

Family Heritage Developer

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“God forbid that I should forsake the inheritance of my fathers” -- 1 Kings 21:3



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A Christmas Blessing: *The Lord is Waiting To Be Merciful To You!*

Isaiah 30, KJV/ESV, Abridged and Adapted by GLC

The Promise of A Blessing...

~ *And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.* Luke 78:23

Christmas is God's declaration of a blessing: *Behold I bring you Good News of Great Joy which shall be for all people.* Good news is for people who are in a *bad situation* (real or imagined!). God's *Good News* offers a blessing to all who will not be offended, no matter how bad the situation seems to be!

When one is offended, he cannot resist rebelling against the bad situation that has offended him. However, in that shallow response of rebellion against the bad, he fails to realize that he really is in danger of rebelling against God. Break-away rebellion is most often seen in children when they enter or are near adulthood. The typical pattern is to depart from their home upbringing in a hasty manner, failing to see God and seek Him in a redemptive transition process.

For the Christian, establishing one's adult autonomy has more to do with becoming a disciple of Jesus than it has to do with becoming one's own person. The disciple must take up his cross and follow Jesus. The self-emancipating adult is only about taking up his cause to follow his dreams ~ and that often means getting away from home as far as possible!

The following scriptural montage is from Luke 15 and Isaiah 30. I have given some direction to the meditation by placing headings over each section. I also adapted the scripture passages to more smoothly express the

sentiment of the mediation these passages have given to me. My prayer and desire is that God will give you, the parent, the long-view of God's mercy, even if your child goes off to a far country! To my joy and astonishment, it is amazing to hear that the Lord is waiting until His children return! May multiplied blessings be upon you and your dear family this Christmas season; as you deliberately choose to not be offended, but wait upon the Lord!

The Departing Son Returned, And the Father was Waiting!

And Jesus said, "A certain man had two sons: And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that fall to me. And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.

And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.

And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, And am no more worthy to be

called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.

And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.

But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry: For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry. And the father said, It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found." (Luke 15:11-24, 32)

Notice: The Prodigal's Plans Deceive Only Him!

1 Woe to the rebellious children, saith the LORD, who take counsel, but not of me; and who weave a web of decisions, but not of my Spirit, that you may add sin to sin. You set out to go to a distant land, but have not asked at my mouth; you seek to strengthen yourselves in the strength of that land, and to trust in the shadow of that distant place! Therefore shall the strength of that land be your shame, and the trust in the shadow of that distant place be your confusion.

God Will Provide the Prodigal a Memorial to the Truth!

7 For that distant place shall help in vain, and to no purpose: therefore have I pleaded with you concerning this, "*Your strength is to sit still!*" Now go, write it before them in a framed plaque, and note it in a book, that it may be a ready word to them, a witness for the time to come for ever and ever: "*You are a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the LORD! You say to Your teachers, 'Don't give us God's perspective!'; and to God's messengers, 'Speak not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, [tell us what we want to hear!]* Get out of our way, turn aside out of our path, let us hear no more about the Holy One of Israel."

Self-made Plans Will Not Prosper.

12 Wherefore thus saith the Holy One of Israel, Because ye despise this word, and trust in oppression and perverseness, and stay thereon: 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."

God's Plan? Return and Rest!

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. But ye said, No; for we will flee upon horses; therefore shall ye flee: and, We will ride upon the swift; therefore shall they that pursue you be swift.

God is Waiting Until You Return!

18 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 righteous judgment: blessed are all they that wait for him.

For it is the Lord's plan that you shall dwell in God's chosen place: you shall weep no more: He will be very gracious unto you, at the voice of your cry; when He shall hear it, He will answer you. And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall your teachers not be removed into a corner any more, but your eyes shall see your teachers: And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.

Then you will reject your self-made idols overlaid with the pretense of beauty and success! You will scatter them as unclean things. You will say to them, "Be gone!"

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 pipe to come into the mountain of the LORD, to the mighty One of Israel. And the LORD shall cause his glorious voice to be heard, and when all are safely returned, He shall come again as He has promised!

Becky's Tips

1. Training Children

From 1 Thess. 5:12-13, we see that we are to esteem very highly in love those who labor among us, are over us and admonish us in the Lord. We know this is talking about church leaders. But in my recent reading I wondered, "Might God feel the same about family leaders?"

Let's think on it and share with one another ways that we might:

- Recognize those who labor among us.
- Esteem them very highly in love for their works sake.

2. Engagement Learning

Engagement learning encourages each one to exercise his gifts.

1Thess. 5:14-15A lists exhortations:

- Warn those who are unruly
- Comfort the faint hearted
- Uphold the weak
- Be patient with all
- See that no one renders evil for evil.

It is the end of verse 15 that I want you to notice. It says, "Pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all." Consider these ideas for ways that we might do this (also be willing to share ideas that you have):

- Talk about what God might be doing when a sibling seems to more easily achieve, whether that achieving is in spelling, baseball, music, baking or other activities.
- Openly discuss how your heart feels when you see someone else get a prize that you were wishing for. Then, talk about how we can get help for our

heart (notice 1 Thess. 5:23-24 gives you help with this).

3. Finding and Knowing God's Will

We often say, "I just wish I knew God's will." Here in 1 Thess. 5:16-18 God himself gives us help with this.

- Rejoice, pray, and give thanks.
- Let's encourage one another in rejoicing, praying and giving thanks even in difficult circumstances.

4. Simplicity

At this time of the year we often fret about being busy. Yet we somehow feel the need to compete for the trophy in busyness. What is the answer to this dilemma?

Would it help if we pause to ask the question, "How do we celebrate Jesus?" Perhaps it would help us if we paused to think whether we baked cookies to celebrate Jesus.

5. Celebrate

I'm sending my sincere wishes that you have a very Merry Christmas. I pray that life in your family will never be the same because you paused to celebrate Jesus!

Love,

Becky

STUDENT DEVELOPER

I'm a Leaf

By Neanza Jones

Once upon a time, I was sitting doing nothing. I was just a baby. I learned to be like my siblings and my cousins. I had three siblings named Kye, Dyn, and Tye. My name was Flyn. I was a boy. We all lived on the same petiole.

We had to do a lot of work. We worked hard to make food for the trees. Our first job was getting carbon dioxide. Our second job was getting water and our third job was getting sun. After we did all that, we mixed it all up and made sugar. Then we let out oxygen. Every day I watched my siblings and cousins do all this work. I watched the water go through the tubes in the leaf that was my siblings and cousins body. They told me one day I would have to do this work too. It took me a long time to grow up and be as big as them.

We stored up all the sugar before we fell off the trees. We stored up water too. In the fall, the trees decided that we had a lot of water. My aunt and uncles and parents were branches. But my cousins were leaves like us. They said that we let out all the water instead of saving it up. So for the winter, my aunts and uncles and parents decided to we had to fall out the tree and go play in piles of leaves with our friends. Each day, some of us would fall off the tree. Amazingly, we landed in the same pile. We played with each other and made new friends. We lived happily after ever.



For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

Luke 2:11-14