

Having A Basic Understanding of Some Old Testament Truths

Part 70 – The Life Of Hezekiah (II Chronicles 29-32)

1. As Hezekiah begins to reign, is he doing that which is right in the sight of God?

Yes, (**II Chronicles 29:2**).

2. Was Hezekiah concerned with the physical condition of the temple?

Yes: “*He in the first year of his reign, in the first month, opened the doors of the house of the LORD, and repaired them*” (**II Chronicles 29:3**).

3. Did Hezekiah want to clean up spiritual problems being carried out in the temple?

Yes: “*(4) And he brought in the priests and the Levites, and gathered them together into the east street, (5) And said unto them, Hear me, ye Levites, sanctify now yourselves, and sanctify the house of the LORD God of your fathers, and carry forth the filthiness out of the holy place*” (**II Chronicles 29:4-5**).

4. What caused the wrath of the Lord to be upon Judah and Jerusalem?

“*(6) For our fathers have trespassed, and done that which was evil in the eyes of the LORD our God, and have forsaken him, and have turned away their faces from the habitation of the LORD, and turned their backs. (7) Also they have shut up the doors of the porch, and put out the lamps, and have not burned incense nor offered burnt offerings in the holy place unto the God of Israel. (8) Wherefore the wrath of the LORD was upon Judah and Jerusalem, and he hath delivered them to trouble, to astonishment, and to hissing, as ye see with your eyes. (9) For, lo, our fathers have fallen by the sword, and our sons and our daughters and our wives are in captivity for this*” (**II Chronicles 29:6-9**).

5. What did Hezekiah say was in his heart?

“*(10) Now it is in mine heart to make a covenant with the LORD God of Israel, that his fierce wrath may turn away from us. (11) My sons [talking to the priest and levites; v. 4], be not now negligent: for the LORD hath chosen you to stand before him, to serve him, and that ye should minister unto him, and burn incense*” (**II Chronicles 29:10-11**).

6. Did the priests and Levites carry out Hezekiah’s instructions?

Yes: “*(15) And they gathered their brethren, and sanctified themselves, and came, according to the commandment of the king, by the words of the LORD, to cleanse the house of the LORD. (16) And the priests went into the inner part of the house of the LORD, to cleanse it, and brought out all the uncleanness that they found in the temple of the LORD into the court of the house of the LORD. And the Levites took it, to carry it out abroad into the brook Kidron. (17) Now they began on the first day of the first month to sanctify, and on the eighth day of the month came they to the porch of the LORD: so they sanctified the house of the LORD in eight days; and in the sixteenth day of the first month they made an end. (18) Then they went in to Hezekiah the king, and said, We have cleansed all the house of the LORD, and the altar of burnt offering, with all the vessels thereof, and the shewbread table, with all the vessels thereof. (19) Moreover all the vessels, which king Ahaz in his reign did cast away in his transgression, have we prepared and sanctified, and, behold, they are before the altar of the LORD*” (**II Chronicles 29:15-19**).

7. Were offerings made for the sins of Judah?

Yes: “(20) Then Hezekiah the king rose early, and gathered the rulers of the city, and went up to the house of the LORD. (21) And they brought seven bullocks, and seven rams, and seven lambs, and seven he goats, for a sin offering for the kingdom, and for the sanctuary, and for Judah. And he commanded the priests the sons of Aaron to offer them on the altar of the LORD. (22) So they killed the bullocks, and the priests received the blood, and sprinkled it on the altar: likewise, when they had killed the rams, they sprinkled the blood upon the altar: they killed also the lambs, and they sprinkled the blood upon the altar. (23) And they brought forth the he goats for the sin offering before the king and the congregation; and they laid their hands upon them: (24) And the priests killed them, and they made reconciliation with their blood upon the altar, to make an atonement for all Israel: for the king commanded that the burnt offering and the sin offering should be made for all Israel” (II Chronicles 29:20-24).

