

RESTORATION REVIVAL

lesson four

II CHRONICLES 29

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.





LESSON FOUR

Getting Ready

see II Chronicles 29:6-9

For, lo, our fathers have fallen by the sword,
and our sons and our daughters and our wives
are in captivity for this.

As we look at this account, we see that Hezekiah saw there was a reason for the problems in the land. He realized that **the curse in the land didn't come causeless**. All the things that were happening didn't **just** happen.

It's always easy to look at situations, and say it's just fate - it would have happened no matter what.

But Hezekiah saw the terrible conditions in the land, and recognized that there was a cause. He noted that the cause of the problems in the land was the lack of the blessing of God.

Proverbs 26:2

As the bird by wandering, as the swallow by flying,
so the curse causeless shall not come.

He brought the people to understand that the problem was with them - that the nation was in that awful place of astonishment **as the result of their neglect**:

they had -

trespassed

turned away from God

shut up the doors of the house of God

put out the lamps

that were to be burning perpetually

they hadn't burned incense unto the Lord

their prayers were not ascending

up to the throne of God

they hadn't offered burnt offerings and sacrifices

Yes, they had not done what the law of God had commanded them to do - and, **thus, the problem lay with them!**

They were seeing their sons fall by the edge of the sword - seeing all these terrible things taking place throughout the land; seeing their wives and children in captivity.

And it was all because
they had turned their backs on God.

Does that sound reasonable?

If you forsake the Lord:

you forsake your own mercy
you forsake your own protection
you won't have anybody to help you
in the time of trouble
you won't have any blessing on your life.

If we had been living under the law, we'd have been well taught that blessings come by obedience.

In **Deuteronomy 28** Moses went to great lengths to tell the children of Israel that if they were willing and obedient; if they would do and keep; if they would observe - then all these blessings would come upon them.

Deuteronomy 28:15

But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken
unto the voice of the Lord thy God,
to observe to do all His commandments
and His statutes which I command thee this day;
that all these curses shall come upon thee,
and overtake thee.

Moses named out all the blessings that would come if you followed the Lord. Then he named out all the cursings - and he said this is what would happen if you forsake the Lord.

We find in Hezekiah's day they were in the place of having forsaken the Lord - thus bringing upon themselves all these cursings. The wrath of God was abiding upon them. There just was no blessing.

We can derive a spiritual lesson from this.

There comes the time when -
somebody has to wake up!
somebody has to come to!
somebody has to take a look and evaluate
to see when things are in a bad state!

Many times people are in a bad state without seeming to know it. They're the last ones to be aware of it. They're so involved in the midst of troubles, they don't even realize how bad a state they're really in.

We see that the children of Israel were in a mess - and the king had been awakened. No doubt he had been prompted by the Spirit of God. He looked the situation over, and gathered the people together to tell them what the problem really was:

We're needing something! We need a revival! We need a restoration! We need to get back to God, and to the house of God. We need to get back to praying; back to worshipping; back to our sacrifices and offerings.

Yes, we need to get back and begin to do what God told us to do. We need to stop and go BACK!

Someone had to see it, and it was wonderful that the king, the leader of the people, could see it. It was wonderful that he was able to get his people to turn BACK to the Lord with all of their hearts.

The pictures we see in such accounts are always the same:

- seeing the need
- bringing attention to the cause
- taking steps to prepare for restoration
- going BACK

Hezekiah realized the need was there; he brought attention to the fact that the house of God had been forsaken.

Remember, he went to open up the door of the temple and found the door in need of repair.

So the first order of business was to repair the door.

If this doesn't get the people's attention that something needed to be done with the house of God, what will?

Hezekiah got the door repaired - and then called on the Levites and the priests to go in and clean out the filthiness in the house of God.

Well, if that wouldn't stir up some talk in town - what would?

So they got things stirred - and then comes the message:

We've forsaken the Lord.

We've gone the wrong way.

We've let up in our duty to serve God -
and we're in this awful mess because of it.

I can imagine the headlines if this was in the papers today!

