with today's passage. The gospel is a cure for distrust. The author says, "When I begin my train of thought with the gospel, I realize that if God loved me enough to sacrifice His Son's life for me, then He must be guided by that same love when He speaks His commandments to me... the gospel cures me of my suspicion of God." Truly, all we have to do is remember what Jesus did for us, and we begin to see that there's no reason to doubt His love.

*Blessings,
Jonna*

Today's passage shows me the consistency of God. I see it as a look into the father's heart when he let his prodigal son go and squander all his wealth in reckless living. And yet, this was written about 700 years before Jesus told the parable. Yes, it was a parable that Jesus told... and if it had been made into a movie, the opening caption would have said, "Based on a true story." The Israelites were the epitome of both the younger prodigal son steeped in reckless living and the older prodigal son steeped in self-righteousness, which is really self-sabotage. Both ways of living are self-sabotage.

As I look at Isaiah 30:8-22, I see a Father who is brokenhearted over the rebellion of His children. I also see that this description of their rebellion could be said of me. I praise God with my whole heart that He never gave up on me. O Lord, please help me not to give up on the prodigal... but to continue to pray, first of all, that this will never describe me again... and secondly, that the prodigal will return to You in humility and repentance. Help me to trust Your plan in the process, even when You haven't told me what it is. Help me not to be like the child on a road trip that keeps saying, "Are we there yet?" But help me to enjoy the scenery on the way... and trust that even the stormy roads are Your paths of steadfast love and faithfulness.

Vs. 8-11 ~ "And now, go, write it before them on a tablet and inscribe it in a book, that it may be for the time to come as a witness forever. For they are a rebellious people, lying children,

children unwilling to hear the instruction of the LORD Yahweh; who say to the seers, 'Do not see,' and to the prophets, 'Do not prophesy to us what is right; speak to us smooth things, prophesy illusions, leave the way, turn aside from the path, let us hear no more about the Holy One of Israel.'"

God had Isaiah write these things down, these prophecies and the call to repentance, not just for the Israelites who were in total rebellion, but for all who would come after them. God puts it in writing so that I can learn from their foolishness.

They were rebellious, though I bet they would not have described themselves as rebellious. They would have accused God of not being good. The problem isn't that He isn't good. The problem is that they were trying to create their own definition of good. They were willing to lie to create their own definition based on feelings and not truth.

Ultimately, though, they had to deny the Lord in order to hold onto their lies. In today's culture, for those who want the appearance of religion, this would look like choosing to go to churches who teach what they want to hear even if what is taught goes against God's word. They want to hear what makes life easy and comfortable rather than what helps us bow to Jesus as the one in charge. They choose the way of comfort and pleasure. They say, "MY god wouldn't want me to suffer. He wants me to be happy." They like what looks good, feels good, and shows them off. They don't want to hear about the one true God. And they reject the words of anyone who speaks His truth.

Vs. 12-14 ~ "Therefore thus says the Holy One of Israel, 'Because you despise this word and trust in oppression and perverseness and rely on them, 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.'"

They may say, "Let us hear no more about the Holy One of Israel," but the Holy One of Israel still speaks, and His word stands true regardless of what anyone says. God described their rebellion as despising and rejecting His word. The prodigals trust in perverseness... injustice (though they may call it some kind of justice), and they trust in corruption. They rely on injustice and corruption to sustain them and keep them happy. But it won't work.

The choice to trust in lies will backfire. It will be like the game of Jenga. The final piece will come out and bring the whole thing tumbling down. But this is like a porcelain game of Jenga, where all the pieces break into tiny pieces that are so small a person couldn't even use it to take fire from a fireplace or dip up a small bit of water. This result is not just a possibility, it is a fact. Things WILL fall apart for anyone who refuses to listen to the Lord.

Some people say, "I have to learn the hard way." That's definitely a choice I took. But learning the hard way leaves a wake of regret and pain... as I've experienced, and as God has warned in

His word. He doesn't warn us about the consequences of our rebellion so that He can condemn us. He warns us so that He can protect us. Those who decide to listen and obey Him have far less scars from damage they brought on themselves. God wants to protect me from myself!!!

Vs. 15 ~ "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.' But you were unwilling."