8. What did Hezekiah set the Levites in the house of the Lord to do?

Yes: “(25) And he set the Levites in the house of the LORD with cymbals, with psalteries, and with harps, according to the commandment of David, and of Gad the king's seer, and Nathan the prophet: for so was the commandment of the LORD by his prophets. (26) And the Levites stood with the instruments of David, and the priests with the trumpets. (27) And Hezekiah commanded to offer the burnt offering upon the altar. And when the burnt offering began, the song of the LORD began also with the trumpets, and with the instruments ordained by David king of Israel. (28) And all the congregation worshipped, and the singers sang, and the trumpeters sounded: and all this continued until the burnt offering was finished. (29) And when they had made an end of offering, the king and all that were present with him bowed themselves, and worshipped. (30) Moreover Hezekiah the king and the princes commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the LORD with the words of David, and of Asaph the seer. And they sang praises with gladness, and they bowed their heads and worshipped” (II Chronicles 29:25-30).

9. When there was an offering made, was it done by choice or force?

Choice: “Then Hezekiah answered and said, Now ye have consecrated yourselves unto the LORD, come near and bring sacrifices and thank offerings into the house of the LORD. And the congregation brought in sacrifices and thank offerings; and as many as were of a free [willing] heart burnt offerings” (II Chronicles 29:31). ASV “...as many as were of a willing heart brought burnt-offerings.”

10. Where both the priests and the Levites equally right in heart to serve at this time?

No: “But the priests were too few, so that they could not flay all the burnt offerings: wherefore their brethren the Levites did help them, till the work was ended, and until the other priests had sanctified themselves: for the Levites were more upright in heart to sanctify themselves than the priests” (II Chronicles 29:34).

In fact, they could not keep the Passover on time because of the priests not being right (30:1-3).

11. Did the people offer a small amount to God at this time?

No: “(35) And also the burnt offerings were in abundance, with the fat of the peace offerings, and the drink offerings for every burnt offering. So the service of the house of the LORD was set in order. (36) And Hezekiah rejoiced, and all the people, that God had prepared the people: for the thing was done suddenly” (II Chronicles 29:35-36).

12. Why was there a delay when it came time to observe the Passover?

The priests were not sanctified in sufficient number and the people had not yet come to Jerusalem: *“(1) And Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah, and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, to keep the passover unto the LORD God of Israel. (2) For the king had taken counsel, and his princes, and all the congregation in Jerusalem, to keep the passover in the second month. (3) For they could not keep it at that time, because the priests had not sanctified themselves sufficiently, neither had the people gathered themselves together to Jerusalem”* (II Chronicles 29:1-3).

We should be reminded here that we have to clean up our act before God hears and sees our worship to Him (**Proverbs 15:8-9; 21:27; 28:9, Isaiah 1:11-20, Matthew 5:23-24, and I Corinthians 11:27-32; cf. II Chronicles 30:16-17**). ** We'll soon discuss one exception God made of this rule and why (vs. 18-20).

13. Since the Passover hadn't been observed aright in a long time, what message was sent out?

“(5) So they established a decree to make proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beer-sheba even to Dan, that they should come to keep the passover unto the LORD God of Israel at Jerusalem: for they had not done it of a long time in such sort as it was written. (6) So the posts went with the letters from the king and his princes throughout all Israel and Judah, and according to the commandment of the king, saying, Ye children of Israel, turn again unto the LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, and he will return to the remnant of you, that are escaped out of the hand of the kings of Assyria. (7) And be not ye like your fathers, and like your brethren, which trespassed against the LORD God of their fathers, who therefore gave them up to desolation, as ye see. (8) Now be ye not stiffnecked, as your fathers were, but yield yourselves unto the LORD, and enter into his sanctuary, which he hath sanctified for ever: and serve the LORD your God, that the fierceness of his wrath may turn away from you. (9) For if ye turn again unto the LORD, your brethren and your children shall find compassion before them that lead them captive, so that they shall come again into this land: for the LORD your God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away his face from you, if ye return unto him.” (II Chronicles 30:5-9).

14. Was everyone willing to follow the decree Hezekiah sent out?

No, but much people came: *“(10) So the posts passed from city to city through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh even unto Zebulun: but they laughed them to scorn, and mocked them. (11) Nevertheless divers of Asher and Manasseh and of Zebulun humbled themselves, and came to Jerusalem. (12) Also in Judah the hand of God was to give them one heart to do the commandment of the king and of the princes, by the word of the LORD”* (II Chronicles 30:10-13).

