

# An Old Testament Revival - Part 1

by David Ravenhill

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*The sermon emphasizes the need for revival and the importance of being God-conscious and doing what is right in the sight of the Lord.*

**Duration:** 56:38

**Scripture:** 2 Chronicles 29:10

**Topics:** "Revival", "Repentance"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of revival in returning to God, highlighting the need for transparency, honesty, and a right relationship with God. It showcases the story of Hezekiah, a young king who led a great revival by cleansing the house of God, celebrating, evangelizing, and giving generously. The sermon calls for personal introspection, repentance, and a return to God's standards to experience true joy, intercession, and transformation.

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## Transcript

Well, what a great turn. I know many of you have driven many miles to be here, and I appreciate it. I know one thing, God will not fail us.

If you have your Bible tonight, turn with me to the Old Testament, to the Book of Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, chapter 29. I want us to explore this chapter together. It is one of the great revivals of the Old Testament.

How many of you know we need revival? Unless we have revival in this nation, we won't have a nation. My father said way back in the 80s, that if America doesn't concentrate in prayer, they will pray in concentration camps. I used to laugh, not outwardly, because I respected my father, but inwardly I thought, Dad, this is America.

The land of the free, the home of the brave, we have a Constitution, we have a Bill of Rights, and so on and so forth. But I've learned that those things are fastly disappearing. The church is being turned against, and we are the ones now that are the problem, if you like.

We are the ones that speak out against homosexuality and all the other things that we know are wrong morally, and yet we are the ones that are mocked and laughed and so on, and will be, I believe, within a number of years, driven underground. It would surprise me that in my lifetime there will be an underground church in America because of the persecution. And the only answer is revival.

The Spirit of God coming and sweeping through this land. And we're going to look at a young man that almost sickle-handedly brought about one of the great revivals of the Old Testament. We're introduced to him there in chapter 1, oh sorry, in verse 1 of chapter 29.

His name is Hezekiah. Hezekiah grew up in a home with a father who was the king, Ahaz. Ahaz was one of the most wicked kings in all of Israel.

He did more evil than all the previous kings combined. He erected high places to various gods. He tore down the, well, closed up the house of God, basically turned the entire nation of Israel away from God into idolatry and apostasy and so on.

You can read, in fact, if you get time, chapter 28 will give you a good background. One of those lesser subtractions, he dies, and his son becomes king. And you would think that because of his father that here you would have another generation of evil, a man that would practice evil because he saw his father doing it, yet you have the very opposite.

And so let's pick it up there in verse 1. Hezekiah became king when he was 25 years of age. Just a young man. Verse 2, he did what was right in the sight of the Lord.

Revival begins when we do that which is right in the sight of the Lord. Not in the sight of your leadership, they may be good or bad, not in the sight of your denomination, not in the sight of your parents, but in the sight of the Lord. In other words, you become God-conscious.

And Hezekiah was God-conscious. He was aware that God was no doubt looking at his life somewhat like Joseph in the Old Testament when he, a friend, you know, when eventually his brother stole him and he was sold into slavery. And there he is, of course, in the house of Bartholomew.

And, you know, Bartholomew's wife takes a liking to him and wants him to sleep with her. And the Bible says he fled and he said, how can I do this sin, or how can I sin against God and do this sin? In other words, he was God-conscious even though he was away from home, away from his elders, away from his friends, relatives, and so on. There was still a God-consciousness about the way in which he conducted his life.

And Hezekiah is that sort of an individual. He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father David had done. It seems to me that because he couldn't look to his actual father, he chose a spiritual example.

In this case, he looked back to the life of David and said, listen, I want to be like David. I would suggest to you, if you don't have an earthly father that is a man of God or a mother that is a woman of God, find somebody, somebody that can mentor you, somebody you can look to, read the books that they've written and so on, and say, listen, I want to be like that individual. And so here is a young man that said, I want to be like David.

Something about David's life, he was a man of God, a man of passion for God, and Hezekiah, again, develops that same love for God. Verse 3, in the first year of his reign, in the first month, he opened the doors of the house of God and he repaired them. Let me take you back to the previous chapter.

Verse 24, moreover, when Hezekiah gathered together the utensils of the house of God, he cut the utensils of the house of God in pieces and he closed the doors of the house of God. In other words, the

house of God was off limits. The house of God was all boarded up.

The doors were closed. And the very first thing that this young man does, the very first year of his reign, in the first month of his reign, he opens the doors of the house of God and he repaired them. Let me take you now to verse 17, because I want to combine these two verses.

Now, they began the consecration on the first day of the first month. They began the consecration on the first day of the first month. If you combine that with verse 3, it would read this way.

In the first year of his reign, in the first month of his reign, on the first day of his reign, he opened the doors of the house of God and he repaired them. That's what I call priority. In other words, he doesn't sort of settle into office.

He doesn't pass a bunch of legislation. The very first thing he does is a spiritual act. He goes to the house of God.

He recognizes the house of God is not in the condition that God intended the house of God to be in. And he sets in motion a series of things to restore the house of God back to its rightful place in the lives of God's people. And so the very first day, the very first month, the very first year of his reign, he opens the doors of the house of God and he repaired them.

