

2 Chronicles 29:1 – 31:21

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III. God Preserves His Kingdom in Judah until the Return from Exile (2 Chronicles 10:1—36:23)

Last Week's Memory Verse: ^{NAS} **1 Peter 5:5** ...clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble.

Review: These are some highlights from last week:

- Amaziah, king of Judah, did what was right *but NOT with a whole heart*; in some ways he was blessed *but in many ways he suffered from various foolish decisions*. Let us be wholly devoted to the LORD!
- Uzziah, king of Judah, did what was right, but, after being richly blessed, “*he grew proud, to his destruction.*” (26:16) – *thus last week's memory verse!*
- Jotham, king of Judah, “*became mighty, because he ordered his ways before the LORD his God.*” (27:6)
- Ahaz, king of Judah, did NOT do what was right and turned to false gods which resulted in great trouble for the people of Judah.

JJ. **Hezekiah Reigns in Judah (29:1-2):** He reigned 29 years and did what was right in the eyes of the LORD.

KK. **Hezekiah Cleanses the Temple (29:3-19):** Since his father, Ahaz had turned to false gods, *Hezekiah brought immediate and positive changes:*

1. ³ In the first year of his reign, in the first month, he opened the doors of the house of the LORD and repaired them. ⁴ He brought in the priests and the Levites and assembled them... ⁵ and said to them, “Hear me, Levites! Now consecrate yourselves, and consecrate the house of the LORD, the God of your fathers, and carry out the filth from the Holy Place. ⁶ For our fathers have been unfaithful and have done what was evil in the sight of the LORD our God. They have forsaken him and have turned away their faces from the habitation of the LORD and turned their backs. ⁷ They also shut the doors of the vestibule [*the pillared entryway*] and put out the lamps and have not burned incense or offered burnt offerings in the Holy Place to the God of Israel. ⁸ Therefore the wrath of the LORD came on Judah and Jerusalem, and he has made them an object of horror, of astonishment, and of hissing, as you see with your own eyes. ⁹ For behold, our fathers have fallen by the sword, and our sons and our daughters and our wives are in captivity for this. ¹⁰ Now it is in my heart to make a covenant with the LORD, the God of Israel, in order that his fierce anger may turn away from us. ¹¹ My sons, do not now be negligent, for the LORD has chosen you to stand in his presence, to minister to him and to be his ministers and make offerings to him.”
2. ¹⁸ Then they [*the Levites*] went in to Hezekiah the king and said, “We have cleansed all the house of the LORD, the altar of burnt offering and all its utensils, and the table for the showbread and all its utensils.”

LL. **Hezekiah Restores Temple Worship (29:20-36):**

1. Bulls, rams, lambs, and goats were sacrificed for a sin offering; then ²⁹ ...the king and all who were present with him bowed themselves and worshiped. Finally, ³⁵ ...the service of the house of the LORD was restored.
2. Regarding the laws for sin offerings, see Leviticus chapter 4. Here are some quotes:
 - a. ¹ And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ² “Speak to the people of Israel, saying, If anyone sins unintentionally in any of the LORD’s commandments about things not to be done, and does any one of them, ³ if it is the anointed priest who sins, thus bringing guilt on the people, then he shall offer for the sin that he has committed a bull from the herd without blemish to the LORD for a sin offering.” Compare “unintentional” with deliberate:
 - i. ^{ESV} **Numbers 15:30** But the person who does anything with a high hand, whether he is native or a sojourner, reviles the LORD, and that person shall be cut off from among his people.
 - ii. **“15:30 with a high hand. The person who committed sins in defiance of God, and with intention and malice, removed himself from God’s covenant grace and forgiveness. Cf Mk 3:28–30; 1Jn 5:16–17.... Parallels the practice of excommunication today.”** (TLSB, 241)
 - b. ¹³ “If the whole congregation of Israel sins unintentionally...” ²² “When a leader sins, doing unintentionally any one of all the things that by the commandments of the LORD his God ought not to be done, and realizes his guilt...” ²⁷ “If anyone of the common people sins unintentionally in doing any one of the things that by the LORD’s commandments ought not to be done, and realizes his guilt...”
3. A summary of 29:20–36 **“Hezekiah fully restores the temple services according to God’s Word and the examples of David and Solomon. The bloody sacrifices cleanse God’s repentant people from their sins, anticipating Christ’s perfect sacrifice on the cross...”** (TLSB, 706)

MM. **Passover Celebrated (30:1-27):** The Passover was supposed to be celebrated each year – *looking back to God sparing the physical lives of the firstborn through lamb blood AND looking ahead to God sparing the spiritual lives of believers through Jesus’ blood* – but ⁵ “...they had not kept it as often as prescribed.”

1. A call to repent: ⁶ So couriers went throughout all Israel and Judah with letters from the king and his princes, as the king had commanded, saying, “O people of Israel, return to the LORD, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, that he may turn again to the remnant of you who have escaped from the hand of the kings of Assyria. ⁷ Do not be like your fathers and your brothers, who were faithless to the LORD God of their fathers, so that he made them a desolation, as you see. ⁸ Do not now be stiff-necked as your fathers were, but yield yourselves to the LORD and come to his sanctuary, which he has consecrated forever, and serve the LORD your God, that his fierce anger may turn away from you. ⁹ For if you return to the LORD, your brothers and your children will find compassion

with their captors and return to this land. For the LORD your God is gracious and merciful and will not turn away his face from you, if you return to him.”

2. How did the people react?
 - a. Some ¹⁰ ...laughed them to scorn and mocked them. 😞
 - b. Some ¹¹ ...humbled themselves. 😊
3. Regarding those who kept the Passover, ²⁶ ...there was great joy in Jerusalem, for since the time of Solomon the son of David king of Israel there had been nothing like this in Jerusalem.

NN. Hezekiah Organizes the Priests (31:1-21): True devotion to the LORD leads to actions which honor the LORD:

1. ¹ Now when all this was finished [*the great Passover celebration*], all Israel who were present went out to the cities of Judah and broke in pieces the pillars and cut down the Asherim and broke down the high places and the altars throughout all Judah and Benjamin, and in Ephraim and Manasseh, until they had destroyed them all.
2. The king himself gave generously; then he commanded the people to give the portion due to the priests and the Levites. ⁵ As soon as the command was spread abroad, the people of Israel gave in abundance the firstfruits of grain, wine, oil, honey, and of all the produce of the field. And they brought in abundantly the tithe of everything.
3. The LORD prospered Hezekiah: ²⁰ ...Hezekiah...did what was good and right and faithful before the LORD his God. ²¹ And every work that he undertook in the service of the house of God and in accordance with the law and the commandments, seeking his God, he did with all his heart, and prospered.

Next Week: We conclude 2 Chronicles, 32:1 – 36:23 – God willing! *Please join us!*

How to benefit the most? Read the section we will be studying in advance!