

**People of the Promise: Hezekiah
Repentance, Revival, and Rescue
2 Chronicles 29-32; 2 Kings 18-20
(Isaiah 36-39)**

Opening Song: Be Unto Your Name

Introduction

NJFK—budding hydrangea—after a long winter, spring comes; soon everything will come to life

2 Chronicles 29:2

And he did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, according to all that David his father had done.

Hezekiah was 25 when he came to the throne. His father was the wicked and unbelieving king Ahaz, who had ruled 16 years, ever since Hezekiah was 9 years old. But he was more like David than Ahaz.

1. Repentance (2 Chronicles 29)

Hezekiah understood that the nation's military and economic troubles were rooted in unfaithfulness to Yahweh.

Cleansing of the Temple (1-19)

⁴ He brought in the priests and the Levites and assembled them in the square on the east 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 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.”

¹⁶ The priests went into the inner part of the house of the LORD to cleanse it, and they 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 and carried it out to the brook Kidron.

18 Then they 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. **19** All the utensils that King Ahaz discarded in his reign when he was faithless, we have made ready and consecrated, and behold, they are before the altar of the LORD."

Restoration of Worship (20-36)

28 The whole assembly worshiped, and the singers sang, and the trumpeters sounded. All this continued until the burnt offering was finished. **29** When the offering was finished, the king and all who were present with him bowed themselves and worshiped. **30** And Hezekiah the king and the officials commanded the Levites to sing praises to the LORD with the words of David and of Asaph the seer. And they sang praises with gladness, and they bowed down and worshiped.

35 Besides the great number of burnt offerings, there was the fat of the peace offerings, and there were the drink offerings for the burnt offerings. Thus the service of the house of the LORD was restored. **36** And Hezekiah and all the people rejoiced because God had provided for the people, for the thing came about suddenly.

God was at work to produce this kind of repentance and the revival that came from it.

2. Revival (2 Chronicles 30-31)

National Celebration of Passover (30)

⁵ So they decreed to make a proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beersheba to Dan, that the people should come and keep the Passover to the LORD, the God of Israel, at Jerusalem, for they had not kept it as often as prescribed. 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."

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."

²⁵ The whole assembly of Judah, and the priests and the Levites, and the whole assembly that came out of Israel, and the sojourners who came out of the land of Israel, and the sojourners who lived in Judah, rejoiced. ²⁶ So 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. ²⁷ Then the priests and the Levites arose and blessed the people, and their voice was heard, and their prayer came to his holy habitation in heaven.

Perpetuating Right Worship (31)

Destruction of false worship centers

¹ Now when all this was finished, 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. Then all the people of Israel returned to their cities, every man to his possession.

Appointment of worship leaders (Levites)

² And Hezekiah appointed the divisions of the priests and of the Levites, division by division, each according to his service, the priests and the Levites, for burnt offerings and peace offerings, to minister in the gates of the camp of the LORD and to give thanks and praise.

Establishment of faithful tithes

⁴ And he commanded the people who lived in Jerusalem to give the portion due to the

priests and the Levites, that they might give themselves to the Law of the LORD.

⁶ And the people of Israel and Judah who lived in the cities of Judah also brought in the tithe of cattle and sheep, and the tithe of the dedicated things that had been dedicated to the LORD their God, and laid them in heaps.

¹¹ Then Hezekiah commanded them to prepare chambers in the house of the LORD, and they prepared them. ¹² And they faithfully brought in the contributions, the tithes, and the dedicated things. The chief officer in charge of them was Conaniah the Levite, with Shimei his brother as second,

Heart devotion to God's law

²⁰ Thus Hezekiah did throughout all Judah, and he 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.

3. Rescue (2 Chronicles 32)

Importance of prayer

From Foreign Invasion (1-23)

⁷ "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or dismayed before the king of Assyria and all the horde that is with him, for there are 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 took confidence from the words of Hezekiah king of Judah.

10 "Thus says Sennacherib king of Assyria, 'On what are you trusting, that you endure the siege in Jerusalem? **11** Is not Hezekiah misleading you, that he may give you over to die by famine and by thirst, when he tells you, "The LORD our God will deliver us from the hand of the king of Assyria"?'"

15 Now, therefore, do not let Hezekiah deceive you or mislead you in this fashion, and do not believe him, for no god of any nation or kingdom has been able to deliver his people from my hand or from the hand of my fathers. How much less will your God deliver you out of my hand!"

20 Then Hezekiah the king and Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, prayed because of this and cried to heaven. **21** And the LORD sent an angel, who cut off all the mighty warriors and commanders and officers in the camp of the king of Assyria. So he returned with shame of face to his own land. And when he came into the house of his god, some of his own sons struck him down there with the sword.

From Terminal Illness (24-31)

24 In those days Hezekiah became sick and was at the point of death, and he prayed to the LORD, and he answered him and gave him a sign.

2 Kings 20:1-6

1 In those days Hezekiah became sick and was at the point of death. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came to him and said to him, "Thus says the LORD, 'Set your house in order, for you shall die; you shall not recover.'" **2** Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the LORD, saying, **3** "Now, O LORD, please remember how I have walked before you in faithfulness and with a whole heart, and have done what is good in your sight." And Hezekiah wept bitterly. **4** And before Isaiah had gone out of the middle court, the word of the LORD came to him: "Turn back, and say to Hezekiah the leader of my people, Thus says the LORD, the God of David your father: I have heard your prayer; I have seen your tears. Behold, I will heal you. On the third day you shall go up to the house of the LORD, **6** and I will add fifteen years to your life. I will deliver you and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria, and I will defend this city for my own sake and for my servant David's sake." (This illness likely occurred before Sennacherib's retreat.)

12 At that time Merodach-baladan the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent envoys with letters and a present to Hezekiah, for he heard that Hezekiah had been sick. **13** And Hezekiah welcomed them, and he showed them all his treasure house, the silver, the gold, the spices, the precious oil, his armory, all that was found in his storehouses. There was nothing in his house or in all his realm that Hezekiah did not show them.

16 Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Hear the word of the LORD: **17** Behold, the days are coming, when all that is in your house, and that which your fathers have stored up till this day, shall be carried to Babylon. Nothing shall be left, says the LORD. **18** And some of your own sons, who will come from you, whom you will father, shall be taken away, and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon." **19** Then Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "The word of the LORD that you have spoken is good." For he thought, "Why not, if there will be peace and security in my days?"

2 Chronicles 32:25-26

25 But Hezekiah did not make return according to the benefit done to him, for his heart was proud. Therefore wrath came upon him and Judah and Jerusalem. **26** But Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of

Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the LORD did not come upon them in the days of Hezekiah.

31 And so in the matter of the envoys of the princes of Babylon, who had been sent to him to inquire about the sign that had been done in the land, God left him to himself, in order to test him and to know all that was in his heart.

Conclusion

Hezekiah's legacy is that of a righteous king, but that does not mean he did not face troubles, nor that he did not evidence personal weaknesses. His God Yahweh nonetheless gave repentance, revival, and rescue in Hezekiah's days. They would be followed by some of the darkest days Judah has ever known (Manasseh).