Now, the Bible speaks a lot about doors. And the doors were not only opened, but the doors were repaired. Doors serve a two-fold function.

They permit access and they prevent access. No doubt if you have left your home or your condo or whatever you live in, you close the doors when you left. Possibly lock the doors.

Why? Because you don't want some intruder getting in. When you go home, you will unlock the door to permit access. And so a door permits access, but it also prevents access. And he is not only opening the doors, but he is repairing the doors.

In other words, the doors are going to open and they are going to close. Now, as we look at this particular chapter, obviously, we don't want to get too fixated on the fact that this is an Old Testament setting because the Bible says all these things were written aforetime, were written for our instruction. And when we go to the New Testament, of course, the Bible tells us God no longer dwells in temples made with names.

This is not technically the house of God. I always get a little perturbed when the psalm leader stands up and says, Isn't it good to be in the house of the Lord this morning? And I feel like screaming out, No, it's even better to be the house of the Lord this morning. So if you are the house of God, this is just the garage in which you will be.

Isn't that right? And so when we look at this setting in the Old Testament, we need to look at the counterpart, if you like, in the New Testament. That counterpart is your life and my life. The Bible says whose house we are.

We are the house of God. We are the temple of the Holy Spirit. And just as a natural temple has got doors, we have doors.

The eye is a door. David said, I will set no worthless thing before my eyes. In other words, I will not allow certain things to get into my mind through the eye gate.

We have ears that allow things in or we can close our ears. We can have a deaf ear, if you like, to certain things. And so the doors have to be opened.

The doors have to be closed. And the Bible, again, speaks a lot about doors. Revelation says, Behold, I stand at the door and knock.

If any man open the door, we can close the door or we can open the door. And so we need to be responsive, again, to open the doors at certain times and close the doors at certain times. But the reason the doors have to be opened initially is because the house of God was full of uncleanness.

Notice it says there, he brought in the priest and the Levites in verse 4. In verse 5, he said to them, Listen, ye old Levites, consecrate yourselves now. Consecrate the house of the Lord, the God of your fathers, and carry the uncleanness out from the holy place. In other words, the house of God that was designed by God and built for God, if you like, was polluted.

Instead of God reigning supreme, sin reigned, if you like. It was full of uncleanness. I think many people, again, today will go to what we call the house of God, and yet internally, there's all sorts of uncleanness in the house of God.

And if revival is going to take place, that uncleanness has to be dealt with. And the only way we can deal with it is to open the doors. And one of the things that the enemy hates are people that will open the door.

In other words, we live, many of us, behind closed doors. We don't want people to really know what is going on, what we're struggling with, the battles that we're facing and so on and so forth. And so we fool people.

We have all the religious jargon, if you like. We know how to greet one another, sing the songs, and even raise our hands, and so on and so forth. But internally, the house of God is not in the condition that God wants it to be in.

And it's only when we become transparent and honest, and we open the door, that the uncleanness can come out. When we talk about opening the door in the New Testament, we would refer to that as repentance. That I am prepared to open the door.

And yet, the one thing that the enemy loves to do, he loves to keep us locked up, if you like, within ourselves. Isn't that right? And men, I think, are worse than women at that, that we don't like to be too transparent. We close down, we don't tell people, we don't share our feelings and what is going on inside us and so on.

But when it comes to God, he knows already what's going on. And he's looking for that honesty, he's looking for that transparency. In the parable of the sower, the seed that brought forth thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold fell into, the Bible says, not a pure heart, nothing wrong with that, not a righteous heart, nothing wrong with that either, but it fell into another cell.

It's when we become honest that the word of God then can take root and change us and transform us. But the enemy hates, again, that sort of honesty. He wants to keep us in bondage, he wants to keep us in a

place where, again, we are fooling everybody else, but we're not fooling God.

I think of a gentleman that was in my church, the last church I passed, it was up in Washington State. And this family would come on a regular basis. In fact, they were at every single meeting we had.

They would be there at the midweek meeting, they'd be there at the prayer meeting. The gentlemen sometimes would come up and help counsel the front and so on and so forth. And two or three years went by as I was pastoring there.

One day I got a call from this gentleman wanting to come and see me. And he sat down in my office and all of a sudden he opened the doors. And I could not believe what was going on behind closed doors.

That man had me fooled, he had his wife fooled, as far as I know. He certainly had the church fooled, but he was involved in an incestuous relationship with his daughter. He'd been going on for years and years and years, and yet here he was counseling other people, testifying, and so on.

That's what I mean by closed doors. Things can be going on internally that we don't share with anybody else. We may be addicted to pornography, we may be battling with anger or lust or some other thing, and we like to live behind those closed doors.

And those doors have to be opened in order for what is inside to be brought out. Again, what we call, as I said a moment ago, repentance. And so here is a young man, the first thing he does then is consecrate the priesthood.

