

A SPIRITUAL AWAKENING – 4

“God Responds to Humility and Repentance in Mercy”

I. A TIME FOR A SPIRITUAL AWAKENING.

- A. *The time is now.*
- B. *We learn from Israel's mistakes and triumphs.*
- C. *Some important principles.*
 - 1. Men are basically the same today as ever; people are people.
 - 2. God is still the same God.
 - 3. The nations, names, and faces may have changed, but the underlying principles are still the same.
The same consequences for evil.
The same plan for renewal and restoration.
 - 4. Israel cursed because of idolatry; blessed when they turned to God.

II. GOD SAYS TO RETURN UNTO HIM.

- A. (2 Chr 30:9 KJV) For if ye turn again unto the LORD, your brethren and your children shall find compassion before them that lead them captive, so that they shall come again into this land: for the LORD your God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away his face from you, if ye return unto him.
- B. (Deu 30:1 KJV) And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath driven thee, (Deu 30:2 KJV) And shalt return unto the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul; (Deu 30:3 KJV) That then the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee.
- C. For the Lord is gracious and merciful; He will have compassion upon us.

III. HEZEKIAH TURNS A NATION BACK TO GOD.

- A. *First, he covenanted with God; had a personal determination.*
- B. *Second, he sanctified the priests and the house of the Lord.*
- C. *Third, he restored the house of the Lord.*
 - 1. Opened the doors.
 - 2. Lit the lamps (emphasized spiritual dimension).
 - 3. Burned incense (instituted worship).
 - 4. Offered burnt offerings (repentance for sins).

IV. PROCLAMATION SENT TO GATHER IN JERUSALEM.

- A. *Some mocked and ridiculed.* (2 Chr 30:10 NIV) The couriers went from town to town in Ephraim and Manasseh, as far as Zebulun, but the people scorned and ridiculed them.
- B. *Others humbled themselves and came.* (2 Chr 30:11 NIV) Nevertheless, some men of Asher, Manasseh and Zebulun humbled themselves and went to Jerusalem.

- C. ***Sacrifices were offered (worship reinstated).*** (2 Chr 30:13 NIV) A very large crowd of people assembled in Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread in the second month.
- D. ***People arose and took away the altars.***
- E. ***The priests and Levites were ashamed and sanctified themselves.***
 - 1. The people had backslid.
 - 2. Apparently, the priesthood had also backslid.
 - 3. Instead of the church influencing the world, the world influences the church.

V. ATTITUDE OR MOTIVE OF HEART.

- A. ***Some of the people were unclean.*** (2 Chr 30:18 KJV) For a multitude of the people, even many of Ephraim, and Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun, had not cleansed themselves, yet did they eat the passover otherwise than it was written.
 - 1. But Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, The good LORD pardon every one (2 Chr 30:19 KJV) That prepareth his heart to seek God, the LORD God of his fathers, though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary.
 - 2. (2 Chr 30:20 KJV) And the LORD hearkened to Hezekiah, and healed the people.
- B. ***God's grace and mercy supersedes the finer points of the law.***
 - 1. Our idea of the law is judgment; an eye for an eye; tooth for a tooth.
 - 2. Some feel that God is just looking for an excuse to get you.
 - 3. I will have mercy and not sacrifice. (Mat 12:1 KJV) At that time Jesus went on the sabbath day through the corn; and his disciples were an hungred, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat. (Mat 12:2 KJV) But when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the sabbath day. (Mat 12:3 KJV) But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungred, and they that were with him; (Mat 12:4 KJV) How he entered into the house of God, and did eat the showbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests? (Mat 12:5 KJV) Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless? (Mat 12:6 KJV) But I say unto you, That in this place is one greater than the temple. (Mat 12:7 KJV) But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless.
 - 4. A perfect heart. (2 Chr 16:9 KJV) For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him. Herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars.
- C. ***So there was great joy.***
- D. ***The priests blessed the people.*** (Chr 30:27 KJV) Then the priests the Levites arose and blessed the people: and their voice was heard, and their prayer came up to his holy dwelling place, even unto heaven.

VI. HEZEKIAH COMMANDS THE PEOPLE TO GIVE.

- A. ***Giving portion to the priests and Levites.*** (2 Chr 31:4 KJV) Moreover he commanded the people that dwelt in Jerusalem to give the portion of the priests and the Levites, that they might be encouraged in the law of the LORD.
- B. ***Bringing in abundance.*** (2 Chr 31:5 KJV) And as soon as the commandment came abroad, the children of Israel brought in abundance the firstfruits of corn, wine, and oil, and honey, and of all the increase of the field; and the tithe of all things brought they in abundantly.
- C. ***Giving laid in heaps.*** (2 Chr 31:7 KJV) In the third month they began to lay the foundation of the heaps, and finished them in the seventh month.
1. (2 Chr 31:8 KJV) And when Hezekiah and the princes came and saw the heaps, they blessed the LORD, and his people Israel.
 2. (2 Chr 31:9 KJV) Then Hezekiah questioned with the priests and the Levites concerning the heaps.
 3. (2 Chr 31:10 KJV) And Azariah the chief priest of the house of Zadok answered him, and said, Since the people began to bring the offerings into the house of the LORD, we have had enough to eat, and have left plenty: for the LORD hath blessed his people; and that which is left is this great store.
- D. ***The opened windows of heaven.*** (Mal 3:10 KJV) Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. (Mal 3:11 KJV) And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts.
1. Open window means God has means to pour out the blessings; there must be a channel or conduit; opening; we must supply God an opening.
 2. Open window means we have breakthrough into heaven for our prayers and petitions to be received of the Lord.

GOD SAYS, "I WILL IF YOU WILL."

Return to me; I'll return to you.

Obey me, I'll bless.

Give, and I will give.

Actually, God has already taken the first step.

He loved first.

He gave first.

He will not force Himself.

Now he is waiting for on our move.