

RESTORATION REVIVAL

lesson three

HEZEKIAH

The title of our radio broadcast is
Restoration Revival Hour.

In this series of lessons, we want to study the meaning behind that title. This should give greater awareness of the need of the hour in which we live. It is an hour when God is wanting to restore and revive His people, that they may be found watching and waiting - ready at the coming of the Bridegroom for His Bride.



RESTORATION IN HEZEKIAH'S DAY



LESSON THREE

In the previous lesson, we took time to examine the 70 years of captivity - and how Cyrus was used to bring restoration.

Now we want to look at another king who was used of God to bring restoration at a time of great neglect:

II Chronicles 29:6-7

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.

- 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.

The land was in need of another restoration. And King Hezekiah, being a godly man, was concerned enough to take steps to bring that restoration into being.

II Chronicles 29:1-2

Hezekiah began to reign
when he was five and twenty years old,
and he reigned nine and twenty years in Jerusalem . .

AND HE DID THAT WHICH WAS RIGHT
IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD,
according to all that David his father had done.

When we look at these accounts of the various kings in Israel and in Judah, we often find an added phrase that lets us know how they did spiritually.

They were reigning over God's people - and, therefore, their spiritual character relates what the rest of their lives were like.

IT'S NOT ALWAYS LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON!

Now, I'm glad it didn't say that Hezekiah did according to all that Ahaz his father had done!

Ahaz was a wicked king. He wasn't a good man at all. He hindered the progress of God - because he was more interested in worshipping Baal and idols than in worshipping God Almighty.

II Chronicles 28:1-4

Ahaz was twenty years old when he began to reign,
and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem:
but he did not that which was right
in the sight of the Lord,
like David his father:

In what ways did Ahaz differ from David?

- * For he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and made also molten images for Baalim.
- * Moreover he burnt incense in the valley of the son of Hinnom,
- * and burnt his children in the fire, after the abominations of the heathen whom the Lord had cast out before the children of Israel.
- * He sacrificed also and burnt incense in the high places, and on the hills, and under every green tree.

Hezekiah grew up in the midst of all that - yet, instead of following the wicked ways of this father, he followed the ways of David.

It really takes God to incline your heart to go the right way. It takes the dealings of God down deep within to get hold of you, and guide you in the right way.

We find that Hezekiah was sensitive to the Lord. He did that which was **right** in the sight of the Lord.

If we want to make any progress in our walk with the Lord, if we want to have anything accomplished in our lives that will be lasting - we must bear this in mind:

we want to do that which is **right**
in the sight of the Lord
every day of our lives!

Proverbs 12:15

**The way of a fool is right in his own eyes:
but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise.**

The ways of man tend to be clean in **his own** eyesight. He'd like to be his own boss, and write his own rules.

Thank God, though, for men like king Hezekiah. He was one of the greatest kings of Israel.

The thing that made him so great was his spiritual life, his spiritual insight - his desire to restore that blessing he knew was missing in the kingdom.

* * *

RESTORATION:

bringing back to former condition
restoring to an improved condition

RESTORE:

return; rebuild; renew
bring back
put again in possession of something

RENEW:

make new spiritually
gain again as new; begin again
replace damaged or decayed parts
restore to existence
revive

REVIVE:

return to life
become active or flourishing again
restore from a depressed, inactive,
or unused state

REVIVAL:

renewed attention to or interest in
restoration of force, validity, or effect

So, RESTORATION IS - A GOING BACK

Hezekiah was a man who had restoration in his heart and mind. He saw the need to get back to the place where Israel once was - and, if he was to accomplish this, he knew he had a hard task ahead.

When Hezekiah became king, spiritual life in Israel was at a low ebb.

The temple was a mess - it was closed tight. There were no sacrifices being offered, no worship, no prayer; nothing spiritual was going on at the temple.

If there were any prayer meetings going on in Israel, it was because someone had a heart to seek the Lord [at home!](#)

Can you imagine what it would be like if the house of God was locked tight! Can you imagine what it would be like if the house of God across this land was empty!!

