

SPIRITUAL AWAKENING – 3

“Old Testament Awakenings”

I. OLD TESTAMENT AWAKENINGS.

- A. *Hezekiah.*
- B. *Josiah.*
- C. *Ezra.*
- D. *Nehemiah.*

II. SOME IMPORTANT PRINCIPLES.

- A. *Men are basically the same today as ever; people are people.*
- B. *God is still the same God.*
- C. *The nations, names, and faces may have changed, but the underlying principles are still the same.*
 - 1. The same consequences for evil.
 - 2. The same plan for renewal and restoration.
- D. *Israel cursed because of idolatry; blessed when they turned to God.*

III. REVIVAL UNDER KING HEZEKIAH (B.C. 726).

- A. *Sent word to come to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover which had been neglected for years.* (2 Chr 30:1 NIV) Hezekiah sent word to all Israel and Judah and also wrote letters to Ephraim and Manasseh, inviting them to come to the temple of the LORD in Jerusalem and celebrate the Passover to the LORD, the God of Israel.
- B. *Reason for neglect.* (2 Chr 30:3 NIV) They had not been able to celebrate it at the regular time because not enough priests had consecrated themselves and the people had not assembled in Jerusalem.
 - 1. Priest had not sanctified themselves sufficiently.
 - 2. People had not gathered themselves together to Jerusalem.
- C. *Plan pleased the king and the people.* (2 Chr 30:4 NIV) The plan seemed right both to the king and to the whole assembly.
- D. *Proclamation sent throughout Israel.* (2 Chr 30:5 NIV) They decided to send a proclamation throughout Israel, from Beersheba to Dan, calling the people to come to Jerusalem and celebrate the Passover to the LORD, the God of Israel. It had not been celebrated in large numbers according to what was written.
 - 1. Be not as your fathers who trespassed against the Lord.
 - 2. Yield yourselves unto the Lord and enter into his sanctuary.
 - 3. Turn again unto the Lord. (2 Chr 30:9 NIV) If you return to the LORD, then your brothers and your children will be shown compassion by their captors and will come back to this land, for the LORD your God is gracious and compassionate. He will not turn his face from you if you return to him."
- E. *The response of the people.*
 - 1. 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.

2. Others humbled themselves and came. (2 Chr 30:11 NIV) Nevertheless, some men of Asher, Manasseh and Zebulun humbled themselves and went to Jerusalem.
 3. 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.
- F. ***Hezekiah prayed for the people.***
1. (2 Chr 30:18 NIV) Although most of the many people who came from Ephraim, Manasseh, Issachar and Zebulun had not purified themselves, yet they ate the Passover, contrary to what was written. But Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, "May the LORD, who is good, pardon everyone who sets his heart on seeking God--the LORD, the God of his fathers--even if he is not clean according to the rules of the sanctuary."
 2. (2 Chr 30:20 NIV) And the LORD heard Hezekiah and healed the people.
- G. ***People worshiped with gladness.***
1. (2 Chr 30:21 NIV) The Israelites who were present in Jerusalem celebrated the Feast of Unleavened Bread for seven days with great rejoicing, while the Levites and priests sang to the LORD every day, accompanied by the Lord's instruments of praise.
 2. (2 Chr 30:26 NIV) There was great joy in Jerusalem, for since the days of Solomon son of David king of Israel there had been nothing like this in Jerusalem.
 3. Priests blessed the people. (2 Chr 30:27 NIV) The priests and the Levites stood to bless the people, and God heard them, for their prayer reached heaven, his holy dwelling place.
- H. ***False worship destroyed.*** (2 Chr 31:1 NIV) When all this had ended, the Israelites who were there went out to the towns of Judah, smashed the sacred stones and cut down the Asherah poles. They destroyed the high places and the altars throughout Judah and Benjamin and in Ephraim and Manasseh. After they had destroyed all of them, the Israelites returned to their own towns and to their own property.
- I. ***Hezekiah appoints ministers according to their service.*** (2 Chr 31:2 NIV) Hezekiah assigned the priests and Levites to divisions--each of them according to their duties as priests or Levites--to offer burnt offerings and fellowship offerings, to minister, to give thanks and to sing praises at the gates of the Lord's dwelling.
- J. ***Hezekiah commands the people to give the portion of the priests and Levites.*** (2 Chr 31:4 NIV) He ordered the people living in Jerusalem to give the portion due the priests and Levites so they could devote themselves to the Law of the LORD.
- K. ***Abundance.***
1. (2 Chr 31:5 NIV) As soon as the order went out, the Israelites generously gave the firstfruits of their grain, new wine, oil and honey and all that the fields produced. They brought a great amount, a tithe of everything. (2 Chr 31:6 NIV) The men of Israel and Judah who lived in the towns of Judah also brought a tithe of their herds and flocks and a tithe of the holy things dedicated to the LORD their God, and they piled them in heaps. (2 Chr

