

PRECEPTS FOR LIFE
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SERIES: Isaiah, Part 1 (Judgment – But Hope)

TITLE: Program 56 – Blessed Are Those Who Long For Him

MONDAY

OPEN

O Beloved, are you stressed? Are you distressed because you're so stressed? Are you anxious? Are you troubled? Do you think, "I don't know what I'm going to do? Well, maybe I can find a plan." But what if your plan doesn't work? O Beloved, I want to talk to you today about what you do when you're stressed out and how you, you can live in peace and confidence and quietness. Wouldn't it be wonderful? We'll talk about it today.

PART ONE

Do you know what a privilege it is Beloved, to come into your life and to be able to share with you the precepts of God; they're precepts for life. They're there for every situation that you and I can ever face. God has spoken. The question is: are we really listening? Because if we're really listening then you and I can have a life that can move through the stresses, that can move through the troubled times and the anxieties that come our way and have a peace, and have a confidence. We're going to look at Isaiah chapter 30

today. Now we're in a segment of Isaiah that has to do with "woes". And yet, in the middle of these "woes" in chapter 30, 31 and 32, which are the chapters—that we're going to look at today, God has such a word for you that I pray He will use in just a great and mighty, mighty way, a word that will come to you that you will grab hold of and that you will cling to, because it's God's word and in clinging to that, you'll have peace and you'll have rest. Well we want to open to Isaiah chapter 30 and I'm going to jump in to verse 18, and the reason that I'm going to jump there is because it is our theme for the week. It is a verse I want you to memorize. It's a verse that you and I need to take to heart. It's a verse that you and I need to understand, and then order our lives according to its truth. Now as we look at this I want you to remember that we have a free study guide for you, because we want you not to just believe what I teach, but we want to get you into God's Word. We want you to understand His precepts for life. We want you to discover truth for yourself. We want to be used of God across the United States of America and around the world to help people become biblically literate. And so we have a free study guide. You can download it by going to preceptsforlife.com. That's preceptsforlife.com. All right now, are you stressed? Are you distressed? Are you anxious? Are you troubled? You don't know which way to go. You don't know which way to turn. You're trying to come up with a plan, or maybe you've got a plan. But I want to ask you a question: is it God's plan? Is it God's plan, or is it your plan? Because if it's your plan you are on shaky ground. Now if it's God's plan then, hey! Move forward. Because God wants you to move according to His will. Before we look at verse 18 let me just show you why I'm saying that. And I want you to go to Isaiah chapter 30, verse 1; Isaiah 30, verse 1. **“Woe to the rebellious children,’ declares the LORD....”** Now remember we're marking “woe” and I've shown you a way to mark it. It's in the study guide, but it's like a little red cloud coming down in a point, and I color it brown. You can do anything you want. That's the way I mark it though. **“Woe to the rebellious children,’ declares the LORD, ‘who execute a plan, but**

not Mine,’ [who execute a plan but not Mine]....” (Isaiah 30:1) There’s a “woe” to you now if you’re moving according to your own wisdom. So the theme verse for this week is verse 18. It says, **“Therefore the LORD longs to be gracious to you, and therefore He waits on high to have compassion on you. For the LORD is a God of justice; how blessed are...those who long for Him.”** (Isaiah 30:18) Now our theme is “Waiting on the Lord who is waiting for you.” You say, “How do you get that from this verse?” Well the word “long” is really the word “wait”. Now let me read it that way. There’s a good footnote in the New American Standard if you have it. If you have the English Standard version it translates it “wait”. But it says, **“Therefore the Lord waits to be gracious to you....”** (Isaiah 30:18 **ESV**) Are you anxious? Are you troubled? Are you stressed? Are you distressed? You don’t know where to go. You don’t know what to do? The Lord is waiting. He is waiting to be gracious to you. It says, **“...And therefore he waits on high to have compassion on you....”** (Isaiah 30:18) Or you could translate it, He’s on high and He has compassion for you. You say, “Well where is it?” Well there’s something that you need to do in order to receive that grace and to receive that compassion from the Lord. It says, **“...For the LORD is a God of justice....”** He says, **“...How blessed are...those who long [who wait] for Him.”** (Isaiah 30:18) God wants you to wait for Him. And because God is a God of justice; now you’ve got to follow me. You’ve got to think. Okay, Honey, we’ve got to think. Sir, we’ve got to think. All right, because a lot of Christians, they don’t really want to think. They don’t want to exercise their brain. But you’ve got to exercise your brain. You’ve got to have understanding because understanding leads to wisdom and wisdom is, to know how to handle something. And it says, **“Through thy precepts I get understanding: [and then] I hate every false way.”** (Psalm 119:104 **KJV**) So God longs, He waits to be gracious to you. But because He’s a God of justice then you have to do your part. This is the human aspect of this verse. And that human aspect is you have to wait for Him. You can’t make an alliance that is not of God. You are not to handle