The king says the house of God is filthy!! the nation is having troubles because we have forsaken God!!

But they didn't have any newspapers in that day. They didn't have any TV or radio to broadcast across the nation.

Today, if the President has something to say - the whole world is informed in just a few minutes. But back then, God had to raise up Hezekiah to take some action.

King Hezekiah spoke - and his words were very weighty. But he recognized that just talking about it wasn't enough, something had to be done.

You know how it goes: we have this little problem, and we don't know quite what to do - so we get a committee organized to have a meeting to discuss our little problem, and then we talk it to death.

That's how we feel we can solve the problem - simply by talking it to death! no action.

When we get all done, after two hours of talking about it we'll lay it aside until things cool down a bit, and then we can talk about it again! and talk it to death again!

That's man's way of doing things. But, I tell you, the good king here didn't have that thought in his mind. He didn't think they could just talk this thing to death, that it would disappear merely by discussing it.

He knew they had to put some action behind their words if anything was going to be accomplished.

II Chronicles 29:10

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.

This wasn't a matter of just talking it to death. It was a matter of taking the problem seriously and bringing it where it ought to be brought - to the Lord: bringing it to the throne of grace, and telling it just like it is.

Leave the sugar bowl at home. Don't justify yourself for your bad ways. Don't justify yourself, and try to make yourself look so special - when really you're as rotten as the day.

No, don't come with any of that.

Make a covenant, turning to God with your whole heart:

Lord, I'll serve You with all of my heart -
that You'll take this awful wrath off the land.

That sounds like bargaining with God - and it is! But, in this type of bargaining with God, it's more in the realm of intercession - taking time to pray and intercede for some way to get out of the awful mess.

II Chronicles 7:14

If My people, which are called by My name,
shall humble themselves, and pray,
and seek My face,
and turn from their wicked ways;
then will I hear from heaven,
and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

Hezekiah said it was in his heart to make a covenant with God, that he should pray and seek the Lord - and, no doubt, he had already been praying about these very matters.

There are a lot of people throughout the earth today that would like to see a great revival - but they don't want to see the inside of a prayer closet for any length of time.

They'd like to have a great outpouring of God - but they don't want to stop what they're doing long enough to pray and make intercession.

I don't think anybody has any right to expect a great outpouring of God, without having first set their hearts to seek God - and to seek Him with all of their hearts.

It's in seeking God that people get themselves into the place of receiving from Him.

II Chronicles 29:11

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.

The king realized that there was a need here **because of neglect**.

The sin of neglect will probably do more to jam the doors of hell in the day of judgment than any other sin.

NEGLECT:

give little attention to
disregard
ignore

It's not always some bad thing you do, not always some obvious awful sin.

Sometimes it's merely that little thing called neglect - something you'd look at and not consider as being anything that would prevent someone from entering the kingdom of God.

Hebrews 2:3

How shall we escape,
if we neglect so great salvation!

Neglecting salvation?

There's just so much in this realm of neglect. It's a real culprit in hindering the power and blessing of God - people neglecting to do what they **should** be doing.

Bear in mind, now, the king was telling the Levites that the problem was their neglect.

You've been neglectful!

You haven't been doing your duty!

You haven't done what God called you to do!

You haven't been standing in that holy place with God!

It's time for you to stop being so neglectful, and get down to business with God - that He may bring restoration.

Yes, it was time for Israel to break out of that rut of neglect.

Look at your own life and see if there aren't some areas you could put your finger right on wherein you've been negligent when it comes to spiritual things.

A mother has a great responsibility when her child is placed in her arms, knowing that that child is her own personal blessing to watch over and care for.



There's one thing about being a good mother - if she's negligent in caring for her baby, that child is going to really suffer for it.

If you want to see how negligent some mothers really are, offer to change the diaper - just once.

If she's been negligent it will show when you take off that diaper - his little hind end will be all blistered and sore.

Realize that any baby could have a diaper rash at one time or another - but too often, it's just because of neglect on the part of the mother.