31:7 NIV) They began doing this in the third month and finished in the seventh month. (2 Chr 31:8 NIV) When Hezekiah and his officials came and saw the heaps, they praised the LORD and blessed his people Israel. (2 Chr 31:9 NIV) Hezekiah asked the priests and Levites about the heaps; (2 Chr 31:10 NIV) and Azariah the chief priest, from the family of Zadok, answered, "Since the people began to bring their contributions to the temple of the LORD, we have had enough to eat and plenty to spare, because the LORD has blessed his people, and this great amount is left over."

IV. AWAKENING UNDER KING JOSIAH. (B.C.634; 92 years after Hezekiah).

- A. ***Josiah did that which was right in the sight of the Lord.*** (2 Chr 34:2 NIV) He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD and walked in the ways of his father David, not turning aside to the right or to the left.
- B. ***Began to seek the Lord and to purge the land.*** (2 Chr 34:3 NIV) In the eighth year of his reign, while he was still young, he began to seek the God of his father David. In his twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem of high places, Asherah poles, carved idols and cast images.
- C. ***After purging, he began to rebuild the house of the Lord.*** (2 Chr 34:8 NIV) In the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign, to purify the land and the temple, he sent Shaphan son of Azaliah and Maaseiah the ruler of the city, with Joah son of Joahaz, the recorder, to repair the temple of the LORD his God.
- D. ***Money for the house of the Lord.*** (2 Chr 34:9 NIV) They went to Hilkiah the high priest and gave him the money that had been brought into the temple of God, which the Levites who were the doorkeepers had collected from the people of Manasseh, Ephraim and the entire remnant of Israel and from all the people of Judah and Benjamin and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. (2 Chr 34:10 NIV) Then they entrusted it to the men appointed to supervise the work on the Lord's temple. These men paid the workers who repaired and restored the temple.
- E. ***Book of the law discovered.***
King rents his clothes. (2 Chr 34:19 NIV) When the king heard the words of the Law, he tore his robes. (2 Chr 34:20 NIV) He gave these orders to Hilkiah, Ahikam son of Shaphan, Abdon son of Micah, Shaphan the secretary and Asaiah the king's attendant: (2 Chr 34:21 NIV) "Go and inquire of the LORD for me and for the remnant in Israel and Judah about what is written in this book that has been found. Great is the Lord's anger that is poured out on us because our fathers have not kept the word of the LORD; they have not acted in accordance with all that is written in this book."
Evil because of disobedience. (2 Chr 34:24 NIV) "This is what the LORD says: I am going to bring disaster on this place and its people--all the curses written in the book that has been read in the presence of the king of Judah. (2 Chr 34:25 NIV) Because they have forsaken me and burned incense to other gods and provoked me to anger by all that their hands have made, my anger will be poured out on this place and will not be quenched."
Because of obedience will not see the plague. (2 Chr 34:27 NIV) Because your

heart was responsive and you humbled yourself before God when you heard what he spoke against this place and its people, and because you humbled yourself before me and tore your robes and wept in my presence, I have heard you, declares the LORD. (2 Chr 34:28 NIV) Now I will gather you to your fathers, and you will be buried in peace. Your eyes will not see all the disaster I am going to bring on this place and on those who live here." So they took her answer back to the king.

I. EZRA - EZ. 10:1-17.

- A. *Nation deep in sin through disobedience and unfaithfulness.*
- B. *People gathered and leaders prayed, wept, confessed, and prostrated themselves before God.*
- C. *Gathering took place in rain.*
- D. *Because of the repentance and consecration, God allowed them to remain in the land.*

NEHEMIAH - NEH. 9.

*Whole nation gathered, fasting in sackcloth and ashes.
 People confessed their sins and the wickedness of their fathers.
 God's word read for three hours; worship and confession another 3 hours.
 As a result, people made a covenant in writing to follow God.*