And he sends it into the house of God, declaring the uncleanness out from the holy place. Verse 6 he says, For our fathers have been unfaithful. They have done evil in the sight of the Lord our God, they have forsaken Him, turned their faces away from the dwelling place of the Lord, and they have turned their backs.

They have also shut the doors of the porch, they have put out the lamps, they have not burned the incense or offered burnt offering in the holy place to the God of Israel. Let me break that down for you a little bit because here we have, if you like, this downward spiral on how it began. How does this nation end in apostasy? How does this nation end with such unbelievable things that are going on? Let me just read you a little bit of the background here.

It says, They sacrificed the gods of Damascus, which had defeated them. It goes on to say about his father, the Lord humbled Judah before Ahaz, king of Israel, for he brought about a lack of restraint in Judah and was unfaithful to the Lord. Prior to that it says he caused his sons to pass through the fire and so on.

I mean it's hard to believe that these were the people of God and yet they have abandoned God, abandoned the house of God, they're involved in all sorts of idolatry, he's making his sons pass through the fire, he brought about a lack of restraint. In other words, every man is doing that which is right in his own eyes. But now we have, how did that take place? What led to that downward, what brought about that downward spiral? And we find here in verse 6, the first thing, our fathers are being unfaithful.

Our fathers are being unfaithful. As you know, throughout the Old Testament as well as the New Testament, our relationship with God is likened to that of a marriage. After all, one day, and I know it's hard for us guys to get our heads around it, but one day we're going to be the bride of Christ.

Isn't that right? It's going to be the great marriage supper of the Lamb. And I don't have all the, you know, the revelation on there, other than I know that this is what the Word of God declares. But even in the Old Testament, God married Israel.

That was His, you know, He made a covenant with her. And yet it says here, our fathers are being unfaithful. There is nothing more devastating to a marriage and a relationship than unfaithfulness.

My wife and I happened to be part of the revival down there in Pensacola. We lived there for 18 months, and I did a little bit of teaching in the school there. And we became friends, or my wife became friends with a lady.

And one day I got a call from her husband, and he said, listen, my wife is getting to know your wife, and they seem to be hanging out and establishing a friendship. He said, would you be open to having a cup of coffee sometime? And so on. So long story short, we met, and one of the first things out of his mouth, he said, has your wife told you anything about my wife and I's relationship? And I said, well, not very much.

And he began to open up, and he said, several years ago, he said my wife got involved sexually with another man. They were actually in the ministry and so on and so forth. I won't go into all the details, but even as he told me, and this was years after he was down at the Bible school, training again for the ministry, but even as he told me about that unfaithfulness, the tears were just ringing in his eyes.

You know, the pain, the hurt of that situation. And God says that in the book of Ezekiel. He says, I've been hurt by your adulterous ways.

We don't realize that God can be hurt. He can be wounded, just the same way we get hurt, we get wounded. On a different level, obviously, but here it says, it all began with unfaithfulness.

What is unfaithfulness? Unfaithfulness is when you have a lover on the side, if you like, that gives you more pleasure and more delight than your spouse. James says, love not the world, neither the things that are in the world, if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. In other words, our love for the world, we may not be involved in, you know, some, what we would consider some gross sin, but we can have a greater love affair with the world, with the NFL.

No, be careful. That was too predictive. Sorry.

But we can have a love affair with other things and spend hours with that mistress, that mistress, if you like, and yet when it comes to church, it's like, man, how long is he going to keep going? Isn't that right? In other words, there is an unfaithfulness. We derive greater pleasure from the things of the world, and yet the Bible says we're in the world, we're not supposed to be out in the world. Come out from among them and be separate, and yet somehow there's an attraction that satisfies and gratifies us more than the things of God.

And we will spend hours, if you like, with that mistress, and yet when it comes to reading the Word of God or prayer or relating to God himself, we have very little interest. That's where it eventually leads to. That was the first thing that Hesyariah mentions, you've been unfaithful to the Lord.

And then it says that you've forsaken Him. So again, that relationship of unfaithfulness led to a departure from that relationship altogether. And obviously the inference is there that there was a divorce, if you like, a spiritual divorce that took place in their relationship.

It says not only that, but it says they turned their faces away from the dwelling place of the Lord. You know, when you no longer have an interest in something, you no longer visit that place. Let's say that you're a fanatic about bowling, and I've never been a bowler, but let's say you're a fanatic about bowling, you're going to be constantly at the bowling alley.

Isn't that right? That's your love affair. But when you lose interest in bowling and take up some other sport or some other interest, then you no longer visit the bowling alley. And so it says here that, first of all, there was an unfaithfulness to God, and then second, they turned their faces away from His dwelling place.

In other words, they were no longer in the house of God. Why? Because they were no longer interested in the God of the house. And you can tell a person's spiritual interest level, if you like, spiritually by, you know, whether you see them on Sunday morning only or whether you see them Wednesday night or Friday evening and so on.

And so they turned their faces away from the dwelling place. Not only that, it says they shut the doors of the porch and they put out the lamps. In other words, there was no longer the burning of the lampstand.

