

Title:            **REBEL CHILDREN AND A**  
**GRACIOUS FATHER**

Text:            Isaiah 30:1-33

Subject:        *God's Counsel to His Rebellious Children*

Date:            Sunday Evening — July 28, 2019

Readings:      *Merle Hart and Jimmy Bowman*

Introduction:

Here is a sad, sad fact that few people recognize, and few acknowledge. **God's children do not always act like they are God's children.**

- God's saints are not always saintly.
- Sometimes devoted, godly men waiver like Peter.
- Sometimes loving brethren have sharp and lasting divisions over carnal, petty, meaningless things (Paul and Barnabas).
- Sometimes people who believe God, men and women of true faith, people truly trust the Lord Jesus Christ, are terribly unbelieving and fearful, and act like madmen (David at Ziklag – 1<sup>st</sup> Samuel 21).
- Sometimes God's dear children behave like unbelieving rebels. — Abraham went down to

**REBEL CHILDREN**  
**AND A GRACIOUS FATHER**

Egypt. — Aaron made a golden calf! — David took Bathsheba and murdered Uriah! — Jonah fled from the face of the Lord!

**Are you one of God's own dear children?**

- Chosen and adopted in everlasting love!
- Redeemed by the precious blood of Christ!
- Born of God by the power and grace of his Holy Spirit!
- Saved, pardoned, sanctified, preserved, and kept by the grace of God!

If you are, I have no doubt that you can identify with all that I have said thus far.

Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,  
Prone to leave the God I love,  
Here's my heart, oh, take and seal it,  
Seal it for Thy courts above!

**I have a message for rebel children from our gracious heavenly Father.** You will find our Father's message to us in the 30<sup>th</sup> chapter of Isaiah — Isaiah chapter 30.

**REBEL CHILDREN**  
**AND A GRACIOUS FATHER**

**Proposition:** The triune Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the God of all grace, is our God and our Father; and he always acts like it. — He is always gracious, very gracious toward his elect.

Isaiah 30 contains a message the Lord God gave to his prophet Isaiah to deliver to the people of Judah. It is one of those messages which God's church needs to hear again and again. Therefore the Lord told Isaiah to write it on a table and record it in a book *“that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever.”*

**Usually, a message of great importance is inspired either by a great work of God, great sin among his people, or great trouble in his church.** This message was inspired by all three of those things. When the people of Judah saw the huge armies of the Assyrians, they were afraid. But rather than calling upon God and trusting him, Judah sought to make an alliance with the Egyptians and their king. They seem to have thought — “There is strength in numbers. If

**REBEL CHILDREN**  
**AND A GRACIOUS FATHER**

we can get the Egyptians to join us, we can drive back the Assyrians.” **Such an alliance with the world, with the unbelieving, with idolatrous religionists, is foolish. It reveals a lack of faith. It dishonors God.**

- It compromises the glory of God.
- It dishonors and brings reproach upon the name of God our Savior.
- It forces the compromise of the truth of God.
- And it always brings trouble to the church of God.

O Spirit of God, be our Teacher this hour and inscribe the message of this chapter upon our hearts, for Christ’s sake. Give us grace to learn the lessons of Isaiah’s sermon, and learn them well. — I will give you my message in these five statements.

**SIT STILL**

1. **In every trial, in every circumstance, in every fearful situation, it is our strength to sit still** (vv. 1-7).

**REBEL CHILDREN**  
**AND A GRACIOUS FATHER**

Worldly alliances are always inspired by unbelief. There is always a pretense of worship, love, and the advancement of God's cause. But worldly alliances are always the result of unbelief. Judah did not believe God, therefore she did not seek the counsel of the Lord, but the counsel of men. Because she did not believe God, she leaned not upon his arm but upon the arm of flesh (vv. 1-2).

(Isaiah 30:1-2) Woe to the **rebellious children**, saith the LORD, that **take counsel, but not of me**; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, **that they may add sin to sin**: (2) That walk to go down into Egypt, and **have not asked at my mouth; to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt!**

**Amid all the rebellion and unbelief of his chosen people, the Lord God still calls them children.** And though chastisement must and will follow their disobedience, the chastisement is designed for their

**REBEL CHILDREN**  
**AND A GRACIOUS FATHER**

recovery. And the method the Lord uses to accomplish his purpose, manifests his gracious intention.

They sought strength from Egypt. So God used Egypt for their correction, as a chastening rod in his hand. They leaned upon Pharaoh instead of Jehovah, and trusted in the reeds of Egypt, when the Rock of Ages was at hand to support them. — Shame and reproach are always consequences of leaning on the arm of the flesh. — “*Go not down to Egypt*” (Genesis 26:2). That is God’s command to his own. — “*Go not down to Egypt!*”

- Unbelief needs the strength of the others. Faith trusts the power of God.
- Unbelief needs the approval of the others. Faith seeks the approval of God.
- Unbelief brings confusion and confusion weakness. Faith brings peace and peace strength — “*Their strength is to sit still*” (v. 7).