The poor baby has been left with a wet diaper all day long, day in and day out.

Many times, such a mother is just plain negligent to get herself around in the morning to care for that little one. She's negligent to see that it's fed, bathed and changed.

Instead, she lies in her bed till one o'clock, with no thought about the needs of her baby - while the baby cries out to be cared for.



So many are negligent about so much. It's easy to be negligent.

I know I should, but I don't feel like it! I know I should cook, but I don't feel like it! I know I should read my Bible, but I don't really feel like it! . . .

That's plain negligence - always going by whether or not you feel like doing something. You're not going by what needs to be done, by what is your duty to do - but just by whether or not you feel like it.

Realize you have a soul! Do you understand that? You have a **living** soul! and you are responsible for that soul! And you can't afford to be negligent when it comes to your soul!

Yes, you've got a soul, and you've got to take up the responsibility for that soul. It's your duty to nourish up that soul - you're the one who'll have to give an account to God for that soul of yours.

Understand this: if that soul is not saved, it's going to be you who will wind up in hell - **with your soul!**

Look, you've got a body - don't you! If you don't take up the responsibility for caring for that body, what will happen?

Suppose you start tomorrow and decide not to take any more baths! decide not to wash your hair, not to brush your teeth! decide not to change your clothes!

There are those poor souls who are negligent when it comes to their body - but you don't have to be one of them! How far down that road could you go before you smelled so bad nobody would want to be near you!

Neglecting your body eventually destroys it. What if you decided not to eat any more? How far down that road can you go?

You'd be like the mule that the farmer finally trained not to eat - and then it died on him!

Your body needs attention. You need to keep it clean and nourished. But you need to nourish your soul, as well. And maintaining spiritual life consists of eating spiritual food.

You can't always neglect, without doing damage. Yet so many neglect their souls. It's up to you to care for your soul - if you don't, who will? Can you expect someone else to do it for you?

You know, it's easy to neglect your soul!

The soul doesn't need outward care like the body does. Yet you must realize that the soul is just as much in need of being nurtured and cared for as the body. You can't neglect your soul and expect to enter heaven.

Listen, can someone else eat your supper for you - and you gain the benefit of it? You want your soul to make eternal life, don't you?

And, while you're still in this world, you want your soul to be as nourished up and as blessed and as spiritual as it possibly can be.

What do you have to do to care for your soul?

Well, it needs to be fed and nourished up on the knowledge of God's Word.

Matthew 4:4

**It is written,
Man shall not live by bread alone,
but by every word
that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.**

You need to consider in your heart the fact that you can't afford to neglect your soul.

I don't think church is that important! Well, what are you going to do if you don't go to church? Stay home, and neglect your soul - while you entertain your flesh? Stay home from church to feed your body? Is that what's important?

It's easy for us to neglect our souls. It's easy to stay away from the house of God, feeling you don't **have** to go to church all the time - not realizing that the more you miss church, the easier it is to just give up going completely!

**You may feel it's not necessary to pray every day,
not necessary to read the Word.**

But the question is this:
what is important to you?

what do you feel is more important
than spending time
in prayer and in the Word?

what do you do in place of those things?

when you don't go to church
or to prayer meeting,
where do you go?
what do you do?

Do you crowd these necessary spiritual things out
with something you feel is more important?

Where are your priorities?

Do you sit in front of the tv
and entertain yourself,

instead of going to church
to be strengthened in your soul?

What do you do? when other things become more
important, you neglect your soul! that's what you do!

And, after a season of neglecting your soul - finding no
time for spiritual things, yet finding plenty of time for
everything else - you begin to realize you don't feel up
to par spiritually.

You begin to sense a lack of the peace and the joy you
ought to be feeling deep within.

Is it because you've been neglecting your soul?

Stop and realize the importance of this.

There are a lot of areas where we may be guilty of
neglecting - and thus missing out on the true
blessings of God in our lives.

The King's Admonishment

Now, we have seen that the king was talking to the
Levites and admonishing them not to neglect those
things which they were called of God to do, those
things it was their duty to do.