If you studied the lampstand in the Old Testament, you recall that the lampstand was placed strategically where it would give light to what was directly in front of it. And the Bible says that the thing that was directly in front of the lampstand was the table of children. And so it was the illumination, if you like, of the Spirit of God upon the Word of God that brought it to life.

But when the lamp goes out in our own life, there's no longer any sort of revelation, any interest in the Word of God. In other words, this just becomes a dry, old, musty book about a bunch of Jews wandering around in the wilderness type of thing. And we think, you know, how does that relate to me? Why? Because it's not revelation.

The light has gone out. The revelation is no longer there. The interest is no longer there.

And we need to get back to allowing the Spirit of God to bring the Word of God to life. You know, the letter kills. That's what the Bible says about itself.

The letter kills. The Spirit gives life. And when the light goes out, again, you just end up with the letter of the Lord.

And so we need, again, to turn on the lamp, if you like, allow the Spirit of God to work in us and through us. And so it's not only that they allowed the lamps to go out, they'd not burn incense. Incense, of course, was the place of prayer and worship.

Many times we talk about it more as worship. Technically, it was more prayer. The Bible says in the New Testament it was the hour of incense burning, which was the hour of prayer.

Now, again, when you lose interest in somebody, you no longer communicate with them. Isn't that right? You know, let's suppose, for instance, that there's a young man and a young woman. They're in high school and they fall in love with each other.

And he's the track star or something, and she's a cheerleader. And, you know, after every track meet, Tom's around at Mary's house. And Mary's parents get used to the fact that Tom's around.

They know why Tom's around, because he's in love with their daughter, Mary. And, you know, it just becomes a routine thing. Then one day, Tom doesn't show up.

And they think, well, you know, he's been here just about every night this week, giving them a break. And, you know, he's got other things to do. And two nights go by and Tom doesn't show up.

And finally, Mary's dad says to Mary, hey, haven't seen Tom for a couple of nights. What's going on? And she sort of drops her head a little bit. She's embarrassed and said, oh, we broke up.

The reason that Tom isn't at Mary's house is he no longer loves Mary. And when we no longer love the Lord Jesus Christ, we're no longer in the house of God. Isn't that right? No longer have an interest in the things of God.

Again, the light has gone out. And then it says they're not burning incense. In other words, there's no longer any communication.

Prior to that, they're texting each other or tweeting each other or whatever it is these days. It's way beyond me. But anyway, I'm still at the email stage.

But anyway, you know, Mary and Tom are constantly in a communication, even though they may not be able to visibly see each other. They're always communicating. But now there's no longer the communication.

And spiritually, the same thing was taking place. They were no longer burning incense. They no longer had an interest in God.

They were no longer praying to God, no longer dependent upon God. And then the last thing it says, nor are they after the burnt offering in the holy place. The burnt offering was a free will offering.

It's the offering that most people say Paul was referring to in Romans 12. I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, you present your body a living sacrifice, a burnt offering. It was wholly consumed.

But you'll notice that no longer are they offering the burnt offering. The Bible says that in the day of thy power, thy people will volunteer freely. In other words, when God is moving, people will volunteer freely.

They want to get on board. They want to get with the action, so to speak. But the fact that they are not communicating, they're not volunteering, not offering the burnt offering means, again, they have no desire to be involved in the things of God.

You know, I passed along enough to know that when you need a replacement for the Sunday school, you know, the five-year-old boys or something, you know, say, listen, you know, Matilda, who's been doing this since she was 12 and she's now 99, and, you know, we need somebody else to look after the five-year-olds. And all of a sudden, everybody starts praying. You know, because they know if they make contact with the pastor, it's a sign of, I'm volunteering.

You know, so all of a sudden we, you know, bow in prayer, so to speak. But you know, when God is moving, people want to get on board. Is that right? When there's a revival atmosphere, listen, I'll go on that mission trip, I'll go out on the streets, I'll pass out tracts, I'll do whatever it takes.

You know, I want to be involved. And so here is a little bit of a background as to how the nation ended up being in the condition it was. It began with a love relationship being broken, another love relationship taking it, no longer an interest in the house of God, again, and all the other things that we just talked about.

Verse 8, therefore, that's the result of that. Therefore the wrath of the Lord was against Judah. We don't hear too much about the wrath of God anymore.

We've repackaged God in recent years and we've made him just a, you know, big sort of Valentine's Teddy bear type individual that has a constant smile of approval on his face no matter what we do. But my Bible tells me differently than that, and I have to stick to what I read in the Word of God. You know, if you love something, then you have to hate the opposite.

Is that right? If you love health, you hate sickness. If you love justice, you hate injustice. And there's always a counterpart.

And God is both just and a justifier. And there's certain things that God hates. Because you've hated lawlessness and love righteousness, the Bible says, therefore, I will put mine anointing upon you.

You've got to love one thing and hate the other. I think it was A.W. Tolzer that said that the Christian life can be reduced down to one simple little formula. Learn to love what God loves and hate what God hates.

You can't put it any simpler than that. And as believers, we have to love what God loves. But we've also got to hate what God hates.