**REBEL CHILDREN**  
**AND A GRACIOUS FATHER**

**Trusting the flesh and the compromise that such trust requires is always costly, very costly** (vv. 3-7).

(Isaiah 30:3-7) **Therefore** shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt *your* confusion. (4) For his (**Judah's**) princes were at Zoan, and his ambassadors came to Hanes. (5) They were all ashamed of a people *that* **could not profit them, nor be an help nor profit, but a shame, and also a reproach.** (6) The burden of the beasts of the south: into the land of trouble and anguish, from whence *come* the young and old lion, the viper and fiery flying serpent, they will carry their riches upon the shoulders of young asses, and their treasures upon the bunches of camels, to a people *that* shall not profit *them*. (7) For the Egyptians shall help in vain, and to no purpose: therefore have I cried concerning this, **Their strength is to sit still.**

**REBEL CHILDREN**  
**AND A GRACIOUS FATHER**

**The arm of flesh will fail you.** It always has and always will. All who trust in the creature, or in an arm of flesh, sooner or later are ashamed and confounded. — Those that trust in the Lord never are, neither in this world, nor in that to come.

**Pharaoh and the Egyptians required Judah to pay dearly for their alliance.** They went through the temple and palace and gathered up all their gold, and silver, and jewels, and gave all to Egypt. They loaded it on asses and camels and sent it to Pharaoh. In return they got nothing but shame, reproach, and confusion.

**The princes of Judah carried their riches down to Egypt,** a land crawling with lions, vipers, and serpents, inhabited by people who worshipped lions, vipers, and serpents, people who acted like the lions, vipers, and serpents they worshipped.

- That was their rebellion.
- That was their trust!
- God and his Word were despised!



**REBEL CHILDREN**  
**AND A GRACIOUS FATHER**

**Children of God, hear me. — Such alliances with the ungodly, such trust in the flesh will cost you much and get you nothing but trouble.** It is always the believer who has to give up his principles. The ungodly have none to give up. — **When Jonah finds a convenient ship to carry him in his course of rebellion, he always has to “pay the fare thereof”** (Jonah 1:3).

**Illustration:** *Elimelech’s Costly Choice*

*J. D. Butler and Scott Richardson*

**Isaiah’s word to us, no, God’s word to us in all times of trouble, trial, and need is this.** — *“Their strength is to sit still!”*

(Exodus 14:13) And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will shew to you today: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen today, ye shall see them again no more forever.

(2 Chronicles 20:17) Ye shall not need to fight in

**REBEL CHILDREN**  
**AND A GRACIOUS FATHER**

this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them: for the LORD will be with you.

(Psalm 46:1-11) **God is our refuge and strength**, a very present help in trouble. (2) **Therefore will not we fear**, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; (3) *Though* the waters thereof roar *and* be troubled, *though* the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.

(4) **There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God**, the holy *place* of the tabernacles of the most High. (5) **God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early.** (6) The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted. (7) **The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is**

**REBEL CHILDREN**  
**AND A GRACIOUS FATHER**

**our refuge.** Selah.

(8) **Come, behold the works of the LORD,** what desolations he hath made in the earth. (9) He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire. (10) **Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.** (11) **The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.** Selah.

When you do not know what to do, your “*strength is to trust God and sit still.*” When you are in trouble, your “*strength is to trust Christ and sit still.*” When you are at your wits’ end, your “*strength is to take refuge in the Rock of Ages and sit still.*” When Satan roars loud and all hell breaks loose against you, your “*strength is to lean upon the arm of the Lord and sit still.*” When you can do nothing, your “*strength is to sit still*” and quietly wait for God to work.

**RETURN AND REST**

**REBEL CHILDREN**  
**AND A GRACIOUS FATHER**

2. **Even in when his children act like rebels, God our Father, the Father of mercies, and our dear Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, call us to return to him and rest** (vv. 8-17).

(Isaiah 30:8-11) Now go, write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever: (9) That this **is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the LORD**: (10) Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits: (11) Get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us.

As Israel's rebellion descended, like the blood in their veins, from father to son, **they needed a standing message written out in a book** to remind them of their sins! What God by his prophet said to one applied to all.