15. What was cast into the brook Kidron?

*“And they arose and took away **the altars that were in Jerusalem, and all the altars for incense took they away, and cast them into the brook Kidron**”* (II Chronicles 30:14).

16. Who was ashamed and had to sanctify themselves during the feast of unleavened bread?

The priests and the Levites (**II Chronicles 30:15**).

17. What happened when some of the unclean partook of the Passover?

“(18) For a multitude of the people, even many of Ephraim, and Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun, had not cleansed themselves, yet did they eat the passover otherwise than it was written. But Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, **The good LORD pardon every one (19) That prepareth his heart to seek God, the LORD God of his fathers, though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary.** (20) And **the LORD hearkened to Hezekiah, and healed the people**” (II Chronicles 30:18-20; cf. Acts 17:30).

18. What do we learn about the state of joy in Judah from II Chronicles 30:26? Since Solomon, things have been bad. Why was there no joy? Consider the answer from these Scriptures: **Psalms 144:15; 146:5, and Proverbs 16:20.**

19. Do things look good after the Passover is observed?

Yes, things look great. They rid the land of idolatry and take care of the priests and Levites as they should have been doing: “(1) Now when all this was finished, **all Israel that were present went out to the cities of Judah, and brake the images in pieces, and cut down the groves, and threw down the high places and the altars out of all Judah and Benjamin, in Ephraim also and Manasseh, until they had utterly destroyed them all.** Then all the children of Israel returned, every man to his possession, into their own cities. (2) And **Hezekiah appointed the courses of the priests and the Levites** after their courses, every man according to his service, the priests and Levites for burnt offerings and for peace offerings, to minister, and to give thanks, and to praise in the gates of the tents of the LORD. (3) He appointed also the king's portion of his substance for the burnt offerings, to wit, for the morning and evening burnt offerings, and the burnt offerings for the sabbaths, and for the new moons, and for the set feasts, as it is written in the law of the LORD. (4) Moreover **he commanded the people that dwelt in Jerusalem to give the portion of the priests and the Levites, that they might be encouraged in the law of the LORD.** (5) And **as soon as the commandment came abroad, the children of Israel brought in abundance the firstfruits** of corn, wine, and oil, and honey, and of all the increase of the field; and the tithe of all things brought they in abundantly. (6) And concerning the children of Israel and Judah, that dwelt in the cities of Judah, they also brought in the tithe of oxen and sheep, and the tithe of holy things which were consecrated unto the LORD their God, and laid them by heaps. (7) In the third month they began to lay the foundation of the heaps, and finished them in the seventh month. (8) And when Hezekiah and the princes came and saw the heaps, they blessed the LORD, and his people Israel. (9) Then Hezekiah questioned with the priests and the Levites concerning the heaps. (10) And **Azariah the chief priest of the house of Zadok answered him, and said, Since the people began to bring the offerings into the house of the LORD, we have had enough to eat, and have left plenty: for the LORD hath blessed his people; and that which is left is this great store**” (II Chronicles 31:1-10).

20. As we close II Chronicles 31, how is Hezekiah doing?

Great: “(20) And thus did Hezekiah throughout all Judah, and wrought that which was good and right and truth before the LORD his God. (21) And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the commandments, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart, and prospered” (II Chronicles 31:20-21).

21. What happened “After these things, and the establishment thereof”?

“After these things, and the establishment thereof, Sennacherib king of Assyria came, and entered into Judah, and encamped against the fenced cities, and thought to win them for himself” (II Chronicles 32:1).

22. What did Hezekiah do with the troubles that now face Judah?

Hezekiah cut off water supplies that would benefit Assyria, prepared for battle, and strengthened the people by reminding them God was there to help: “(2) And when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib was come, and that he was purposed to fight against Jerusalem, (3) He took counsel with his princes and his mighty men to stop the waters of the fountains which were without the city: and they did help him. (4) So there was gathered much people together, who stopped all the fountains, and the brook that ran through the midst of the land, saying, Why should the kings of Assyria come, and find much water? (5) Also he strengthened himself, and built up all the wall that was broken, and raised it up to the towers, and another wall without, and repaired Millo in the city of David, and made darts and shields in abundance. (6) And he set captains of war over the people, and gathered them together to him in the street of the gate of the city, and spake comfortably to them, saying, (7) **Be strong and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that is with him: for there be more with us than with him:** (8) **With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the LORD our God to help us, and to fight our battles.** And the people rested themselves upon the words of Hezekiah king of Judah” (II Chronicles 32:2-8).