What do you tend to do if you have any extra space in your house? What about the garage? If you don't keep your car in it all the time - before long, it becomes a catch-all for everything else but the car!



What about that spare closet? If you're not putting things in there that you use all the time, you soon have it stuffed full with junk!

Well, picture the house of God being empty. Try to picture, now, this empty house just standing idle. Though it was the house of God - it eventually became the catch-all for any old discarded thing.

It became a place of filth! It probably would have turned your stomach if you dared look inside.

Now, we're looking at **the beginning** of restoration - at Hezekiah opening the doors of the house of the Lord, and seeing the need to clean out the filth.

II Chronicles 29:3

He in the first year of his reign, in the first month, opened the doors of the house of the Lord, and repaired them.

Note this about Hezekiah - in the **first year** of his reign, and in the **first month**. He certainly didn't waste any time by fooling around! He wasn't a procrastinator - putting off to another day what he could do today.

Are you a procrastinator?

you don't do anything this month
if you can possibly put it off till next month!
you don't do anything this year
if you can postpone it until next year!

That's the reasoning by which so many live.

But Hezekiah wasn't like that!
He got right down to business.

His first priority as king wasn't to see how great an army he could get together; nor to see how much he could raise the taxes; nor to see how many laws he could pass to let the people know he was boss.

No, Hezekiah had a greater priority. He saw the spiritual need in his land. He saw there was nothing going on in the house of God - and, when he went to open the doors, he found the place was falling apart!

SO WHAT!!!

Those doors had needed to be repaired all this time - who cared? Nobody seemed to care.

It didn't matter to anyone what was happening to the house of God. It just wasn't important!

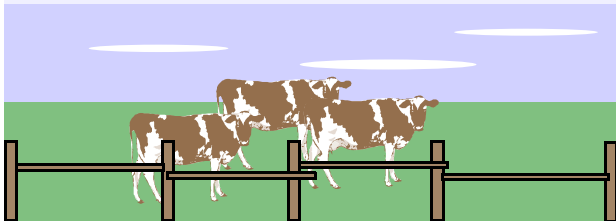
When Hezekiah went to open the door, right away he decided that there was no use opening it without first repairing it!

So the beginning of this great revival was
right at the door
of the house of the Lord!

It think there's a point to consider in this: the beginning of a revival can be right at the door of the house of the Lord, right at the door of the church.

What has that door allowed to come inside? What had entered through that door into the holy place?

I had a vision once that showed me what people had done: God gave me an illustration of an old cow pasture.



Have you ever seen a farm with a pasture for the cows?

You have to get the cows in and out of the pasture, along with the tractor - so you build a set of bars that connect between the fence posts.

When those bars are in place, they make up a hedge to keep the cattle inside. If you want to get in past the fence, you just pull the bars back and drive right on in.

Well, God gave me this illustration of how the shepherds have let down the bars - allowing anything and everything to come into the churches in these last days.

We have to stop and consider that one of the first acts of revival for many people is going to be putting the bars back in place - or maybe, first of all, taking a lesson from Jesus:

Mark 11:15-17

And they come to Jerusalem:
and Jesus went into the temple,
and began to cast out
them that sold and bought in the temple,
and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers,
and the seats of them that sold doves;
and would not suffer that any man
should carry any vessel through the temple.

And He taught, saying unto them, Is it not written,
My house shall be called of all nations
the house of prayer?
but ye have made it a den of thieves.

Jesus saw all manner of business going on in the house of God, and He knew it wasn't right. He drove the business out - and started revival!

This is what we have to be concerned about, what we must consider: **God's house is a house of prayer.**

If the bars are let down, the next thing you know, the church has every sort of activity going on - everything, that is, but the spiritual.

I think the house of God ought to be used as a house of prayer - a place to praise and worship God, and have revival!

* * *

Hezekiah felt this way, too. And he set about to make ready for revival. He opened up the doors of the house of God, and took a look around!

He surely got his eyes full. This is the house of God? God lives in this place? God lives amongst all of this rubble? Amongst all the filth that is in this house?