this problem yourself. You are not to walk independently of God. Instead you are to listen to God. You are to pore over His Word. And then when you understand His precepts for life you are to say, “Okay Lord, I understand Your precepts for life. Now, **‘...Through thy precepts I get understanding....’ (Psalms 119:104)** I know how I am to live.” Now when you and I do that, Beloved, when you wait for God and you wait for God to speak to you and you wait for God to move, then God is ready to move because He is a God of justice. Now if you’re going to walk independently God cannot be gracious to you. God cannot bless you. Why? Because to walk independently is to walk in sin. And so if you’re walking in sin, because God is just, because God is righteous, He cannot bless you. God is not a mamby pamby parent. He is not a sugar daddy that’s sitting up in heaven. God is a God who wants to take you, who was an unrighteous person, and He wants to make you righteous. He wants to take you, who was walking your own way and get you to listen to Him and to understand His ways, and then to walk in them. That’s what God is after. Now as we look at the context of this chapter, we know that Israel is walking in sin. We know that Israel is being disobedient to God. And because Israel is being disobedient to God, because they put their fingers in their ears and they’re not listening, because they don’t want to hear what He is saying, because they want just a sweet little message, then God cannot bless them. He can only bless obedience and that’s what you need to remember. And the blessing of obedience is not always material things. You have to understand that. So what God is doing is God is waiting, and this is our theme all this week. God is waiting for you to wait for Him, to say, “I’m not going to move, I’m not,” not that you’re inert, not that you’re just sitting there like a zombie, and just saying, “I’m not gonna move until God tells me to move. I’m just not gonna do it.” And it’s not becoming a spiritual couch potato, but it’s getting a hold of the Word of God, understanding His precepts for life, understanding who He is and saying, “God, I’m going to live accordingly. I long for You. I’m going to wait for You and I’m going to trust You to

accomplish Your purpose in me.” Now when you do that, Beloved, God is ready to move. Well we’re looking at Isaiah 30, 31 and 32. We’re in the segment of “woes”. And as we’re in the segment of “woes” that starts at chapter 28, Isaiah 28 and moves through Isaiah chapter 33, then God is talking—again to Israel. Now watch what happens. In chapters 1, all the way through chapter 12 God is speaking to Israel. In chapter 13 through chapter 23 God is speaking to the nations. Then in 24 up to 27 God is talking to the whole world. And He’s showing them, listen, I’m the God of Israel. I’m the God of the nations and I am the God of the whole world. Now as He speaks to them He’s going to tell them that they’re in trouble because they are making plans that are not of Him. And I want you to know, you may be in trouble because you are making plans and you have not consulted God. Have you ever done anything and deeply, bitterly regretted it? You were in a hurry. You moved. You were going to accomplish something that you wanted accomplished, and everybody get out of your way, and “God, I don’t need You on this, because I know exactly what I want. I know exactly where I’m going.” And so you went ahead and you did it, and you knew you left God out of the picture. You got what you wanted. But are you happy with what you got? O Beloved, God is waiting for those who will wait for Him, who will long for Him. We’ll talk about it more right after this announcement.

PART TWO

Welcome back, Beloved. I’m excited about teaching you this portion of Isaiah. I don’t know if you’re like me, but listen, I am a goer. I am a doer. And yesterday, and so I’m not a person that has a lot of patience for waiting. And as I was reading this passage, as I was sitting and just having my quiet time, my prayer was, “O God, I don’t want to make an alliance that is not of Your Spirit. I don’t want to seek the help of the world and ignore You because I know who You are.” And this is what they were doing. Let’s look

at it. It's Isaiah chapter 30 verse 1. **“Woe to [those] rebellious children,’ declares the LORD, ‘who execute a plan, but not Mine....”** Now He's called them rebellious from the very first chapter of this book. He has told how they have revolted against Him, how they have despised the word of the Holy One. (See Isaiah 1:2, 4) Isaiah has been speaking to them and pointing out to them their sin, and urging them to listen to God because they were not listening. And now, once again, they're not paying attention. He says, **“...Who...make an alliance, but not of My Spirit....”** In other words it's pure flesh. The Spirit of God has nothing to do with it. **“...In order to add sin to sin.” (Isaiah 30:1)** So what they're doing is they're sinning and then they're compounding it, and then they're compounding it again because they're going off trying to solve a problem their own way. Now stress comes when we get in a hurry, when we have a lot of pressure on us, when we have to make decisions and many times we buckle under that stress when we could walk in quietness and confidence and in rest. I know you want to know about that. It says, okay, they're adding sin to sin, **“Who proceed down to Egypt without consulting Me, to take refuge in the safety of Pharaoh and to seek shelter in the shadow of Egypt!” (Isaiah 30:2)** Now why are they going down to Egypt? Now this is what we need to understand so that you will be able to appreciate even more what he's saying. You know I have found as I have gone through Isaiah that there are so many verses that I have taken out like **“The steadfast of mind You will keep in perfect peace...,”** whose mind is stayed on Thee, **“...because he trusts in [Thee].” (Isaiah 26:3)** But I never knew the context. I never knew the setting. Or **“...Though your sins be as scarlet, [yet shall] they be as white as snow....” (Isaiah 1:18 KJV)** I never knew the context. I just knew the verse because when I became a new Christian these are some of the verses that I memorized. It is so wonderful to see them in their context. I used to quote, **“Woe [be un]to those who go down to Egypt for [the] help...,’** in the time of trouble.” **(Isaiah 31:1)** Why were they going down to Egypt? Well remember Assyria was that major power of the Middle East. Assyria was