**REBEL CHILDREN**  
**AND A GRACIOUS FATHER**

Isaiah's message needed to be written down in a book for all future generations, because **in every generation there are countless hireling prophets who gladly accommodate what they preach to the desires of their hearers!**

(Isaiah 30:12-17) Wherefore thus saith the Holy One of Israel, Because ye despise this word, and trust in oppression and perverseness, and stay thereon: (13) Therefore this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly at an instant. (14) And he shall break it as the breaking of the potters' vessel that is broken in pieces; he shall not spare: so that there shall not be found in the bursting of it a sherd (**piece of broken pottery**) to take fire from the hearth, or to take water *withal* out of the pit. (15) For thus saith the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel; **In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength:** and ye would not. (16) But ye said, no; for we will flee

**REBEL CHILDREN**  
**AND A GRACIOUS FATHER**

upon horses; therefore shall ye flee: and, We will ride upon the swift; therefore shall they that pursue you be swift. (17) One thousand *shall flee* at the rebuke of one; at the rebuke of five shall ye flee: **till ye be left as a beacon** upon the top of a mountain, and as an ensign on an hill.

When we allow ourselves to be ruled by the flesh, guided by advantage, and are determined to do things our own way, cast off the rule of God, rebel against the Word of God, and despise the prophet of God, we court trouble.

Be warned. — You cannot take fire to your bosom and not get burned. You cannot walk in the counsel of the ungodly and not be brought to shame. You cannot lean upon the arm of the flesh and not fall. You cannot reject the counsel of God and not suffer.

**Still, even in the teethe of sins without number, rebellion without restraint, and waywardness without limit, the God of all grace calls sinners to return to him and promises rest to all who do.** —

**REBEL CHILDREN**  
**AND A GRACIOUS FATHER**

*“For thus saith the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not.”* (v. 15).

**Salvation comes to sinners by returning to God by faith in Christ, finding resting him** (Matthew 1:28-30).

(Matthew 11:28-30) Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (29) Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. (30) For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

**My brother, my sister, all this applies to you and me.** — We find deliverance from our troubles and salvation from our woes, even when we have brought them upon ourselves, only by returning to our ever-gracious God and Father by faith in Christ. As we return, we find rest for our souls in our Savior.

**REBEL CHILDREN**  
**AND A GRACIOUS FATHER**

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(Lamentations 3:18-26) I said, My strength and my hope is perished from the LORD: (19) Remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall. (20) My soul hath *them* still in remembrance, and is humbled in me. (21) This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope. (22) *It is of* the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. (23) *They are* new every morning: great *is* thy faithfulness. (24) The LORD *is* my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him. (25) The LORD *is* good unto them that wait for him, to the soul *that* seeketh him. (26) *It is* good that a *man* should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD.



**REBEL CHILDREN**  
**AND A GRACIOUS FATHER**

*“In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength.”*

**EVER-GRACIOUS GOD**

3. **The Lord God our Savior, our Heavenly Father, is the ever-gracious God who waits to be gracious** (vv. 18-26)!

(Isaiah 30:18-26) And **therefore will the LORD wait, that he may be gracious unto you,** — and **therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you:** — **for the LORD is a God of judgment:** — **blessed are all they that wait for him.** (19) For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem: **thou shalt weep no more: he will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it, he will answer thee.** (20) And *though* the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, **yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more,** but thine eyes shall see thy teachers: (21) And **thine ears**

**REBEL CHILDREN**  
**AND A GRACIOUS FATHER**

**shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.** (22) Ye shall defile also the covering of thy graven images of silver, and the ornament of thy molten images of gold: **thou shalt cast them away as a menstruous cloth;** thou shalt say unto it, Get thee hence. (23) Then shall he give the rain of thy seed, that thou shalt sow the ground withal; and bread of the increase of the earth, and it shall be fat and plenteous: in that day shall thy cattle feed in large pastures. (24) The oxen likewise and the young asses that ear the ground shall eat clean provender, which hath been winnowed with the shovel and with the fan. (25) And **there shall be upon every high mountain, and upon every high hill, rivers and streams of waters** in the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall. (26) Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, **in the day that the LORD bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their**

**REBEL CHILDREN**  
**AND A GRACIOUS FATHER**

**wound.**

**He waits to be gracious. But if he waited for us to return on our own, we never would and never could. Rejoice, my soul, it is the Lord Jehovah who binds up the breach and heals the stroke of our wound!**

**Observe, and stand in awe before our God as you meditate, O my soul, upon the workings of grace!**

- The Lord's love breaks out before the weapons of sin in his rebellious child's hands fall down.
- Not only does the Lord wait to be gracious, but to be very gracious!
- He not only delights in mercy and yearns to pardon, but to take sinners into favor.
- Though often the Lord seems to frown, giving us the bread in adversity and water in affliction, everlasting love is the source of it all.

(Micah 7:8-9) Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD *shall be* a light unto me. (9)

**REBEL CHILDREN**  
**AND A GRACIOUS FATHER**

I will bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me: he will bring me forth to the light, *and* I shall behold his righteousness.

**When the Lord God exercises his, grace, he sends his servants with his gospel and speaks to the chosen, redeemed sinner, and by almighty, effectual, irresistible grace, causes the object of his love to come to him that he might find grace!**

He gives the hearing ear and the seeing eye, causing those who are the called of God to hear the word behind them and but feel it in them, and forms Christ in their heart, the hope of glory.

