

# Isaiah Chapter 30

by Stephen Kaung

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of returning to God for strength and salvation amidst life's pressures and challenges.*

**Duration:** 38:55

**Scripture:** Leviticus 26:8, Isaiah 30:15-21

**Topics:** "Isaiah"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker addresses the issue of having a hard heart and not helping those in need. He tells a story of a brother who watched another brother drown multiple times before finally jumping in to save him. The speaker explains that sometimes we need to let people hit rock bottom before they can be truly saved. He emphasizes the importance of turning to God in times of trouble instead of relying on our own cleverness. The speaker concludes by reminding the audience that God will deliver them from idols and provide abundance if they trust in Him.

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## Transcript

We will please turn to the book of Isaiah chapter 30. Isaiah chapter 30. We will read from verse 15 through verse 21.

In quietness and confidence shall be your strength. But ye will not. And ye say, No, but we will flee upon horses.

Therefore shall ye flee. And we will ride upon the swift. Therefore shall they that pursue you be swift.

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 a banner on a hill.

And therefore will Jehovah wait, that he may be gracious unto you. And therefore will he lift himself up, that he may have mercy upon you. For Jehovah is a God of judgment.

Blessed are all they that wait for him. 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. As he heareth it, he will answer thee. And the Lord will give you the bread of adversity, and the water of oppression.

But thy teachers shall not be hidden any more. But thine eye shall see thy teachers. And when ye turn to the right hand, or when ye turn to the left, thine ear shall hear a voice, a word, behind thee, saying, This is the way.

In order to understand this passage of the scripture, I think it is necessary for us to know a little bit of the background. The nation of Judah was situated at that time between two great nations. On the north was the kingdom of Assyria.

In the south was the kingdom of Egypt. And this little nation of Judah was squeezed, as it were, in between these two great nations. And whenever there was a campaign, Assyria would pass through the land of Judah in order to reach Egypt, and vice versa.

For in a sense, you see that Judah was in a very difficult situation. And as a little nation, he had to try to balance herself between these two powers. Humanly speaking, of course.

He had to be very clever to walk a tightrope. Try to balance one against the other for her own survival. And this was what she did.

Whenever she was in trouble from one nation, she tried to seek the help from the other nation. And vice versa. And probably this happened in this particular juncture at the time of King Hezekiah.

We know that King Hezekiah was a good king. And yet he was faced with such a dilemma. In order to fight against the oppression of Assyria, at that time he sought the help of Egypt.

You will find that in 2 Kings chapter 18. We do not have the time to go over it. You can do it yourself.

But when King Hezekiah was doing that, the word of God came through the prophet Isaiah. Why? Because instead of going to the Lord for help, instead of seeking the Lord's face, the little nation of Judah was trying to solve their dilemma by their own wisdom, by their own cleverness. And this was considered as a rebelling against the Lord.

A nation that was supposed to know the Lord forgot their God, and tried to seek the help of an earthly kingdom. And God was not pleased with that. So he sent his prophet Isaiah to the nation, and said that if you seek the help of Egypt, you will find that Egypt was like a broken reed.

Both you and Egypt will fall. And the word of the Lord to that nation at that time was this. In returning and rest shall ye be saved.

In quietness and confidence shall be your strength. What they needed to do is to return to God, and rest in God. Then they shall be saved.

In quietness, not in running around, and confidence, not in men, but in God, shall be their strength. Now this was the word of God to this little nation of Judah at that time. Now brothers and sisters, applying this word to us today, the Church of God is a little flock, so far as she is compared to this world.

We find that in Luke chapter 12. Fear not, little flock, for it is the good pleasure of the Father to give you the kingdom. For still you find the Church of God is a little flock, and this little flock, in a sense, is situated between two great forces.

On the one side is the world, the secular world, represented by Egypt. On the other hand is the religious world represented by Assyria or Babylon. God has delivered us out of this world, out of Egypt, but we find ourselves oppressed by Babylon, by Assyria.

And in order to balance against the oppression from the religious world, we seek the help of the secular world, and vice versa. Now let me illustrate with what happened at the time of Reformation. At the time of Reformation you'll find these Reformers, they were raised up by God to seek deliverance from papacy, from the Roman Catholic system.

And yet in doing that, they received the help of those earthly princes. And the result was, sometimes you'll find the Church of God is under the oppression of the secular world, and at other times you'll find she is captured by the religious world. And the word of God to his people is, in returning and rest shall ye be saved.

In quietness and confidence shall be thy strength. To apply it to us individually. Now dear brothers and sisters, often times we find ourselves surrounded with adverse forces.

