

God's Responses to Going Our Own Way

Text: Isaiah 30:11-19

Date: 11-28-21 @ 10:30 AM

Truth: God always responds to people whether they choose His path or their own path. God's responses are grounded in His perfect character and are displayed through His justice and mercy. Righteousness and His justice are the foundation of His throne and mercy and truth go before His face (Ps. 89:14). The lovingkindness and mercy of God as well as His justice reflect His inherent nature and are the very foundation of His rule. It is then consistent with His character that He punishes the wickedness of the wicked and shows mercy to the repentant.

1. The people's path led them to reject God (Isa. 30:11).

Instead of listening to the prophets of God, Judah wanted to tell the prophets what to do and in turn command God what to do.

Don't declare what the LORD tells you to declare; speak pleasant things and prophesy illusions. Don't speak the truth. But Isaiah refused to speak to them what they wanted to hear, and this made them angrier. **In today's church, this would be "teach us religious things but don't give us the gospel".**

"When the truth is no longer proclaimed, the God of truth disappears from the hearts of men. This it was that the people desired" (Young 347). What would God say to this?

2. The people's path leads to total judgment (Isa. 30:12-14).

What had the people done? They had rejected God's word. They despised and held in contempt that which God had spoken through the prophets.

They would fall into the hands of the Assyrians and Babylonians, but the main problem was their own sin that was within their own walls.

No nation or people will remain when they continue to raise opposition to the words of the Lord.

The picture is of complete destruction. The pottery will break easily and mercilessly. God's mercy has run its course and now the potter's vessel is smashed into tiny fragments. The vessel is now good for nothing.

3. The people's path leads to the removal of God's blessing (Isa. 30:15-17).

"You could repent and return to me and find your true rest and deliverance. In this you would be saved. If you trusted in me you would find help and strength."

Instead the people had gone to Egypt and asked for their help. In doing so they had made an alliance with an ungodly, idolatrous people who would offer them nothing in the way of salvation.

The lesson must be learned that those who fail to rely solely on the Lord will end with their lives in sinking sand and in a quagmire of doubt, destruction, and difficulty. Those who do learn the lesson find God to be their refuge and become the foundation to the church who can withstand the quicksand of destructive social and religious beliefs.

A false trust in horses: What the people needed most was regeneration but instead they were bent on following the practices of their own rebellious ways.

Instead of trusting in their Savior, they would trust in the enemy. Instead of trusting the right hand of Jehovah, they would trust in using these animals to pursue the Assyrians in an attempt to push them back from their land. What folly!

A false trust in numbers: Isaiah declared that those who trust in large numbers will end up defeated by the enemy. Israel's choice was to trust God, be blessed, and end up strong. Instead they trusted horses and men, became cursed, and ended up defeated. Which choice do you think was better?

4. Jehovah bestows favor on those people who earnestly seek Him (Isa. 30:18-19).

That God delays in granting deliverance is according to His justice. He must punish because His divine justice requires it. If He should only show mercy, this would not be good for the sinner himself (26:10). Yet the Lord says, "I will not make a full end of thee; but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished" (Jer. 30:11; 46:28). Yet from this correction in measure, which satisfies justice and love, there is deliverance to the enjoyment of the full light of salvation for those who wait on the LORD in faith. Ex. 34:6, 7; Numb. 14:18

The word *wait* means *to wait with an earnest expectation and confident hope, with a desire for something*. "He [God] must first complete His work of judgment before He can manifest that of compassion" (Young 353).

Once the judgment is concluded, the earnest expectation will be that the Lord will work His grace and mercy upon the people.

Certainly God desires to shower mercy and grace upon His people, but His character binds Him to wait until the judgment is completed to shower these works upon them.

We can now confidently say that God desires to demonstrate His favor upon those who willingly wait in earnest expectation (Ps. 2:12; Isa. 49:23; Lam. 3:25).

Will the people enjoy when they wait on God? Peace, safety, and delight. God will answer their cries of help.

Just as Isaiah's hearers were promised hope and deliverance, we also must believe that God will keep His total word.

Conclusion

Do we confidently trust in God's word for our lives?

Do we allow the enemy a foothold when we fail to take God at His word and instead trust our own ideas, knowledge, and wisdom?