**The Lord our God is faithful. And he will not suffer his faithfulness to fail.** He will purge his church. He will refine his church. But he will not forsake, or destroy his church.

- He will be gracious (v. 18).
- He will hear your cry (v. 19).

**REBEL CHILDREN**  
**AND A GRACIOUS FATHER**

- He will teach you to walk in his way (vv. 20-22).
- He will revive his people (vv. 23).
- He will pour out the rain of his grace (vv. 23-25).
- He will give abundant light (v. 26).
- He will heal his church (v. 26).

**NIGHT SONG**

4. **When God gives grace, he always gives his chosen a song in the night, a song to help us through the night** (vv. 27-30)

(Isaiah 30:27) Behold, the name of the LORD cometh from far, burning *with* his anger, and the burden *thereof is* heavy: his lips are full of indignation, and his tongue as a devouring fire: (28) And his breath, as an overflowing stream, shall reach to the midst of the neck, to sift the nations with the sieve of vanity: and *there shall be* a bridle in the jaws of the people, causing *them* to err. (29) **Ye shall have a song, as in the night when a holy solemnity is kept; and gladness of heart, as when one goeth with a**

**REBEL CHILDREN**  
**AND A GRACIOUS FATHER**

**pipe to come into the mountain of the LORD,**  
**to the mighty One of Israel.** (30) And **the LORD shall cause his glorious voice to be heard, and shall shew the lighting down of his arm,** with the indignation of *his* anger, and *with* the flame of a devouring fire, *with* scattering, and tempest, and hailstones.

- He will give a song in the night (v. 29).
- He will cause his glorious voice to be heard (v. 30).

**SURE TRIUMPH**

5. **The Lord our God, our Heavenly Father, will do us good. He will destroy the enemies of his people. Zion must and shall be triumphant. The woman's Seed shall crush the serpent's head** (vv. 31-33).

The battle will be won, not by the horses of Egypt, nor by the armies of Pharaoh, but by the praises of God.

**REBEL CHILDREN**  
**AND A GRACIOUS FATHER**

(Isaiah 30:31-33) For through the voice of the LORD (**by the preaching of the gospel**) shall the Assyrian be beaten down, *which* smote with a rod. (32) And *in* every place where the grounded staff shall pass, which the LORD shall lay upon him, *it* shall be with tabrets and harps: and in battles of shaking will he fight with it. (33) For Tophet *is* ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared; he hath made *it* deep *and* large: the pile thereof *is* fire and much wood; the breath of the LORD, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it.

(Exodus 15:1-11) Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the LORD, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. (2) The LORD *is* my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he *is* my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him. (3) The LORD *is* a man of war: the LORD

**REBEL CHILDREN**  
**AND A GRACIOUS FATHER**

*is* his name. (4) Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea: his chosen captains also are drowned in the Red sea. (5) The depths have covered them: they sank into the bottom as a stone. (6) Thy right hand, O LORD, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O LORD, hath dashed in pieces the enemy. (7) And in the greatness of thine excellency thou hast overthrown them that rose up against thee: thou sentest forth thy wrath, *which* consumed them as stubble. (8) And with the blast of thy nostrils the waters were gathered together, the floods stood upright as an heap, *and* the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea. (9) The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my lust shall be satisfied upon them; I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them. (10) Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them: they sank as lead in the mighty waters. (11) Who *is* like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? who *is* like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful *in* praises, doing wonders?



**REBEL CHILDREN**  
**AND A GRACIOUS FATHER**

(Revelation 15:2-4) And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, *and* over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. (3) And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous *are* thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true *are* thy ways, thou King of saints. (4) Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for *thou* only *art* holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.

(Revelation 19:1-6) And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: (2) For true and righteous *are* his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged

**REBEL CHILDREN**  
**AND A GRACIOUS FATHER**

the blood of his servants at her hand. (3) And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever. (4) And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia. (5) And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. (6) And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

**APPLICATION**

Rebellious and sinful as I am, my God, and utterly unworthy of the least of your mercies, pardon my iniquity, for it is great! Do so, my God, for your own great name's sake. Ever let my covering be the covering of Christ's righteousness.

Keep me from seeking strength from the Egypts of this world, in the arm of flesh, or the false

**REBEL CHILDREN**  
**AND A GRACIOUS FATHER**

confidences of my own heart. Oh, precious Lord Jesus, be thou my strength, and salvation, and my sure help in every time of need! As often as I seek to go my own way, fetch me by your grace, my God, back to your Son, his blood, his righteousness, and all your covenant mercies in him!

- He is my refuge!
- He is my rest!
- He is quietness for my soul!
- He is my strength!

Amen.