Suppose we are placed in a situation. We are oppressed from all sides. What are we going to do to get out of such a dilemma? Suppose we have lots of problems coming from all directions.

What are we going to do? Brothers and sisters, you know, our natural tendency when we are oppressed, we try to plan, we try to scheme, we try to figure out a way, we try to seek help from one side in order to balance the other side, and you'll find that when we are in times of trouble, when we are under pressure, when we have trials, our first reaction will be, well, try to figure out a way. Try to balance these forces. Try to solve it with our cleverness.

And when we are doing that, you'll find we are running hither and hither. We struggle, we strive, we worry, we complain, we doubt, we lose our sleep, we get restless. But often times, brothers and sisters, we forget to return to the Lord.

We have a God who is faithful, and yet when we are met with practical problems and situations, we forgot we had a God. Our reaction will be all from ourselves, looking to man for help. What a rebellious people we are.

The word of God to us is to return. To return and rest! Then we shall be saved. How we need to return to the Lord again and again.

You know, sometimes in the scripture you'll find such prayers as Lord, turn to us, and we will turn to Thee. As if the Lord needs to return to us. So far as our feeling is concerned, sometimes we feel that God has left us.

He has forsaken us. And we cry out that He should turn to us, He should return to us. And then we will return to Him.

Now this is our feeling. But so far as the fact is concerned, He has not left us, nor has forsaken us. It is we who has left Him.

We should return. And if we return, we'll find that He is waiting there for us. Of course, the power to return has to come from Him, that's true.

But thank God. He is always here. He has never left us, nor forsaken us.

He is waiting for us to return to Him. We need to return to Him. And as we return to Him, then we rest in His finished work.

We rest in all that He has promised us. You remember the Lord Jesus said, Come to me, all ye that labour and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon me, and learn of me, for I am lowly in spirit, humble and lowly in spirit, and you shall find rest to your soul.

We need to come to the Lord. We need to return to the Lord. Whenever we are oppressed, brothers and sisters, the first thing to do is to return to the Lord.

And as we return to the Lord, we shall find rest. We begin to see all that He is, what He has accomplished for us, who He is, what He has promised. And when we begin to see these things, then we rest.

We rest in Him. There is no need to doubt. There is no need to worry.

There is no need to struggle, to fret. We just return and rest in Him. And when we come and rest in Him, we shall be saved.

We shall be saved. But it is more than just to be saved. In quietness and confidence shall be your strength.

Now, brothers and sisters, to be saved is one thing. To be strong is another thing. He will not only save us if we return and rest in Him, but you'll find as we return and learn to rest in Him, we enter into a quietness.

Our flesh begins to be calmed. You know, our problem is we are not quiet enough. We are restless.

We waste lots of our energy, our strength, because we are struggling and striving. Oh, if only we can return to Him and see Him. The Lord is in His sanctuary.

Let all flesh be quiet. If we enter behind the veil, you'll find in the wholeness of all, everything is quiet. Everything is quiet.

It is alive behind the veil. It is alive with the Lord. And as we enter behind the veil, everything is quiet.

We see the Lord. And confidence begins to rise up in us. We know He is trustworthy.

Paul said our confidence is not in ourselves but in God. Our confidence is in Him. So I do believe, brothers and sisters, that God has a word for us today.

He is calling us to return and rest in Him. For this shall be our salvation. He is calling us to enter into quietness and confidence.

And we shall find spiritual strength for our everyday need. Now, this is the word of God. But did the nation of Israel receive that word? No.

They say we were not. We will run. We will be swift.

In other words, they want to rely on something that is tangible, visible. They do not have faith to believe in the God who is invisible, who seems to be intangible to them, their flesh. They would rather rely on

something that they can lay hold on with their hands.

They would not listen to God. They would not return to the Lord. And the result was, God said, alright, if you want to run, you will run.

If you want to be swift, you will be pursued with swiftness. At the rebuke of one, a thousand will flee. At the rebuke of five, all ye will flee.

Now, think of that. What a reverse of the promise of God. If you read Leviticus chapter 26, you'll find in that chapter God said, if you will keep my statutes, if you will keep my commandments, then one will make a hundred flee, and a hundred will make ten thousand flee.

But if you do not listen to my word, then you will flee even without anyone. And because the nation of Israel will not listen to God, therefore, at the rebuke of one, a hundred will flee. At the rebuke of five, all.

A thousand will flee. At the rebuke of five, all will flee. In other words, they were put under the disciplinary hand of the Lord.

