

Good morning, dear family and friends. It is another beautiful June morning. Some may question my use of the word "beautiful." We all enjoy the blue skies and bright sunshine. But our dear farmer friends would love to have some much needed rain. So, wherever you are, it IS a beautiful morning. And here is our Devotional for today ... the last in my series on the Revival under King Hezekiah of Judah, from 2 Chronicles 29 - 31. Read those chapters again. Pray for revival; trust God for revival; rejoice as He sends revival.

## WHAT ARE THE ENDURING EVIDENCES OF A TRUE REVIVAL?

A Devotional prepared by Dr. Robert L. Morris

Posted on June 7, 2021

2 Chronicles 31:1-21

The key to the successful, and God-blessed reign of King Hezekiah is found at the end of this passage. "Thus Hezekiah did throughout all Judah, and he did what was good and right and true before the LORD his God. And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, in the law, and in the commandment, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart. So he prospered."

(2 Chronicles 31:20, 21; NKJV)

These two verses, spoken or written at the end of the disclosures of this 31st Chapter of 2 Chronicles, declare the blessings of God on this King of Judah because he wholly followed the Lord. But even more, they need to be cited as the key, the heart, the central focus of the five "revival chapters," chapters 28 - 31, from which this series of Devotionals emerge.

I have read many facebook, email, and other posts submitted by Christian people who are praying in faith for a true heaven-sent, God-honoring, Christ-exalting, Spirit-led, Satan defeating, Sin-killing, Life transforming, Bible-affirming, Church-renewing revival. Our families need it. Our Churches need it. Our communities need it. Our nation needs it. Our world is in desperate need for this mighty move of God. Let's join together in prayer ... daily and often time daily ... for this outpouring of God's grace, love, and mercy. But for right now, we need to turn to 2 Chronicles 31 and discover what we need to look for in a spiritual revival that will result in its longevity. From the account of the revival under King Hezekiah's leadership there are at least five evidences that when in place, followed by the people, and anointed by God, will ensure the lasting character of a revival. These are as follows.

### 1. Religious Practices are Corrected. (2 Chronicles 31:1)

As the leader of Judah, King Hezekiah guided his people back to true worship of God. Verse 1 of this chapter is a mini-review of the earliest days of the reign of King Hezekiah. Almost immediately upon his ascension to the throne of Judah, King Hezekiah had restored Judah's focus on the house of the Lord, by opening and repairing its doors. He instructed the Levitical priests to "sanctify yourselves (and then) sanctify the house of the LORD God of your fathers, and carry out the rubbish from the holy place." (2 Chronicles 29:5; NKJV) They obeyed the king's instructions, and reported the same to the king. (See 2 Chronicles 29:18, 19; NKJV) In an amazing act, even the bronze serpent that Moses had made was broken. That which had been a blessing, a symbol of the grace and presence of God, over the years had become an object of worship, taking the place of God in the lives of the people. All evidential vestiges of idolatry were now removed. (See 2 Kings 18:4) The revival movement began to touch the whole city of Jerusalem. (See 2 Chronicles 29:20-36; NKJV) In chapter 30 we find that this revival began to spread throughout all Israel. The remembrances - pagan altars - of the evil reign of King Ahaz were removed. The celebration of the Passover was renewed. The worship of the LORD God of Israel was restored. Peace, rejoicing, and tranquility returned. Revival! It begins in getting rid of sin in the areas of daily living. And that is what verse one is all about! How desperately we need true Spirit-anointed, Biblical preaching on sin and its horrific consequences, and how desperately we need to correct all that is needed that we might know the powerful presence of God among us.

### 2. Relationship to God is Restored. (2 Chronicles 31:2)

It might be easy to pass by this important verse, and its message lost. In the days of King David, the priesthood and the roles of the Levites who supported the priests had been established in orders and

divisions. The worship of God in His house had been carefully set into an orderly arrangement by King David. By means of this, the work of the temple was effective, and the lives of God's people spiritually nourished. But under King Hezekiah's father, wicked King Ahaz, and possibly before, this orderly arrangement was abandoned. Therefore, when Hezekiah became king, he restored the orderly arrangements so that the priests were where they should be in the service of the Lord, leading the people of God in true worship, including at least song, praise, and giving of thanks.

We live in a sad time in which so many people consider Church to be an irrelevant option, and probably for people weak in character! Some so-called leaders even suggest that the Church is no longer needed. But in a true, Bible-based, God-anointed revival that lasts, the vital importance of the Church and one's relationship to God is restored. Under King Hezekiah's leadership, the people began to correctly esteem and support the ministry of the house of the Lord and His appointed leaders. We need to remember that the church is God's institution for the spiritual health and well-being of His people. The Apostle Paul set forth some basic structure for the local church, and then stated the purpose for his writing. "I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." (1 Timothy 3:15; NKJV) Therefore, one of the important evidences of a true revival is the restoration of the ministry of the local church. In the New Testament we note the following relating to life in the church: "Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account. Do this so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no benefit to you." (Hebrews 13:17; TNIV) There is, of course, one qualifier to this. The leaders must provide leadership based upon and therefore in harmony with the Word of God. A true revival is evidenced in a restoration of the priority God places on our relationship to, in, and through the church.