God WANTS me to return to Him and rest in Him, and He will rescue me from myself! He WANTS me to be still before Him and trust Him to do what He says He will do. He wants to give me strength to overcome my sin and to stand firm in faith.

For the prodigal... for me when I was a prodigal... I was unwilling to return and rest in Him. I was unwilling to be still before Him and trust Him. I could use all kinds of excuses and rationalizations to explain my unwillingness... but ultimately it was because returning to Him meant that He would have the control and staying in my rebellion meant that the control was mine. Having control is way overrated... as I'll see next.

Vs. 16-17 ~ "and you said, 'No! We will flee upon horses'; therefore you shall flee away; and, 'We will ride upon swift steeds'; therefore your pursuers shall be swift. A thousand shall flee at the threat of one; at the threat of five you shall flee, till you are left like a flagstaff on the top of a mountain, like a signal on a hill."

The truth is, I never actually have control... At least not for long. When I run from the Lord, I take myself out of His protection. The enemy of my soul is not afraid of me. He's afraid of the Lord. So when I remove myself from the Lord's protection, I put myself out in the open for my enemy to attack. He disguises himself as an angel of light. He flatters. He manipulates. He accuses. He ensnares. And I'm easy prey.

I would think at that point the Lord would say, "I wash My hands of you. You reject Me? I reject you." But I'm about to see... that's not what He says... He's not like man who retaliates. His ways are higher than mine.

Vs. 18-19 ~ "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. For a people shall dwell in Zion, in Jerusalem; you shall weep no more. He will surely be gracious to you at the sound of your cry. As soon as He hears it, He answers you."

Therefore... because I chose to run from God right into my enemy's hands, He WAITS. He doesn't wait to say, "I told you so." He doesn't wait to crush me. He doesn't wait to condemn me. He waits to be GRACIOUS to me, to show me the generosity of His love. He rises, not to bring the hammer down, but to show me just how deep His compassion for me is. His whole purpose is to wait until I call to Him for help in order to rescue me from the trap I ensnared myself in by rebelling against Him. As soon as I cry to Him, He hears and He answers.

He is a God of justice. That's why He won't enable me to stay in my sin. But when I'm willing to draw near to Him and wait for Him, to let Him be in charge of my life, He blesses me with His grace and compassion. He dries my tears and gives me a place to dwell with Him. He doesn't wait for me to clean myself up. He just waits for me to return to Him as the father waited for his dirty, pig smelling, filthy prodigal son to just come home. I come home dirty, and He makes me clean.

Vs. 20-22 ~ "And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet your Teacher will not hide Himself anymore, but your eyes shall see your Teacher. And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, 'This is the way, walk in it,' when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left. Then you will defile your carved idols overlaid with silver and your gold-plated metal images. You will scatter them as unclean things. You will say to them, 'Be gone!'"

Does the Lord take responsibility for my adversity and affliction even when I bring it on myself? Yes... because He is sovereign, in charge and in control. He allows me to feel the consequences of my choices... for a purpose... to help me to see that He's the safest, best place to be. It's what a good parent does.

Motivation is everything. God's motivation in letting me experience the consequences of my rebellion is not to harm me, but to help me hear Him and to help me see Him. When I finally return to Him, I understand the generosity of His love and compassion, and I hear His directions differently. I begin to see my idols for what they really are... just fake, unclean, worthless junk. Where I used to treat the Lord as though He was a worthless treasure, I now scatter the things that pulled me away from Him and say, "Be gone."

O Lord, this is what You did for me!!! You waited patiently while I ran from You. You heard all my accusations against You. And You waited, always reminding me that You were ready to welcome me home when I was ready to come home. And then I did. And there You were. O Lord, I was absolutely miserable when I rebelled against You. I praise You for the bread of adversity and the water of affliction. It brought me back to You.

I pray for the prodigals in my life. Please open their eyes to see what I finally saw. The enemy is the one who tries to deceive us and make us think that smooth things and illusions are better than being with You. And then when he gets us to walk away from You, the enemy attacks us to crush us. O Lord, please help us not to be deceived!

I praise You for never giving up on us... for how You waited for the younger, reckless son, and entreated the older, legalistic son. You didn't get harsh or pushy with either of them. Who is like You? No one compares to You.