Now, dear brothers and sisters, what should be our attitude before God? Life is full of pressure. Life is full of problems. What should be our reaction? What should be our attitude? In returning and rest shall be your salvation.

In quietness and confidence shall be your strength. If we do not, what will be the result? We will be under the disciplinary hand. But do you think that because of that God will forsake us? Not so.

Because in verse 18 we read, And therefore will Jehovah wait, that he may be gracious unto you. The Lord has not left us nor forsaken us. He is there patiently waiting for us, that he may be gracious to us.

He wants to be gracious to us, but he cannot. He wants to lift himself up and have mercy upon us, but he cannot. He has to wait for us until we are ready.

Do you think that we are waiting for God? No. He is waiting for us. And all that wait upon him shall be blessed.

So here you find these two waitings. One is God is waiting for us to be merciful, to be gracious, and the other is blessed are those who wait upon the Lord. He waits for us until we wait upon him.

To use an illustration, probably you have read it somewhere in Brother Ni's books. I think it was in one of Brother Ni's books. He mentioned an experience of his.

Once he and a few others they went to swim. And one of them, you know, began to sink. He was drowning.

And Brother Ni himself not being a good swimmer, you know, there was a good swimmer there. So he expected that brother to jump in and rescue the drowning one, another brother in the Lord. But that brother who was good in swimming just stood there and watched.

And Brother Ni got so excited and said, now why don't you go in and swim? Why is it your heart is so hard? You see your brother is sinking, is drowning, and you just stand and watch? How can you do that? But that brother wouldn't do anything. Just stood there and watched. Let that brother sink down and

floated up and sank down.

But after two times, when he came up the third time and was going down the third time, that brother jumped into the water and got him to the shore. And after that Brother Ni couldn't understand, so he asked that brother, why did you do such a thing? You could save him before he suffered that long. Why didn't you do it? And that brother said, you don't know.

When a man was sinking, if anyone would try to rescue him, he will wrap upon up, wrap up with that man, and both will go down. You have to let him give up everything. Until he wasn't struggling anymore.

As if dead. Then you could bring him to the shore. And how true it is.

How often we misunderstand God. And say, Lord, we are in trouble, we are sinking, we are drowning. We don't know what to do.

We are running here and there. We try everything we can and it doesn't seem to help. Now, where are you? Do you really care? Why do you stand by and just watch and do nothing? And how often we murmur against God, not knowing that we are under discipline.

Not knowing that he cannot do anything. Why? Because we are struggling. We do not return to him.

We do not rest. There is no quietness. There is no confidence.

He has to allow us to go to the end of ourselves. And when we come to the end of ourselves and say, Well, this is finished. Is it finished? That's the beginning.

You'll find that God is waiting for you. He is waiting there until you give up every struggle and striving. Until you enter into rest.

Then he will be gracious to you. He will lift himself up and rescue you. But dear brothers and sisters, we will not wait upon the Lord until we consider ourselves as dead.

If there is anything still alive there, we want to do it ourselves. We want to try it. Blessed are they that wait upon the Lord.

When you come to the point of waiting upon the Lord, you'll find the Lord is waiting there for you. He is waiting there all the time. He has not forsaken you.

He has heard you. When you cry, he has heard you. He gives you the bread of adversity and the water of oppression.

That's true. Who will like adversity? But here you'll find God gives you the bread of adversity. We all like bread, but we don't like adversity.

We all want water, but we do not want oppression. But here you'll find God will give us the bread of adversity. He will give us the water of oppression.

In other words, oppression and adversity are bread and water to us. They will feed us. They will satisfy us.

Because God is there. Even adversity and oppression are bread and water to us. Even though God may give us bread of adversity and water of oppression to eat and to drink, but your teachers shall not be

hidden from you.

Adversity and oppression are good teachers if the Spirit of God is in them. They are good teachers. Sometimes we are so stubborn, we have to learn it the hard way.

Oh, if only we are meek and lowly in heart. If only we will listen and not harden. If only we will return and rest.

If only we will enter into quietness and confidence. But we will not. We have to learn it the hard way.

God has to give us the bread of adversity, the water of oppression, in order to teach us. We may turn to the right and to the left, and the Word comes to us and says, This is the way, walk ye in it. What is the way? The way is, in returning and rest shall ye be saved.

In quietness and confidence shall be your strength. This is the way. And you know what is the consequence, what is the result, outcome of all it? If you read on, you will find God deliver them from idols, deliver them from anything foreign to God, and God give them rain, give them seed, give them abundance, give them water, and the moon shall shine as the sun, and the sun shall shine sevenfold.