tearing up the Middle East. I mean, it came against Tyre. Of course it came against the Northern Kingdom in 722 B.C. and took them captive. It was down in Arabia. They had come down against Egypt. So God had spoken to them and God had told them, “Listen, I’m going to take care of Egypt. And I’m going to take care of Assyria. It is your job to take care with Me. It is your job to wait on Me.” In chapter 7 of Isaiah Ahaz is troubled because Aram is coming against him and siding with the Northern Kingdom. (See Isaiah 7:4) This is before 722 B.C. And so he’s going to go up here to get Assyria to help him instead of going to the Lord. And God comes with Isaiah and He says, “I’m going to take care of him.” (See Isaiah 7:7) God has promised to take care of you. Do you know that? God has promised that if you will seek the kingdom of heaven and His righteousness everything will be taken care of for you, your basic necessities, everything, if you will seek Him, if you will put Him first. (See Matthew 6:33) So God says through Isaiah to Ahaz in chapter 7, **“...If you will not believe, you...[will] not last.” (Isaiah 7:9)** And this is the problem, they’re not listening. They’re in trouble because Assyria is coming against them. And when you think of Isaiah chapter 30, 31, 32 right up to 39 you can think around the year 701 B.C. They’re in trouble. They’re afraid of Assyria so they’re going to go south and they’re going to make an alliance. They’re going to buy Egypt’s help. And so this is what God is saying to them. **“Woe [be un]to...[you that] make an alliance, but not of My Spirit...” (Isaiah 30:1)** [“That are going down to Egypt for help in the time of trouble.”] (PARAPHRASE Isaiah 30:2) It’s like He’s putting His hands on His hips and saying, “Haven’t you been listening Me these years that I have been prophesying? That I have been speaking to you through My servant Isaiah? Don’t you remember what I said in Isaiah chapter 20?” Well let’s go and look at Isaiah chapter 20 for a minute. Now Isaiah chapter 20 is in the segment that belongs of God’s word to the nations. And so He’s speaking in Isaiah chapter 20 to Egypt. He’s telling what’s going to happen to Egypt. But He’s going to tell them in such a way so that Israel, Judah and Jerusalem can listen and learn from that, and

not make an alliance with Egypt. So this is what He says in verse 1, **“In the year that the commander came to Ashdod, when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him and he fought against Ashdod and captured it, at that time the LORD spoke through Isaiah the son of Amoz, [and said], ‘Go...loosen the sackcloth from your hips and...your shoes [from] your feet.’ And he did so, going naked and barefoot. And the Lord said, ‘Even as My servant Isaiah has gone naked and barefoot [for] three years as a sign and token against Egypt and Cush, so the king of Assyria will lead away the captives of Egypt and the exiles of Cush...with [their] buttocks uncovered, to the shame of [them].” (Isaiah 20:1-4)** Now what has God been doing? For three years and about the year 711, so that you back up when Sargon was ruling over Assyria, about 711 Isaiah strips down. And for three years they’re looking at his bare buttocks and they’re looking at his shoeless feet and they’re seeing that Isaiah is saying, “This is what’s going to happen to Egypt.” Duh! Why in chapter 30 are they going down to Egypt to get help in the time of trouble? Don’t they realize that God is waiting for them to wait for Him? That He is the deliverer? O Precious One, this is going to be such a great week. It’s going to be such a needful week because God wants to speak to you. And what He wants to say to you is, “Hush, Child. Be calm. Be quiet. Settle down. Listen to Me. I’m just waiting for you to wait for Me. I’m waiting for you, to get on your knees before Me and submit—commit—your way unto Me and to trust in Me, because I’m your God and I’m waiting to be gracious to you. I’m longing to be compassionate to you. Wait on Me.” That’s what God is saying. And you need to listen and don’t you miss any part of this week, Beloved. God’s waiting for you to wait.