The temple had gotten into such a deplorable state that I suppose Hezekiah might have wondered in his heart where God really was!

II Chronicles 29:4,5

And he brought in the priests and the Levites,
and gathered them together into the east street,
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.

Now, Hezekiah brought the Levites into the temple. The priests and the Levites were all of the same tribe (the tribe of Levi), but they had different responsibilities.

Aaron was appointed the high priest, and his sons were appointed as a priests after him. Then there were the Levites. These were appointed as ministers of the house of God to the service of the house of God.

FIRST THINGS FIRST!

The first thing that Hezekiah realized was needed, before much could be done, was to get these Levites sanctified. They weren't fit to fulfill their ministry of bearing the vessels of the Lord.

Not only was the house filled with filth - but the ministry was corrupt to the core. It was unsanctified, unclean. They had not kept themselves washed and sanctified, set apart for God.

HEAR ME, YE LEVITES, SANCTIFY NOW YOURSELVES!

That was the first order of business. No use of being sent to do God's work without first being revived.

Until you've got your life cleaned up in light of God's Word, walking in the way with Him, you can't expect to do much for the Lord.

We realize that revival always starts to bring dealings with God's people, doesn't it?

Remember, revival doesn't come to a building -

Revival comes to a people, just like you and me:

who want to get serious with God

who want to draw closer to the Lord

who want to be faithful

and who want to be sanctified and set apart -
vessels fit for the Master's use.

It's people like this that God can work with -
and work in.

* * *

The king realized that the people who should be clean weren't, so he ordered them -

to sanctify themselves

to set themselves apart

to clean up

to get themselves prepared for this good work.

CARRY ALL THE FILTH OUT

Then, after they got **themselves** sanctified, he ordered them to sanctify the house of the Lord - and carry all the filth out of it.

It think it's a shame to have to read this - a shame that things had gotten that bad in the house of God. It's a shame that the house of God should be recorded as being a filthy place.

Of all the places that ought to be sanctified and kept clean, the house of God ought to be - and the people that dwell there also ought to be sanctified and clean.

When we talk about clean here, we're speaking of a cleansing that starts way down within, down in the heart. God sanctifies a man - but remember, if you're going to be sanctified, there has to be a starting place.

And for God to sanctify you and set you apart - He has to start in the right spot -



DEEP DOWN IN YOUR HEART.

The Lord Jesus chided with the Scribes and Pharisees and hypocrites of that generation about washing the cup **inside** as well as outside:

Matthew 23:26

Thou blind Pharisee,
cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter,
that the outside of them may be clean also.

They washed the outside,
but neglected the inside - leaving it dirty.

Jesus was likening this to their lives - where they had cleaned up outwardly. - [see Matthew 23:25-28](#)

They kept themselves looking neat and clean - except on the days they fasted, when they disfigured their faces to look bad and get people to notice they were fasting. - [see Matthew 6:16-18](#)

When Jesus looked at them, though, He looked beyond their outward. He said they were like old stinking graves - beautiful on the outside, but rotten underneath. - [see Matthew 23:27](#)

He said their mouths were like an open sepulchre. He certainly didn't speak very highly of them.

They had missed the mark in trying to clean up their lives according to their own opinions.

Their way was a way of self-righteousness - doing things the way they thought things should be done, not the way the Lord had instructed them to do things.

When you want to get sanctified, it has to begin inside. When a man is born again of the Spirit of God, the work begins in the heart.

If it's not accomplished on the inside,
then it's not genuine.



II Corinthians 5:17

Therefore if any man be in Christ,
he is a new creature:
old things are passed away;
behold, all things are become new.

If you haven't changed on the inside, you need to be born again. You're not a new creature in Christ - oh, you may **look** like it, and you may try to **act** like it - **but your heart hasn't been changed.**

The change comes on the **inside** when one is born again of the Spirit of God, receiving a new changed heart and being sanctified from within.

Sanctification then begins to speak into all the areas of one's life - that which is without **and** that which is within.