In other words, through all these troubles, God is teaching us, and after we are taught, we will enter into the riches. So dear brothers and sisters this morning, I believe God wants us to have this Word. Meditate upon it.

Take it to heart. And practice it by the grace of God. In returning and rest shall ye be saved.

Whenever you are in trouble, whenever you are in trouble, wherever you are under pressure, remember this, in returning and rest shall you be saved. In quietness and confidence shall you be rescued. For the sake of some who do not know English too well, let me use five minutes just to sum up what we have just said in Chinese.

In returning and rest shall you be rescued. In quietness and confidence shall you be rescued. We know that many times, when we encounter difficulties, when we encounter many problems, how do we deal with them? We are there, our thoughts are there, and we use all kinds of methods to deal with many of our problems.

It is very easy for us to seek help from others. We forget that we have a God. When we encounter difficulties, how can we be saved? It is not by running around.

It is not by planning or seeking help from others. When we encounter many problems, the first thing we should do is to return to God. When we return to God, we should return to God.

We have a God who loves us. Why do we forget Him? Let us return to God. When we return to God, when we return to God, we will be at peace.

Why? Because we know that our God watches over us. We know that He can solve all our problems. So today, our difficulty is that we do not return to God.

If we do not return to God, we will not be at peace inside. If we return to God, we will be at peace inside. This is what we call being saved.

When we return like this, not only will we be at peace, but also all our physical struggles will be at peace. Therefore, we only care about peace and stability. Our entire body will be at peace.

It is as if we have entered the back of a basket. Behind the basket, everything is at peace. We only see our Lord.

And when we see our Lord, we will have strength inside us. As long as we have strength, we can cope with the environment. So, brothers and sisters, God's words to us are that your salvation depends on returning to God and being at peace.

Your success depends on being at peace. But in the end, whether we listen or not, we do not listen. We must hold on to something as if we can see God.

Many times, we have no confidence. We cannot believe that God will solve all our problems. So, what happens in the end? Although we know, but we do not want to do it.

We still run and hide. Where do we find our own way? If this is the case, then it is good. You are really going to run away.

Then you are really going to be in the hands of God. You are going to fail. But does it mean that God is going to abandon us like this? No.

The Bible tells us that although we are still there running and hiding, we are going to be in the hands of God. But what about God? God is still waiting for us there. God is waiting for us there to grant us grace.

Many times, we think that we are waiting for God there. But no. God is waiting for us there.

Because we do not want to be at peace, God has no other way. When we are at peace, God is going to save us. It is like swimming.

If a person does not know how to swim, when he is about to drown, if you are going to save him, when he is struggling, you cannot save him. Because when he is struggling, you are going to save him. If he buries you, then you are going to drag him down.

So people who can swim, when they see someone is going to sink, they let him sink. When he gives up for the last time, when there is no hope, and he does not want to move, they jump down and save him. Many times, God is like this.

It is not that we are waiting for God there. God is waiting for us there. When we are able to return to peace, God is going to save us.

Some people say that God gives us food, gives us water, gives us food, gives us water, gives us water, and teaches us when we are in trouble. Your teachers, your teachers, do not hide it anymore. Many times we think that when we are in trouble, what is the use of this? Don't forget, this is our food, this is our water.

Being able to teach us about the truth, can be beneficial. And, God will be behind us, and will tell us, This is the right path. You have to stay focused.

Don't go from east to west. You have to go back to the dark side. You have to calm down.

If we listen to him, what will happen? He will save us. Not only will he solve all our problems, but he will also give us his abundant blessings. He will tell us to be full of light and full of grace.

So I hope that these words will be recited to us. Let us pray. Our Heavenly Father, how we praise and thank Thee that Thou hast a word for us as we are faced with many problems, pressed on all sides.

Oh, how we praise and thank Thee Thou art not silent, but Thou dost give us Thy word. In returning and rest shall ye be saved. In quietness and confidence shall be Your strength.

Oh, Lord, soften our hearts that we may not rush here and there and forget Thee. But, Lord, teach us how to return, how to rest, how to be quiet, how to have our confidence in Thee and Thee alone. Oh, how we praise and thank Thee even though sometimes Thou dost give us bread or adversity and water or oppression, and yet Thou dost teach us through all these circumstances that Thou mayst bring us into abundance, into the fullness that is in Christ.

Oh, we do praise and thank Thee for Thou art gracious, Thou art merciful. We ask You in the name of our Lord Jesus.

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