### 3. Responsibilities in God's Work are Clearly Defined. (2 Chronicles 31:3-4)

This is another practical reform that is a vital and enduring evidence of a true revival. King Hezekiah involved himself. "The king also appointed a portion of his possessions for the burnt offerings: for the morning and evening burnt offerings, the burnt offerings for the Sabbaths and the New Moons and the set feasts, as it is written in the Law of the LORD." (2 Chronicles 31:3; NKJV) King Hezekiah instructed all the people living in Jerusalem to "contribute support for the priests and the Levites, that they might devote themselves to the Law of the LORD." (2 Chronicles 31:4; NKJV) It is easy to pass by these verses, but we need to know what they tell us. In the Book of Numbers, chapters 28 and 29, we are informed about the specific offerings to be given in the temple related to various days, weeks, and months, and by these offerings the work of the ministry of and in the temple would be supported.

These offerings were vital. They consisted of the animal sacrifices that in God's redemptive plan pointed ahead to the Calvary sacrifice of the Lamb of God. By faith these sacrifices focused on and gave support for the atoning grace of God promised in Genesis 3:15 and fulfilled in those magnificent words, "It is finished." We do not bring livestock to church. However, we must recall that the sacrifices ... offerings ... in the revival under King Hezekiah's leadership did not remove sin. They were intended by God to point forward to the sacrifice of Jesus our Lord that He made for us. In the New Testament we read: "For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect. ... For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins. ... But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God." (Hebrews 10:1, 4, 12; NKJV) For the support of spreading this grand message of redemption we have been given the responsibility. And so, we give in support of the work of the Kingdom of God in the world, and usually much of this is and should be through our Church.

### 4. Resources are Adequate and Managed Appropriately. (2 Chronicles 31:5-19)

This is a fascinating passage of Scripture. To get it before us, I want to go through the verses, 5-19 of 2 Chronicles 31, and cite a series of Biblical statements that when seen together form the full foundation of this point in the Devotional.

"As soon as the commandment was circulated ..." (v 5)

"... the children of Israel brought in abundance the first fruits ..." (v 5)

“... and they brought in abundantly the tithes of everything.” (v 5)  
 “... the children of Israel and Judah ... brought the tithes of oxen and sheep ...” (v 6)  
 “... In the third month they began laying them in heaps ...” (v 7)  
 “... Since the people began to bring the offerings into the house of the LORD ...” (v 10)  
 “... we have had enough to eat and plenty left, for the LORD has blessed His people ...” (v 10)  
 “... and what is left is this great abundance ...” (v 10)  
 “... Hezekiah commanded them to prepare rooms in the house of the LORD ...” (v 11)  
 “... they faithfully brought in the offerings, the tithes, and the dedicated things ...” (v 12)  
 “... Kore, keeper of the East Gate, was over the freewill offerings to God to distribute the offerings ...” (v 14)  
 “... they distributed to everyone who entered the house of the LORD his daily portion ...” (v 16)  
 “... the priests ... the Levites ... all who were written in the genealogy ... their little ones and their wives, their sons and daughters, the whole company of them ... for in their faithfulness they sanctified themselves in holiness.” (vv 17, 18)

And in verse 8 we note that Hezekiah and the leaders ... "blessed the LORD and His people Israel." How magnificent is this early account of God's blessing on His people as they obeyed Him. It corresponds with the prophecy of Malachi. "Bring the full 10 percent into the storehouse so that there may be food in My house. Test Me in this way," says the LORD of Hosts. "See if I will not open the floodgates of heaven and pour out a blessing for you without measure." (Malachi 3:10; HCSB; I like this Holman Christian Standard Bible translation!)

And management? Here it is: "Also for the sons of Aaron the priests, who were in the fields of the common-lands of their cities, in every city, there were men who were designated by name to distribute portions to all the males among the priests and to all who were listed by genealogies among the Levites." (2 Chronicles 31:19)

In so doing, Hezekiah and his reform was illustrating another of the essential and enduring evidences of a true Revival. And now we move to the fifth of the enduring evidences of revival.

#### 5. Righteousness Prevails under God. (2 Chronicles 31:20, 21)

Here we return to the key quality of the leadership of the great revival in Judah and Israel. "Thus Hezekiah did throughout all Judah, and he did what was good and right and true before the LORD his God. And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, in the law and in the commandment, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart. So he prospered." Chapter 32 of 2 Chronicles will provide our readers with a summary of the remaining time of King Hezekiah. And that could be another Devotional. For now, however, let's join in singing one of the Church's old hymns that still stands as a challenge to all the people of God. The lyrics were written by John H. Sammis in 1887, and in the same year, the music score we are accustomed to using was the creation of Daniel B. Towner.

#### TRUST AND OBEY

1. When we walk with the Lord in the light of His Word, what a glory He sheds on our way!

While we do His good will, He abides with us still, and with all who will trust and obey.

2. Not a shadow can rise, not a cloud in the skies, but His smile quickly drives it away.

Not a doubt nor a fear, not a sigh nor a tear can abide while we trust and obey.

3. Not a burden we bear, not a sorrow we share, but our toil He doth richly repay.

Not a grief nor a loss, not a frown nor a cross but is blest if we trust and obey.

4. But we never can prove the delights of His love until all on the altar we lay;

For the favor He shows and the joy He bestows are for them who will trust and obey.

5. Then in fellowship sweet we will sit at His feet, or we'll walk by His side in the way.

What He says we will do; where He sends we will go; never fear, only trust and obey.

CHORUS after each verse:

Trust and obey, for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.