

## Lesson 8      27 December, 2020

### Hezekiah Restores True Worship

**Lesson Scope:** [2 Chronicles chapters 29 to 32](#)

*References in brackets relate to Lesson Scope unless noted otherwise*

#### Lesson Focus

Hezekiah became king in the midst of a downward spiritual spiral. Five generations had passed since the revival that was initiated by Joash.

His grandfather Jotham “did that which was right,” yet failed in that he “entered not into the temple of the LORD.” His father Ahaz forsook the Lord and sacrificed to pagan gods. It is not surprising that the temple was in such deplorable condition and worship so neglected.

Hezekiah’s spiritual concern and diligence in restoring true worship are a refreshing contrast to the ungodliness promoted by his predecessor.

His zeal in stirring a revival came as a refreshing breeze across the land. The Northern Kingdom would soon be carried away as the result of their apostasy, yet an invitation was extended for the faithful to participate in the worship at Jerusalem. Their effort culminated in a revival not known since the days of Solomon.

All men sense a need to worship. Paul writes of depraved men that worship the creation rather than the Creator. True worship of God is a heart condition that produces outward manifestations of prayer, praise, and obedience to God’s Word. Unless we “worship him in spirit and in truth,” our worship is vain.

Witnessing is an integral part of our faith. The child of God should be eager to testify what the Lord has done in his experience. Witnessing is a spiritual exercise that strengthens our faith and fulfill God’s commands.

Worship will bring us to fellowship with God and His people. Such fellowship should inspire us to greater faithfulness. Opposition is not a surprise to the believer. A close relationship to Christ will enable us to walk in victory and to uphold others facing difficult situations.

**Lesson Aim:** To identify principles related to acceptable worship.

**Theme Verse:** [2 Chronicles 31:21](#) 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.

## Lesson Text

### The Temple Cleansed

[2 Chronicles 29:1-5](#) <sup>(KJV)</sup> Hezekiah began to reign *when he was* five and twenty years old, and he reigned nine and twenty years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Abijah, the daughter of Zechariah. <sup>2</sup> And he did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that David his father had done. <sup>3</sup> He in the first year of his reign, in the first month, opened the doors of the house of the LORD, and repaired them. <sup>4</sup> And he brought in the priests and the Levites, and gathered them together into the east street, <sup>5</sup>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*.

[2 Chronicles 29:10-11](#) 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. <sup>11</sup> My sons, 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.

[2 Chronicles 29:20](#) Then Hezekiah the king rose early, and gathered the rulers of the city, and went up to the house of the LORD.

[2 Chronicles 29:29](#) And when they had made an end of offering, the king and all that were present with him bowed themselves, and worshipped.

[2 Chronicles 29:35-36](#) 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. <sup>36</sup> And Hezekiah rejoiced, and all the people, that God had prepared the people: for the thing was *done* suddenly.

### The Passover Kept

[2 Chronicles 30:1](#) 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 Chronicles 30:10-12** 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. <sup>11</sup> Nevertheless divers of Asher and Manasseh and of Zebulun humbled themselves, and came to Jerusalem. <sup>12</sup> 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.

**2 Chronicles 30:26-27** So there was great joy in Jerusalem: for since the time of Solomon the son of David king of Israel *there was* not the like in Jerusalem. <sup>27</sup> Then the priests the Levites arose and blessed the people: and their voice was heard, and their prayer came *up* to his holy dwelling place, *even* unto heaven.

### **The People Strengthened**

**2 Chronicles 31:1** 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 Chronicles 32:2** And when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib was come, and that he was purposed to fight against Jerusalem,

**2 Chronicles 32:6-8** 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, <sup>7</sup> 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: <sup>8</sup> 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.

### **Questions for Study**

#### **The Temple Cleansed**

1. How is Hezekiah's spiritual zeal shown in these verses?
2. How do we experience revival today?

## **The Passover Kept**

3. Was Hezekiah acting alone in seeking to keep the Passover?
4. How do we maintain a vision for witnessing when our efforts are mocked?

## **The People Strengthened**

5. What lessons are to be learned from the response of the worshippers? (3 1: 1)?
6. How did Hezekiah seek to encourage the people in the face of adversity?
7. How should we respond to the assaults of the enemy?

## **Analysing the Passage**

When Hezekiah began to reign, the temple had been shattered, the grounds desecrated, and the furnishings looted. He lost no time in getting to work, opening the temple doors in his first month as king (29:3). He exhorted the priests and Levites to fill their God-given roles and to lead out in cleansing and refurbishing the temple. Hezekiah made a personal commitment to follow the Lord and urged them to not be negligent (29:11).

Through his own eagerness, he was able to gather the people together and bring about a great consecration of the temple, the priests, and the Levites. God had “prepared the people” and they rejoiced to follow consecrated leaders.