Remember - if you're lacking the blessing of God, you're the one who's being affected.

And if you don't have revival in your spirit, you're the one that's lacking it.

If you're as dry as a firecracker, and you don't seem to have that oil of joy and gladness, it's you that's dry - and it's you that will have to take steps to get out of that spiritual rut you allowed yourself to get into.

Yes, it's you who will have to get some of that revival burning in your own heart and soul.

We'd best bear this in mind:
neglect won't get us anywhere.

II Chronicles 29:15

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.

Look at that! they got the message! Do you get the message?

DON'T BE NEGLIGENT!

They took this message as the Word of the Lord, as the commandment of the king from God - and they sanctified themselves. They cleaned themselves up. They got ready for the task.

The king warned them not to neglect any more - and they didn't. They sanctified themselves. They took the matter seriously! and then got on to the business of cleaning up the house of God.

II Chronicles 29:16

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.

The priests, who had their duty and obligation to minister in the inner part of the temple, went in there to take a look.

My, what filth they found inside! in the very holy place!

What did they find in there? All the Bible indicates is that it was filled with uncleanness, with filthiness. That's the description in the Bible of what was found in the temple.

So they had to enter that holy place, and clean it out. The need was there. How could they have church in a place that was filthy?

In order to get down to the real blessing of restoration and revival the first order of the day was to cleanse the temple, so the priests went in there and began to drag the stuff out.

In our ministry, some of the places the Lord has given us to have church in were just like this: we opened the door and wondered what we would do with all the junk!

The first thing we had to do was to haul the trash out, throw things away, gather it all up to haul to the dump - till we finally got down to see there was a building there! all because someone let it get so filled with junk, someone had neglected it over the years.

Here in **II Chronicles** we find them cleaning up the temple of God - that magnificent place that had been neglected for so long.

They had to haul away all the filth that was in there - piling it up in the court for the others to remove completely.

What a shame! the neglect that must have taken place to allow God's house to get into such a state!

One thing is evident - they needed a revival. And here the steps are ordered that would bring that revival and restoration.

We have to note this pattern: they desperately needed revival, but they first had to get back on the job to do what they were called of God to do.

This is one of the things we have to say about this last day, and the need of the churches across the land and around the world.

There is the need for God's people to do what they are called to do:

get back down to basics

have a vision to pray

have a vision to intercede and seek God

Hezekiah realized there was a need for revival and restoration, and he ordered some priorities -

If we're going to have restoration, we're going to have to get down to business first of all. We have to get cleaned up and sanctified. We've got to get the house of God cleaned out and cleaned up, to get ready for God to move.

Yes. Hezekiah ordered some priorities -
and he got results!

One thing to notice is that the people responded to Hezekiah. They took it to heart, and got down to business. They first sanctified themselves, and then got the house of God sanctified.

II Chronicles 29:17

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.

Recognizing that the house of God was filthy, it took some time to get it cleaned up. All those men were busy working at it - yet there was so much filth that it took eight days to remove it all!

After spending eight days to get rid of all the trash, they still weren't finished!

They threw in all that junk into the brook to get rid of it - and then they had to spend **another eight days** to sanctify the place, washing it down - cleaning and polishing the vessels of the Lord, cleaning the furniture, washing the floors and the walls, cleaning the altar, and so on.

They were getting ready to use the house of God for what it was built for originally - serving the Lord.

It took dedication on their part to do all this. But how could they expect to have any sort of blessing, how could they expect to get the wrath off their back if they didn't stop and put this kind of effort forth to really serve God.

Thus far, there was no seeking God for revival.



They'd first had to spend all this time cleaning up, in order to get ready to seek out restoration.

II Chronicles 31:20-21

And thus did Hezekiah throughout all Judah,
and wrought that which was good and right
and truth
before the Lord his God.

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.

* * *

And, as you read the rest of this chapter - along with chapters 30 to 33 you will see further all that Hezekiah did in restoring the land.

Lesson Five -
PRAYING
WITH EXPECTANCY!

Take the Exam