

Doctrine of Rebellion

1. Though he loved the people of Israel, Moses was under no illusion as to how difficult they could be. Moses knew that since Israel rebelled against him while he was alive, they would become worse after his death.
 - Deuteronomy 31:27 For I know thy rebellion, and thy stiff neck: behold, while I am yet alive with you this day, ye have been rebellious against the Lord; and how much more after my death?
2. The word for rebellion used by Moses is meriy (mer-ee'), meaning bitterness, a reference to feelings of anger and resentment.
3. When people do not like something someone says or does, they can become resentful, angry, and bitter.
4. The people of Israel did not like where Moses had brought them in the desert. They did not like their circumstances, and so they took matters into their own hands. By rebelling against Moses they were rebelling against God Himself, for it was the Lord who guided the people by a Pillar of Fire, and by a Covering Cloud.
5. Rebellion is a matter of the heart. A person may engage in God-talk, a person may conform to outward religious and social customs, but the heart is far from God. And, the Lord knows it.
 - Joshua 22:22 The Lord God of gods, the Lord God of gods, he knoweth, and Israel he shall know; if it be in rebellion, or if in transgression against the Lord, (save us not this day,)
6. The heart has to be guarded against bitterness, so that rebellion does not occur, resulting in acts of immorality, or worse, renunciation of one's faith, and gospel privileges.
 - Hebrews 12:15 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; 16 Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.
7. The seriousness of the sin of rebellion is declared by Samuel. Rebellion is united with witchcraft, stubbornness, and idolatry.
 - 1 Samuel 15:23 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king.

Special Note.

Rebellion is united with stubbornness, because, no matter how rational an argument might be set forth for doing what is right, regardless of feelings, the soul is wedded to sinning.

Rebellion is united to witchcraft, because it moves the soul into the realm of the occult. To be in rebellion is to be like the Devil and his evil spirits, or demons, who did not want to obey God.

Rebellion is united to idolatry, because it is the worship of a false god, the god of self-interest. Either God is God, or self decides to act as god, and direct its own destiny. Self is determined to be the Captain of its own fate, and the Master of its own destiny.

“Invictus”

or

“Unconquered”

“Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeoning of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the Horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds, and shall find me, unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate:
I am the captain of my soul.”

William Ernest Henley

8. When enough people become rebellious against God, it is a national sin which should be confessed, as Nehemiah did.

- Nehemiah 9:1 Now in the twenty and fourth day of this month the children of Israel were assembled with fasting, and with sack clothes, and earth upon them. 2 And the seed of Israel separated themselves from all strangers, and stood and confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers.

Nehemiah 9:17 And refused to obey, neither were mindful of thy wonders that thou didst among them; but hardened their necks, and in their rebellion appointed a captain to return to their bondage: but thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and forsookest them not.

Special Note.

When the soul is in emotional revolt against the Lord, a new Captain will be found to guide one's life. This new Captain will be followed, because it agrees with the wishes of the person who is in rebellion.

9. Rebellion is not a sin that can be committed in isolation. There is no sin that can be committed by itself. One sin leads to another. The sin of rebellion will lead to harsh thoughts, and words against God.

- Job 34:37 For he addeth rebellion unto his sin, he clappeth his hands among us, and multiplieth his words against God.

10. The person who is in rebellion may have a healthy self-esteem, and engage in rhetoric of self-righteousness, but in the sight of God that person is an evil person.

- Proverbs 17:11 An evil man seeketh only rebellion: therefore a cruel messenger shall be sent against him.

11. People who rebel are not satisfied to sin by themselves. They teach rebellion to others, and for that will be cast off from the face of the earth. There is a sin unto death.

- Jeremiah 28:16 Therefore thus saith the Lord; Behold, I will cast thee from off the face of the earth: this year thou shalt die, because thou hast taught rebellion against the Lord.
- Jeremiah 29:32 Therefore thus saith the Lord; Behold, I will punish Shemaiah the Nehelamite, and his seed: he shall not have a man to dwell among this people; neither shall he behold the good that I will do for my people, saith the Lord; because he hath taught rebellion against the Lord.

12. The gospel calls upon individuals to put down their rebellion, and submit to the Lordship of Christ.

“All to Jesus, I surrender;
All to Him I freely give;
I will ever love and trust Him,
In His presence daily live.

I surrender all, I surrender all,
All to Thee, my blessèd Savior,
I surrender all.

All to Jesus I surrender;
Humbly at His feet I bow,
Worldly pleasures all forsaken;
Take me, Jesus, take me now.

All to Jesus, I surrender;
Make me, Savior, wholly Thine;
Let me feel the Holy Spirit,
Truly know that Thou art mine.

All to Jesus, I surrender;
Lord, I give myself to Thee;
Fill me with Thy love and power;
Let Thy blessing fall on me.

All to Jesus I surrender;
Now I feel the sacred flame.
O the joy of full salvation!
Glory, glory, to His Name!”

Judson W. Van DeVenter, 1896