23. What did Sennacherib’s messengers say to the people of Judah?

First, we should note as this context does not, Hezekiah does not stay as strong as he started out. Hezekiah tried to back out of this battle without faith before this message is sent (II Kings 18:13-16).

“(9) After this did Sennacherib king of Assyria send his servants to Jerusalem, (but he himself laid siege against Lachish, and all his power with him,) unto Hezekiah king of Judah, and unto all Judah that were at Jerusalem, saying, (10) Thus saith Sennacherib king of Assyria, **Whereon do ye trust, that ye abide in the siege in Jerusalem?** (11) **Doth not Hezekiah persuade you to give over yourselves to die by famine and by thirst, saying, The LORD our God shall deliver us out of the hand of the king of Assyria?** (12) **Hath not the same Hezekiah taken away his high places and his altars, and commanded Judah and Jerusalem, saying, Ye shall worship before one altar, and burn incense upon it?** (13) **Know ye not what I and my fathers have done unto all the people of other lands? were the gods of the nations of those lands any ways able to deliver their lands out of mine hand?** (14) **Who was there among all the gods of those nations that my fathers utterly destroyed, that could deliver his people out of mine hand, that your God should be able to deliver you out of mine hand?** (15) Now therefore **let not Hezekiah deceive you, nor persuade you on this manner, neither yet believe him: for no god of any nation or kingdom was able to deliver his people out of mine hand, and out of the hand of my fathers: how much less shall your God deliver you out of mine hand?** (16) And **his servants spake yet more against the LORD God, and against his servant Hezekiah.** (17) **He wrote also letters to rail on the LORD God of Israel, and to speak against him,** saying, As the gods of the nations of other lands have not delivered their people out of mine hand, so shall not the God of Hezekiah deliver his people out of mine hand. (18) **Then they cried with a loud voice in the Jews' speech unto the people of Jerusalem that were on the wall, to affright them, and to trouble them; that they might take the**

city. (19) **And they spake against the God of Jerusalem, as against the gods of the people of the earth, which were the work of the hands of man**” (II Chronicles 32:9-19).

24. What did Hezekiah and Isaiah do after the message from Assyria?

“*And for this cause Hezekiah the king, and the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz, prayed and cried to heaven*” (II Chronicles 32:20).

This would be the time wherein Hezekiah had some repented to do (II Kings 19:1-7).

25. What happens to the Assyrians?

They found out that the other lands might not have had gods to protect them, but the God is with Judah: “(21) **And the LORD sent an angel, which cut off all the mighty men of valour, and the leaders and captains in the camp of the king of Assyria. So he returned with shame of face to his own land. And when he was come into the house of his god, they that came forth of his own bowels slew him there with the sword.** (22) **Thus the LORD saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib the king of Assyria, and from the hand of all other, and guided them on every side.** (23) **And many brought gifts unto the LORD to Jerusalem, and presents to Hezekiah king of Judah: so that he was magnified in the sight of all nations from thenceforth**” (II Chronicles 32:21-23).

26. Was Hezekiah on the “straight and narrow” after he saw what God did to Assyria?

No, he fails twice after this: “(24) *In those days Hezekiah was sick to the death, and prayed unto the LORD: and he spake unto him, and he gave him a sign.* (25) *But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up: therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem.* (26) **Notwithstanding Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the LORD came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah...** (31) **Howbeit in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon [WE KNOW THAT HE FAILED HERE TOO as he was only worried about his reign, not what Babylon would do to his children – II Kings 20:12-19], who sent unto him to enquire of the wonder that was done in the land, God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart**” (II Chronicles 32:24-26; 31).

27. How does the account of Hezekiah’s life in II Chronicles end?

“(32) *Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and his goodness, behold, they are written in the vision of Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, and in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel.* (33) *And Hezekiah slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the chiefest of the sepulchres of the sons of David: and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem did him honour at his death. And Manasseh his son reigned in his stead*” (II Chronicles 32:32-33).