But first it must come on the inside.

No amount of outward wrappings and trim will make anyone sanctified. If you put yourself in a box, and have someone gift wrap it with pretty paper and a bow, you won't be sanctified.

Yet many will try to put on a spiritual uniform that others may think they're sanctified and holy. They want to look the way they think a sanctified person should look - but inwardly they are not changed.

Their efforts are meaningless without that inward change.

* * * In Hezekiah's day, the Levites had to first get sanctified - and then proceed to sanctify the house of the Lord, carrying out all the filth.

I can't picture this in my mind:
filthiness in the holy place!

Something's wrong -
filthiness and holiness just don't go together!

A holy place is not the place to have all this filthiness. That only serves to defile the holy place - making it so it's not habitable for the Holy One.

II Chronicles 29:6

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.

The king is seeing what they had done. They had turned away, trespassed against God - just backslid to go the wrong way.

Now they're realizing, deep within, what all of this is going to mean.

This wasn't going to make them look good - forsaking the habitation of God, that holy place - leaving it desolate to become a filthy mess!

There was no blessing in the land. This was bringing wrath upon them.

Carrying filthiness out of the house of God was a big job. They had to get a big crew. The temple of God wasn't just a small building. It was a great place! including many buildings. Yes, it was a vast place.

That large place, that place that was set aside for the Lord as a holy place in which to worship, that place was corrupted.

It was polluted, filthy. And the people who were supposed to keep it clean were filthy too.

How were they going to have revival
with all of this filth?

I'm glad that God is able to raise up a leader in the time of trouble and crisis. He's able to raise up somebody who can take authority.

You have to have authority in order to get some things done. And God raised up Hezekiah to accomplish the job of cleansing the temple of God from all the filth that was in it.

An ordinary person would have had a hard time accomplishing all that Hezekiah accomplished.

He was the king, and as such, he had authority. Now, if the people would respect his authority, then the job would get done.

He got down to the business at hand, and ordered that the temple be purged of all the filth and corruption that was in it.

What a big order to accomplish!

Let's get this house cleaned out and ready for revival!

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I want you to go back to what I said previously: if there's going to be a revival, if there's going to be restoration - what are we going to do?

Are we going to get something new to replace what we now have? or is revival going to send us back to where the Church was before?

Back to the place of taking up the blessing that God has already given.

Here in the days of Hezekiah they were going to go back - back to the blessing, back to the ways of God and His commandments; back to God's ways of conducting worship; back to the old paths. . .

back to the place where they got off the track - and, there,
get on the right track once again with God.

God's not going to do a new thing. He's going to do an old thing! He's not going to do anything that He hasn't already done. **He's going to bring restoration revival!**

God wasn't going to give Israel anything they didn't already have. He was merely going to give them back what they had lost, what they had previously possessed.

This is what they could expect and seek after.

And when God revives us, He takes us back to give us those things we've lost -

bringing back -

the power that we lost

the blessings that we lost

the treasures that we lost

stirring up -

the gifts that we allowed to get dormant

the blessings that we cast aside

the callings that have been set on the shelf

Revival stirs up God's people to get back to the place where they once were with God -

**and then, once they get back there -
go on to some new things
that they never seemed to have before.**

**But first they have to get back
what they did have!**



When we see the buds appear, we know that spring is on the way. The blossoms start to come forth, and beautiful things begin to grow.

The apple blossoms are in bloom, and then the bees go to work - and before we realize it, we begin to see fruit.

Maybe this is what we need in our hearts - signs that spring is on the way, the time when we will begin to see fruit.

* * *

We have seen the first signs of restoration in this lesson - with Hezekiah taking steps to bring the nation back to God:

- he had a heart after God
- he saw the need in God's house -
finding the house idle and run down
- he opened the doors of the house of the Lord,
and repaired them
- in doing this,
he found the house filled with filth
- he had the priests and Levites carry out the filth
but, first, they had to sanctify themselves

Now they were ready to go **BACK**
in order to go forward in revival!

We will examine this further in the next lesson.



Take the Exam