And you can't love something without hating the opposite. And God here is, if you like angry, the wrath of God was against Judah. Why? Because to whom much is given, much is required.

I believe that we are heading into a time of judgment in America. And our judgment will be far greater than just that of any other nation. Because we've had far more life than any other nation.

There's a church on every single corner. There's TV stations and radio stations that you can tune into and so on and so forth. I mean, we are being saturated with life, so to speak.

And yet we've rejected it. And therefore, the penalty is going to be greater than those who never heard it. So God is angry with his people.

And it says, In other words, the end result of this downward spiral was that God's people were in bondage. Many of them had died by the sword. In other words, God said to them, Listen, if you walk in obedience, I'll defend you.

If you walk in disobedience, basically you're on your own. And so here we have a nation that has turned their back on God. And as a result, they fall by the sword.

Not only did they fall by the sword, but their sons and their daughters and wives are in captivity. Bondage has come in. And that's the end result in our own life when we choose to walk in disobedience to the Word of God.

We end up in bondage. We end up in captivity. Thank God that one of the things Jesus came to do was set captives free.

You know, not just prisoners in the sense of being literally in prison, but also prisoners to whatever sin or lust or pride or anger it may be that Jesus Christ can set you free. But here, this is the end result, again, of this downward spiral. Rather sad situation.

Verse 10. Now it is in my heart. This is the king speaking Hezekiah again to this young man, 25 years of age.

It's in my heart to make a covenant with the Lord, the God of Israel, that his burning anger may turn away from us. You can see the sincerity and the determination of this young man. Again, he makes a covenant.

That's pretty strong language. We don't use that language very much these days. But a contract, if you like.

And he makes a contract with God, a covenant with God, to turn away his burning anger. We need to do the same thing. In other words, he's serious.

He's not just sort of nonchalant. It's like, well, you know, it would be nice to have the old days back again, and so on and so forth. No, this man is determined.

So determined, again, that he no doubt gets on his face before God, and he makes this agreement with God. Verse 11. My sons, do not be negligent men.

In other words, don't be apathetic, lethargic, indifferent. For the Lord has chosen you to stand before Him, to minister to Him, and to be His ministers in a burning sense. Now, he's gathered together the priesthood.

They've gone through a time of consecration. Obviously, prior to this, they were doing what everybody else was doing. They'd forsaken their posts.

They were involved in all sorts of carnality and sin and so on. But now he presents them what they themselves have fallen from. This is the ideal that God has for you.

And the first thing he says, the Lord has chosen you to stand before Him. And keep in mind that when we come to the New Testament, we are all priests, isn't that right? We are a royal priesthood. And you and I have the privilege, and it is a privilege, it is an honor, of standing before Him.

There's no greater privilege than that. And yet, how often do we avail ourselves of that privilege? Of coming into the presence of the one who is the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. If you had a personal letter from the White House saying that you are invited, just a small company of people, five or six chosen from around the nation, to spend the day at the White House to meet the President and so on, you would be thrilled.

The fact that, listen, I'm going to Washington, D.C., I'm going to be in the White House, I'm actually going to meet the President and so on. Here I've got this little invitation. There's only five people in the entire United States that are going to be there.

This is not some big conference where we have to look through binoculars to see the President. I'll actually be able to talk to him, I think. It may not be a great thrill these days, but, you know, that's what we get.

But you know what I'm saying. But here we have the privilege of coming into the one that rules the universe. The one that is the creator of the heavens and the earth.

The one that never slumbers or sleeps. The one that created the stars, calls them all by name. I mean, what an incredible privilege you and I have to be able to stand before him.

That's what we have as a priesthood. Not only that, he says, but we can stand before him and minister to him. Minister to him.

Now that sounds a little strange, I'm sure. How do we minister to a God that is absolutely, totally complete within itself? He doesn't have to have any addition. He doesn't need anybody supporting him.

And the closest I can come, of course, to that is those of you who are parents and you know what it's like when your little two or three or four year old son or daughter or granddaughter or grandson jumps up on your lap spontaneously and wraps their arms around you and gives you a peck on the cheek and says, Papa, I love you, or whatever. I mean, that is the privilege you and I have. Coming into the father of the universe, God himself, and saying, Papa, I love you.

I love you because you first loved me. You lifted me out of that horrible pit and out of the mime-y place, set my feet on a solid rock and I'm here to say thank you. Thank you, Lord, for saving my soul.

Thank you, Lord, for making me. And we can minister to him. And then, it says not only there, we can be his ministers.

We can be his ministers. And that is, of course, what we are called to do. We are ambassadors of Christ among ourselves.

If you look up the word ambassador in the dictionary, it is the highest ranking office that you can have outside of the kingdom. In other words, if you are the ambassador of the United States to Japan or to Germany or Italy or wherever it is, you have the full force of the United States government behind you, supporting you. You represent that government in a foreign land.

And we are ambassadors of the kingdom of God. Here we are in this world where we have the authority and the power of God behind us. That is the place that God wants to bring us to.

We need somehow to get a revelation of this because the world, again, has such a magnetism many times. It draws us and we get sidetracked and we get off on this thing and that thing and so on. And we forget our true calling.