Following the temple cleansing, the king and princes offered an even broader appeal, inviting all Judah and Israel to attend a Passover celebration in Jerusalem. The varied responses indicate the level of spirituality that was lost by certain tribes. However, for those that participated, it resulted in a time of joy and blessing. They also took time to purge the idolatry throughout the land.

Opposition is to be expected following a renewed commitment. Hezekiah’s faithfulness enabled him to trust the Lord, encourage his people, and lead them to victory and rest.

## **Principles and Applications**

### **The Temple Cleansed**

1. Acceptable worship begins by putting away all spiritual neglect and unholy things (29:3-5). Serving with a pure heart is the only acceptable

way to serve the Lord. We need to daily search our lives and seek God's cleansing power so that His presence will be with us. This opens the way to God and restores fellowship that was lost through sin and neglect.

2. A life of holy worship requires solid commitment and diligence (29:10-11). Hezekiah rose early to prepare for worship and provided encouragement to others. Only Biblical obedience will prove an individual's depth of commitment. A committed heart will seek to follow the Lord more perfectly in all aspects of life.

### **The Passover Kept**

3. True worshippers call others to spiritual decision (30:1, 10-12).

Those whose hearts God has touched will be eager to share His message with others. His invitation is open to all who come to Him in repentance. It is the Christians' responsibility to offer hope to the seeker and warning to the sinner.

4. Acceptable worship produces abundant joy and blessing (30:26-27). Proper worship will cause rejoicing as we find God's way for our lives. Blessing results as we live faithfully and enjoy victory in our spiritual lives.

5. Holy worship both requires and issues into decisive action against all idolatry (31:1). What does our worship do for us? We must be dedicated to removing all expressions of self-will from our lives. As the Spirit brings things to our attention, we will find assurance as we rightly deal with them.

### **The People Strengthened**

6. Holy worship prepares us to face the enemy victoriously (32:6-8).

Proper worship and diligent personal meditation on God's Word will strengthen us to face the temptations Satan confronts us with. A brotherhood that points out potential pitfalls and provides encouragement in the midst of adversity is truly a blessing. And a sound mind will rely on the promises of victory God has given, responding victoriously to the glory of God.

7. Holy worship produces peace and rest (32:6-8). Holy worship enables us to see that "there be more with us than with [them]" Past examples and personal experiences show us God's faithfulness in times of trouble and enable us to be at rest with His control over our lives. We can be at peace, knowing that He is in control of the situation.

## **Important Teachings**

1. Acceptable worship begins by putting away all spiritual neglect and unholy things (29:3-5).
2. A life of holy worship requires solid commitment and diligence (29:10-11).
3. True worshipers call others to spiritual decision (30:1, 10-12).
4. Acceptable worship produces abundant joy and blessing (30:26-27).
5. Holy worship both requires and issues into decisive action against all idolatry (31:1).
6. Holy worship prepares us to face the enemy victoriously (32:6-8).
7. Holy Worship produces peace and rest (32:6-8).
8. Making worship a first priority is essential to spiritual vitality (29:20, 29, 35-36).

## **Answers to Questions**

1. How is Hezekiah's spiritual zeal shown in these verses?

One of his first official actions was to open the temple doors. He gathered together the spiritual leaders and exhorted them to lead out in revival. He made a personal commitment to the Lord. He gathered the rulers and worshiped with them.

2. How do we experience revival today?

We need to begin with a personal relationship and dedication to serve the Lord. We need to study God's Word and make it part of our experience. We must be ready and eager to share our testimony with others. When the Lord sends conviction in a certain area, we must heed it.

3. Was Hezekiah acting alone in seeking to keep the Passover?

Hezekiah followed God's plan for the people, even if they were not faithful in following. He made a personal commitment, yet invited others to join him in service. God gave the people one heart to follow the king and princes in this.

4. How do we maintain a vision for witnessing when our efforts are mocked?

The Lord's way is right, no matter what others may say about it. We are not the ones being rejected; it is God's Word that is rejected as it brings about conviction. We must always remember that others may yet respond rightly to truth.

5. What lessons are to be learned from the response of the worshipers in (31:1)?

True worship will stimulate a proper response. Brethren will help each other to keep their lives cleansed. Sinful habits or objects will be removed so that they will have no further effects, and each person will live faithfully.

6. How did Hezekiah seek to encourage the people in the face of adversity?

He made preparations to resist the enemy. He spoke comfortingly to the people and reminded them that God was with them. He took his role as leader and personally sought help from God.

7. How should we respond to the assaults of the enemy?

We need to purpose in our hearts ahead of time that we will not defile our lives with what the world has to offer. We will seek encouragement and counsel from the brotherhood. We will seek God's help in prayer and in the study of His Word. We will not put our trust in our own strength.

### **Summarizing the Lesson**

“And I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the LORD: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart” (Jeremiah 24:7).

### **Research Guide**

Study “Worship” (pages 474-479) in *Doctrines of the Bible* by Daniel J Kauffman.