We forget the privilege of being a priest to God, coming into his presence, listening for his voice, going out, again, with a mandate from God, whatever it is that he calls us to do. And so he challenges the priesthood here. My sons, do not be negligent now.

In other words, don't just treat this apathetically. Do something about it. Verse 15, it says, They assembled their brothers, they consecrated themselves, they went in to cleanse the house of the Lord according to the commandment of the king by the word of God.

Notice the cleansing took place, it says here, and they cleansed the house according to the word of God. Not according to Hezekiah's standard, not according to the standard of society at the time, but according to the word of God. There is only one type of cleansing, that is cleansing according to the word of God.

We have entire denominations now buying into the fact that homosexuality is a natural sort of practice and so on and so forth. It's not what my Bible says. God is the same yesterday, today, and forever, and I am the Lord and I change not, he says, God doesn't have to be updated, he doesn't have to put out new orders every once in a while, oops, I missed it, you know, I forgot.

We have to do the cleansing according to the word of God, not according to what is politically correct, not according to what somebody else says, but listen, he sent them into the house of God and you bring this thing back to God's standard. To God's standard. So the priests went in, verse 16, to the inner part of the house of the Lord to cleanse it.

And every unclean thing which they found in the temple of the Lord, they brought out to the courts of the house of the Lord, and the Levites carried it to the Kidron Valley, that was the garbage stuff basically where the fires burned. But let me take you back again, verse 16, they went into the inner part of the house of the Lord. In other words, that area that was off limits, that area that other people didn't have access to.

When the psalmist repented, remember, because of his sin with Bathsheba, he says that thou desirest truth in the inward parts. In other words, God knows what goes on in the deep recesses of your heart. Your spouse may not know, your boyfriend may not know, your girlfriend may not know, your parents may not know, but God knows.

The Bible says all things are naked before the eyes of Him with whom we have to do it. And it's when we go into the inner part and allow the Spirit of God to bring out every unclean thing, it's not just some, in other words, this was not some sort of superficial cleansing. This was not, you know, a merry maids going in to do a little bit of dusting for an hour.

Verse 17, they began the consecration on the first day of the first month. On the eighth day of the month, they entered the porch of the Lord. Then they consecrated the house of the Lord in eight days.

And they finished on the sixteenth day of the first month. Sixteen days, over two weeks of cleansing. How many Levites you got, I don't know, the Bible doesn't say.

But certainly there were possibly dozens of them. Like I said, this was not some sort of superficial job. Sixteen days of cleansing.

The house of God was not that big. They went through that thing with a fine-tooth comb, if you like. That's what revival does.

Revival cleanses the whole house of God. No stone is left unturned. We get honest, we get transparent with God and say, God, I want freedom from this.

I've battled this for years. Nobody knows that I'm battling it. But Lord, I'm going to open these doors.

I want that cleansing to take place. I want the power of your blood to wash me. I want this house restored to the condition that is approved by you.

So that's what happened. Verse 18, they went to King Hezekiah and said, We've cleansed the whole house of the Lord. The altar of burnt offering, all the utensils, the table of shewbread, all the utensils.

Moreover, all the utensils which King Ahaz had discarded during his reign of his unfaithfulness. We are prepared and consecrated. Behold, there before the altar of the Lord.

And so we have now this consecration that takes place. Following the consecration, we have celebration. You'll notice from about verse 20 to the end of the chapter, let me just pick up a few little things.

Verse 25, they stationed the Levites in the house of the Lord with cymbals, with harps, with lyres, according to the command of David, and of Gad, the king's seer. As it was made from the prophet, for the command was from the Lord. The Levites stood with the musical instruments of David and the priests with the trumpets.

It says, verse 28, the whole assembly worshipped. The singers sang, the trumpets sounded, and so on. Verse 29, at the completion of the burnt offering, the king and all who were present bowed down and they worshipped.

It goes on to say in verse 30, they sang praises with joy, they bowed down and worshipped, and so on. In other words, celebration always follows consecration. There is a divine order in the Word of God.

It is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Righteousness, getting things right, produces peace. Peace, then, ultimately produces joy.

But the Bible says there is no peace for wicked. In other words, you cannot put peace before righteousness, because there is no peace for the wicked. And so they have got right with God now.

The end result of getting right with God now is this incredible joy, this incredible enthusiasm. Every single revival from this day on all down through the years, the Welsh Revival and so on and so forth, almost without exception, every great revival has produced a whole new wave of music. In other words, it's no longer, you know, we're singing a generation or two generations or ten generations ago of their hymns, because now God has done something in my life.

Psalms said again, you lifted me also out of a horrible pit, out of my reclaim, and then what? Put a new song in my life. In other words, I've got something to sing about, because I know what it is to be lifted out of the depths of sin. And every revival, almost without exception, there has come this incredible celebration where people begin to voice in their own sort of culture, if you like, with the beat of their music and so on.

You know, many of the old Salvation Army songs were written to bar tunes, because everybody, you know, was in the bar and so on, but they loved the beat of whatever it was, and so they put Christian words to them. You know, every generation. That's why we, you know, we're not stuck in the past with pipe organs and so on and so forth.

You know, we were, Marcus Hilling would be for a pipe organ. But we have a new expression. And so here they are now, there's dancing, there's songs, David has made these instruments to praise God, they're dancing before the Lord, they're singing, the trumpets are blasting there, the burnt offerings, the joy, they're bowing down in worship, and so on.

And so there is celebration. The next thing is, there is evangelism. Every revival, again, birthed a whole new interest in telling others.

Notice what happens in Chapter 30. Now, Hezekiah sent to all Israel. This is taking place in Jerusalem, of course.

He sent to all Israel and Judah, wrote letters also to Ephraim and Asa, that they should come to the house of God in Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover of the Lord, the God of Israel. And so it says, verse 5, They established a decree to circulate a proclamation throughout all the land of Israel, from Beersheba even to Dan, that they should come to celebrate the Passover of the Lord, the God of Israel, at Jerusalem, for they had not celebrated it in great numbers as it was prescribed. Verse 6, And the couriers went throughout all of Israel and Judah with letters from the hand of the king and his prince.

In other words, if we could modernize this, there's emails going out, there's tweets going out, you know, come to our church, we are having a revival, God is doing something, people get saved, marriages get restored, people get set free from drugs, and so on and so forth. I mean, you know, in those days, they had the same couriers. But they were excited about what God was doing.

God has restored, again, His presence to the house of God. And there is incredible enthusiasm, incredible singing going on, and dancing, and music, and so on. They want others to know that.

And the fact is, when we get excited about the things of God, we cannot contain it. Isn't that right? Well, we shouldn't be able to contain it. If we can, then there's something wrong.

But they, all of a sudden now, the circulations of proclamations being made, and they are circulating these, if you like, tracts, these letters, the couriers going, and it says here in verse 6, So sons of Israel, return to the Lord God of Abraham, and Isaac, and Israel, that He may return to those of you who have escaped and are left from the hands of the king of Assyria. Do not be like your fathers and your brothers who were unfaithful to the Lord God of our fathers, so that He may then make horror as you see. Do not stiffen your necks like your fathers, but yield to the Lord and enter His sanctuary.

Verse 9, If you return to the Lord, your brothers and your sons will find compassion for those who live in captivity, and will return to this land. The Lord your God is gracious and compassionate. He will not turn His face away from you if you return to Him.

Here we have the other side, if you like, of God's character. He hates sin, but along with His hatred of sin, He always has this incredible, incredible compassion for us. And He says, listen, if you return to Him, He will return to you.

He is a God of compassion. And so this is the message that is going on. Don't turn away from Him.

Verse 10, So the couriers passed from city to city throughout the country of Ephraim and Manasseh, even as far as Zebulun. But they left them to scorn and they mocked them. Nevertheless, some men of Asher, Manasseh, and Zebulun humbled themselves and they came to Jerusalem.

You will always get those that will laugh and mock at your attempt to try and win them to Christ. But listen, there will always be those that will humble themselves, those that will be scorned. We don't cease to go because we're going to get mocked.

We go because there's going to be somebody that's going to respond to what we have to say. And so they go down the whole lane. And it says, The hand of God was also on Judah to give them one heart to do what the king and the princess commanded by the Lord.

Notice God's grace now. The hand of the Lord, He gave them one heart. God's grace, once we even begin to turn to Him, the grace of God is there to fully restore us.

All the years of the locusts and the kangaroos of Egypt, God is able to restore. That's what revival does. And so they go throughout all the land.

Let me drop down now to verse 26, chapter 30. So there was great joy in Jerusalem because there was nothing like this in Jerusalem since the days of Solomon, the son of David, king of Israel. Then the Levitical priests arose and they blessed the people.

And their voice was heard, and their prayer came to His holy dwelling place in heaven. We not only have celebration, evangelization, but if you like, intercession. And this intercession now is reeking results.

God is listening. The prayer is noticed. It says they came to His holy dwelling place in heaven.

In other words, the prayers are not bouncing off the ceiling because the people are living in sin. The Bible says if I regarded equity in my heart, God would not even hear me. But because they're coming in sincerity and truth, all of a sudden those prayers are ascending and God is answering for it.

That's what happens again in revival. All of a sudden, prayer begins to get answered because we're in a right relationship with God. The community begins to change because we're in a right relationship with God.

And then the last thing, chapter 31, it says the people began to give. Don't worry, I'm not taking it up. Verse 5, as soon as the order spread, the sons of Israel provided in abundance the first fruits of grain, new wine, oil, honey, all the produce of the field, and they brought in abundantly the tithe of all.

In other words, when you are blessed, you will give. You don't give to get blessed. That's the televangelists who will tell you that.

You give because you are blessed. And they are blessed. They come back into a right relationship with God and now, again, every need that is needed is being met.

Those are just a few of the things that we see in this portion of Scripture. When one young man, 25 years of age, basically single-handedly was able to turn that nation back to God because of his leadership, because of his dedication, because of his willingness to be transparent and honest, rally other people around him, and as a result, the entire nation experienced one of the greatest revivals that we have in the Bible. All it takes, again, for your family, for father, mother, brother, sister, whatever, son or daughter, to get right with God.

Things begin to change. It's contagious, isn't it? And the God that we are looking at here is the same God. He's no different today than He was back there in Hezbollah.

His demands are also the same. He gets angry with sin. He'll turn His face away from you if you continue in that sin.

He's also God of incredible compassion. When we turn back to Him, it doesn't matter how deep you've got in sin, it doesn't matter what depths you've gone to, what you've done, the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanses from not 90% of sin, but from all sin. Amen.

Maybe some of you tonight, maybe you've just settled into a place of indifference. Maybe you say, well, you know, my Christian walk is not what it used to be. I don't read the Bible like I used to.

Those were all the beginning signs of that downward spiral again. I've lost that relationship with God. That's where it begins.

I've lost that relationship with God. After all, we have the Ephesian church and the five or seven churches, rather, of Revelation. That church had, in the natural, everything going for it.

I know you're zeal, God said. I know you're toil. Squeaky clean.

When it came to any sort of false teaching, there was no Jezebel in the midst. There was no Balaam teaching. You know, God commended them.

You try those that say they're apostles of the honor. You know, I know you're zeal, I know you're toil. I mean, there's not a pastor in America that doesn't want to have a church where every single member is so working themselves that they've got muscle ache.

That's what one translation basically says. I know you're zeal and you're toil. That they're working so hard.

What I call the purpose-driven church. And yet, God says, you've left your person. You've left your person.

It wasn't passion-driven, it was purpose-driven. We can have a purpose-driven church. We can have groups for this and groups for that and this and that and the other thing.

But listen, when we lose our first love, that's where that downward spiral begins. And it doesn't stop until we end up in captivity of bondage and death. When I talk about death, obviously it's spiritual death.

God is in our contention. He wants us to come back. He wants us to find again that first love, that passion that we once had for God.

Passion for the Word of God, passion for prayer. And it's gonna take that before we see this nation change. We'll never, the state of the church today will never change this nation.

Because we're no different than the nation. Oh, we may clean up a few little things, but basically we're no different than them. And they don't see any differences.

And until they do, and until we get the fire in our back, we will not see this nation change. And yet we are the only hope for this nation. We've got to take seriously, Lord, that I am not in that right relationship with you.

And tonight, Lord, I am gonna come open and transparent. You know everything anyway. I am not suggesting that you open your heart to every topic in the area.

Don't get me wrong. But we have to open our heart to you. And say, God, you know what's coming.

Cleanse that thing, cleanse that area in my life. I want to walk out of here with that joy that comes from being in the right relationship with you. Let's just close the bridge, shall we? And let's just take a few moments.

I don't want this to be a waste of time. Be honest. God knows you.

I don't. You can fool me, and I acknowledge that. But you can't fool me.

And if the Spirit of God is speaking to you, it may even be just a tiny little whisper. Keep that voice. Maybe what you consider just a tiny little sin, but it's sin.

God, I've got a great love for this. I've got a great love for that. I've got a great passion for this.

I've got a great passion for that. Lord, rekindle that first love to me. Make that your prayer today.

These altars are open. If you want to come, just kneel. Just open your heart to me.

Father, I pray right now. Lord, you who were the saint yesterday, today and forever. You who have no variables, no shadow to me.

Lord, you who see each and every one of us just the way we are. Lord, set this people free. Free from any sin, from any bondage, any addiction.

Father, break the yokes to me. You said the anointing will break the yoke. I pray, Lord, for the anointing in your Spirit.

Lord, even as they sit here, whatever that yoke is that has people bound, Father, break it in the name of Jesus. Lord, bring that liberty. Your Word says it was for freedom that Christ set us free.

Freedom from sin, Lord. The greatest freedom there ever was, there ever will be, is a freedom from sin. Father, let that be a true experience right from heaven.

God has no respect for the person. It doesn't matter who you are. It doesn't matter your background, your education or lack of education.

You're just as valuable to God as anybody else. He's not going to withhold from you. There's grace if you come to Him.

Father, thank you for your Word today. I pray that, Lord, you are taken and sealed in the heart of each and every one of us. That, Lord, even as we go our separate ways, that, Lord, your Word says we can't flee from your presence.

If you take the wings of the morning, dwell in the innermost part of the earth, it's still there. If you're sent into hell, it's still there. So, Father, let your presence go with us.

Continue, Lord, to do that work which you've begun tonight. In Jesus' name. We'll meet Him back over.

If you need prayers, I'm here. I know pastors are here. If you need prayer, we're glad to pray with you.

But you know, you can come to God. If you need a priesthood, hang on. We're not the Roman Catholic Church.

We have a high priest. He's on duty 24-7. All you've got to do is go to him and ask him.

So, Lord, forgive and thank you. Thank you, Brother D, for sharing with us tonight. That's a great challenge.

Let's all stand together, shall we? Thank you, Lord.

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